

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY IN COUNTRIES OF THE EAST

Report of a conference held in the History and Philosophy Department of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., at the Institute of Oriental Studies. (Continued from last issue).

2. Special features of the regime of people's democracy in countries where there is no proletariat or was none at the time of the establishment of the people's power (in particular, in Mongolia).

Candidate of historical sciences I. Ya. Zlatkin, basing himself on the differences of level of socio-economic development between the different Eastern countries of people's democracy, doubted the rapporteur's view that it is possible to give a common definition of the character and peculiarities of people's democracy in these countries. In Zlatkin's opinion, the rapporteur made a mistake in formulating completely identical conclusions about the nature of the people's democratic regimes in all the countries of the East, especially in his conclusion that all the people's democratic countries of the East are special forms of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Zlatkin considered that in such countries as China and also, possibly, Korea, Vietnam and others, people's democracy actually is the democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry. But as regards Mongolia and other countries, lacking a proletariat, people's democracy is or will be in such countries a dictatorship of the toiling classes, a dictatorship of the peasantry of these countries, and this cannot be considered fantastic in our day, when the Soviet Union is in being.

A. M. Dyakov also spoke on the theme of the possibility of there being two different types of people's democracy in the East, one for countries possessing a working class and another for those without. In his view, the difference in level of economic development between one colonial country and another sets a special mark on the people's democratic revolution in each of these countries and on the government formed as a result of that revolution. In countries without a proletariat, people's soviets can be formed. The development of these countries towards socialism is made possibly by the aid of countries in which the proletariat has conquered power.

Y. P. Nasenko and A. I. Stadnichenko also took the same view as Zlatkin, but G. V. Astafyev disagreed, declaring that the petty-bourgeoisie and the peasantry (which forms the main part of it) cannot act as an independent political force in the fight against

feudalism and feudal survivals. The peasantry can come forward into the fight for people's democracy only under the leadership of the proletariat, however small in numbers the latter may be. A people's democratic government led by a party with a proletarian ideology is always, even where the peasantry makes up the overwhelming majority of the population, a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, i.e., of the peasantry advancing under the leadership of the proletariat.

Two views were expressed on the question of the present stage of people's democracy in the M.P.R. Zlatkin, arguing against the rapporteur, asserted that the M.P.R. has already passed the stage of creating the socio economic and cultural prerequisites for transition to the building of socialism. This stage was completed with the final fulfilment of the anti-feudal programme of people's democracy. Approximately from the year 1940 onwards Mongolia has been developing along the non-capitalist road to socialism. This is shown by Articles 1 and 4 of the constitution of the M.P.R. and by the present state of the country's economy, in which the socialist sector predominates in a number of branches. Mongolia is now approaching the problem of the socialist transformation of agriculture. Zlatkin's point of view was shared by Sikiryanskaya, who held that Mongolia, notwithstanding the peculiarities of its path of development, is today in the second stage of people's democracy, with the construction of socialism as its immediate task. Heifetz also agreed declaring that the M.P.R. today has a developed socialist structure and therefore it is impossible to consider it (as regards the tasks and nature of its people's democratic regime) on the same footing with China, Korea and Vietnam. The nature of people's democracy in the M.P.R., according to Heifetz, is the same as that of people's democracy in the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe.

P. P. Staritsina expressed a different view, claiming that petty-peasant production still predominates in the M.P.R. at the present time, based upon very backward pastoral nomadic cattle-raising and that the tasks of fighting against the survivals of feudalism in the economy and in men's minds are still in process of accomplishment there. Quoting in support of his view a great deal of factual material and documents of the M.P.R. Government, Staritsina questioned Zlatkin's statement that by 1940 the tasks of the anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic revolution had been completed in the M.P.R. and that Mongolia had already started on the road of socialist development. She mentioned a number of survivals of feudalism which still exist in the economy, in everyday life and in

ideology, and also individual instances of the appearances of capitalist elements in the *arats'* (herdsmen's) economy.

3. The period in which the people's democratic power arose.

Important differences of view became apparent also on the question of the period in which the people's democratic power arose in the East. Whereas comrades Martynov, Heifetz and Sikinyanskaya expressed the view that the people's democratic form arose mainly after the Second World War and that the M.P.R., which was formed earlier, cannot in all respects be grouped with the other people's democratic countries of the East, comrades Zlatkin, Nikiforov and Ehrenburg related the fight for people's democracy and the setting-up of people's democracy regimes to an earlier period.

Discussing the question of the period in which people's democracy arose in China, V. I. Nikiforov expressed the view that from 1917-1919 onward the Chinese Revolution had already taken the path of the fight for people's democracy, although the organs of people's democratic power in the present-day sense of the words arose only after the Second World War. In connexion with this idea, Nikiforov gave an important place in his contribution to a characterisation of the Chinese Soviets as a form of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Ehrenburg supported this view, holding that people's democracy as revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, as the dictatorship of the people, arose in China before the Second World War. There was no difference of principle between the character, i.e., the content, of the government at Fuichen in the so-called Soviet period and the character of the government in the Chinese People's Republic today.

Comrade Zlatkin put the period of the birth of people's democracy as far back as 1921. In his view, the first people's democracy in the world was the people's Republic of Bukhara. Thereafter, a new strategy appears—the bourgeois-democratic republic of a special type, with Mongolia as the example. The Communist Parties of China and Spain fought to transform their countries into republics of this kind. (See Decisions of the Extraordinary Plenum of the C.C. of the People's Revolutionary Party of Mongolia, May 1932, and the decision of the Sixth Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P. of China in 1938).

4. The importance of the experience of the Chinese Revolution and the ways of applying it in the revolutionary movement in other Eastern countries.

The majority of the comrades who took part in the discussion

mentioned the enormous importance of the experience of the Chinese revolution for other countries and its special role in the formulation of the programme of struggle for people's democracy in India and the countries of South-East Asia.

G. N. Voitinsky said that, on the basis of and as a result of the victory of people's democracy in China, the Communist Party of India was able to present to the Indian people a platform and a programme which proved that there is only one road to the independence and economic progress of India—the road of people's democracy.

G. I. Levinson said that the progressive influence of the great victory of the Chinese Revolution was and continues to be particularly strongly felt in the countries of South-East Asia. The reasons for this were: the geographical proximity of these countries to China, the cultural links which have existed for centuries between China and these countries, and the presence in these countries of an important Chinese population (amounting to 45 per cent. of the total in Malaya and 20 per cent. in Thailand). The Chinese population in these countries continues to maintain close political ties with China and plays an active political role in the life of the countries where it lives. All this facilitates the mastery by the S.E. Asian countries of the experience of the Chinese Revolution, which is keenly studied and spread by the Communist Parties of these countries.

The most important features of the Chinese experience, according to Levinson, are the union of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal currents of the revolution; the creation of an all-national united front; the experience of the conquest and consolidation of the hegemony of the proletariat within this front; and, finally, the experience of the creation of the armed forces of the revolution of the national liberation army. Examples of the role of the revolutionary army are seen in the present stages of the revolutionary movements in the Philippines, in Malaya, in Burma and, up to the proclamation of the Republic, in Vietnam.

Contrary to the rapporteur's view, Nikiforov considered that the experience of the Chinese people in the creation of a revolutionary army and in revolutionary war has great importance for the other Eastern countries. Showing, from the example of China, that the revolutionary army and revolutionary war are the consequences of the rule of imperialism and feudal relations, which give rise to (i) the need to develop the revolution in the form of a revolutionary

war, and (ii) the inequality of the development of the revolution, its prolonged character and the inevitability of its victory first in some parts of the country and then in others, Nikiforov declared that these conditions obtain also in other countries of the East, e.g. in India. One must therefore reckon that other Eastern peoples will wage revolutionary wars and create their revolutionary armies. As examples he cited the revolutionary happenings in Burma, Vietnam, Korea, Malaya and the Philippines, all of which countries have this feature in common.

The Indian specialists Balabushevich and Nasenko put forward a different view on the question of the revolutionary army. Referring to the very great importance of the Chinese experience and the broad utilisation of it by the Communist Parties of different Eastern countries, Balabushevich agreed with the rapporteur that it would be rash to see the Chinese Revolution and its path of development as a compulsory pattern for people's democratic revolutions in other Asian countries, and he demonstrated this from the example of India, where the incorrectness of mechanically transferring to India the experience of the Chinese Revolution, improperly understood, without taking into account the specific features of India, had been fully revealed. Nasenko also spoke on mistakes connected with the mechanical transference to India of the 'Chinese experience'.

The contributions of Dyakov, Balabushevich, Nasenko and Levinson, based on material from the present programmes of the Communist Parties of India and of the S.E. Asian countries and on concrete facts from the revolutionary activity of these parties, gave a broad review of the struggle of the Communist Parties and peoples of these countries for people's democracy and for the creation of a broad anti-imperialist and anti-feudal united front. The speakers showed that at the present time this struggle is being carried on on the basis of a correct mastery and utilisation (taking into account the specific conditions of each country) of the Lenin-Stalin teaching on the peculiarities of the national-colonial revolution in Eastern countries, of the experience of the great October socialist revolution and of the experience of the Chinese revolution. This was shown, in particular, in the latest programme of the Communist Party of India, which is a real programme of struggle for people's democracy and the creation of a broad national front in the concrete conditions of India.

(To be continued.)