

ud. 8

It is argued in Point 25 that the first phase of the bourgeois-democratic revolution consists of two stages. In the first stage the feudal-imperialist bloc is in power. The national-bourgeoisie in the most important of these countries plays a preponderantly oppositional although a vacillating role. Its national-reformist parties exercise considerable influence over the masses, etc. In this stage it is incumbent on the Communist Party to win over and mobilise the workers and peasants for mass demonstrations against the ruling bloc and for organised struggle for their everyday demands, exposure of the national-reformist Party, etc.

In the second stage the bourgeois parties join in a very marked manner the imperialist-feudal ruling bloc, their opposition begins to play a very secondary role and their counter-revolutionary struggle against the workers and peasant movement, becomes paramount. Finally, the bourgeois parties are drawn into participation in the highest government organs, etc.

In this stage it is incumbent on the Communist Party to win over and mobilise the workers and peasants under the slogan of the overthrow of the enlarged ruling bloc, not only the imperialist and feudal lords, but also the Parties of the national big bourgeoisie, and also to launch the general agrarian revolution and to steer the course towards the seizure of State power. But a very important point is the situation between the first and the second stage. Here it should be emphasised with the utmost energy that it is not necessary and even not permissible for the Communist Party to wait for the bourgeois parties to assume power before raising the question of the overthrow of the bourgeois government and of the agrarian revolution. The Communist Party should avoid, as far as this is possible, a development of the second stage in which it has to raise the question of the agrarian revolution too soon, in which it is compelled to bring forward the question of workers' and peasants' government at the turning point between the first and second stage. Let us take for instance the Wuhan period. The mistake of the Communist Party consisted in its inability to raise the question of the agrarian revolution and of the seizure of power by the workers and peasants soon enough, already before the beginning of the Wuhan period. If our Chinese Communist Party had raised at the right time the question of agrarian revolution and seizure of power, seizure of power by us would have been possible if not certain. We should have been working towards this possibility.

There is also a very long Point 26 in the Theses where the possibility of such a development is certainly mentioned. But in view of the schematic attitude of most of our parties and the serious errors of our Chinese Party, we cannot adopt a rigid division into two stages as given in the Theses.

I should like to say also a few words about a country which has been treated by the Comintern like a stepchild, namely, Ireland. I think that the time has come to deal seriously with Ireland. One could of course say Ireland is a free state, a Dominion, and rest content with this. But this would be a serious mistake. Ireland is a free state or a Dominion only in name. In reality Ireland is still in the position of a colony. What was given here as the characteristic of a Dominion? That the British white bourgeoisie pushes the natives into the background and creates a new white state which, economically and politically, is an agency of the mother country. Another comrade will deal in greater detail with the Dominion question. I think that this formula does not take into consideration the centrifugal tendencies. In Ireland the situation is utterly different. We witness there the oppression of a whole people by British imperialism. In Ireland the social policy of the conquerors aimed at depriving the native population of the land. We witness there the typical economic policy of imperialism towards a subject race. If it is true for a colony that the "mother country" impedes the productive forces, it is certainly true for Ireland where British imperialism is ruthlessly impeding the productive forces of the country. If Ireland bears formally the character of a Dominion, this is due to a revolution which had its course between 1916 and 1923. This revolution ended in a compromise between the national bourgeoisie and British imperialism. This revolution was brought to an end by a sanguinary civil war of the new ruling bloc of the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie against the petty bourgeoisie and the workers and peasants who wanted to continue the struggle for full independence. The revolution came to a standstill half way, but the Irish question is not yet solved. Ireland has not yet secured independence and national unity. On

the contrary, Great Britain has driven a wedge into the national unity. The agrarian question is not yet solved in Ireland, it is probably not known that peasant rebellions have taken place lately in Ireland. We witnessed in 1922-23 seizure of land on a large scale by poor and middle peasants, establishment of Soviets in rural districts, the unfurling of the Red Banner on the buildings of the big landlords.

Everyone knows about the miserable position of the agricultural labourers in Ireland, but the labour movement, too, is in a miserable position in Ireland. As to the Labour Party I agree with Comrade Carney that it is now nothing but an agency of British imperialism. If it is necessary for us to take up a very definite attitude towards the Labour Party in Britain, this is all the more necessary in Ireland. But the most important point is that in Ireland we have no revolutionary, no Communist Party. There is certainly the fact that the Irish Workers League has begun lately to be politically active, for instance, in the 1927 elections. But it is not yet a Party in the true sense of the word; it is not yet a Communist Party, and as long as we have no Communist Party in Ireland, we will not be able to make any headway. We witnessed in the last years a big political crisis in Ireland. We will continue to lag behind also in future if we do not establish in Ireland a genuine Communist Party capable of leading the national and social liberation struggle.

Hegemony has already been in the hands of the labour movement in Ireland, namely, in the revolutionary years 1916-1918, in the Easter insurrection and also later. At that time the Irish labour movement committed a big mistake; it gave up hegemony and independence and became only an appendage of the petty bourgeois republican movement. The result was — a break up of the revolutionary labour movement and a reinforcement of the reformist labour organisations. In this respect a change has taken place lately, and we are progressing. This year the Irish Workers League has begun to act as a kind of political organisation. But we must demand more. We must demand that this organisation be transformed into a political organisation, into a Communist Party. We have Communist Parties in China and India; which work even under the pressure of white terror and in very complicated situations, why should not we have a Communist Party in Ireland? Are we to rest content there with diverse labour organisations and keep silent on the fact that we stand in need of a Communist Party? We must not do so. It is high time to take a step forward, all the more so as there are good elements in Ireland which we can use, and not only in the political groups of the workers, but also in trade unions. There are also many honest revolutionary elements among the Republicans whom we can win over to our side. Such a Party would give an impetus to the labour movement and could also carry out the alliance policy with the peasantry which is one of the main problems in Ireland. With the support of the C.I. and the British Party, such a Party could achieve considerable results in the Irish revolutionary movement.

Comrade PAREDES (Ecuador):

Comrades, on the whole the colonial theses are quite acceptable. Nevertheless I should like to pass some critical remarks on a few points.

The classification of the different countries in these theses is better than in the Draft Programme. Nevertheless I believe that there should be a different sub-division as regards the economic and political situation of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. In the discussion on the Programme I pointed out the necessity of introducing a new group of countries to be described as "dependent countries". This question is of importance in working out the proper tactics for these countries. I am not going to dwell upon this question, nor upon a number of other points which I have raised in the discussion on the Programme. Nevertheless, I should like to urge the need of a thorough study of the colonial, semi-colonial and dependent countries.

On the question of the bourgeois, democratic and agrarian revolution, stress ought to be laid upon four chief points: 1. the economy of the country; 2. the degree of economic penetration by imperialism; 3) the political strength of the country, and 4. the political sway of imperialism. In connection with the first point it is essential to make an attentive study of the