

**Charles
Bettelheim**

**Class
Struggles
in the
USSR**



Second Period: 1923-1930

[Section 6 -- Sec. 2
of Part 4]

NOTE: *The translation of this book into English has given the author the opportunity to check a number of his references and, as a result, to revise parts of the text.*

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Key to abbreviations, initials, and Russian words used in the text

Artel	A particular form of producers' cooperative
Cadet party	The Constitutional Democratic Party
CLD	See STO
Cheka	Extraordinary Commission (political police)
Glavk	One of the chief directorates in the Supreme Council of the National Economy or in a people's commissariat
Gosplan	State Planning Commission
GPU	State Political Administration (political police)
Kulak	A rich peasant, often involved in capitalist activities of one kind or another, such as hiring out agricultural machinery, trade, moneylending, etc.
Mir	The village community
Narkomtrud	People's Commissariat of Labor
NEP	New Economic Policy
NKhSSSRv	National Economy of the USSR in (a certain year or period)
NKVD	People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs
OGPU	Unified State Political Administration (political police)
Orgburo	Organization Bureau of the Bolshevik Party
Politburo	Political Bureau of the Bolshevik Party
Rabfak	Workers' Faculty
Rabkrin	See RKI
RCP(B)	Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik): official

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	name of the Bolshevik Party, adopted by the Seventh Party Congress in March 1918
RKI	Workers' and Peasants' Inspection
RSDLP	Russian Social Democratic Labor Party
RSDLP(B)	Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolshevik)
RSFSR	Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic
Skhod	General assembly of a village
Sovkhoz	State farm
Sovnarkhoz	Regional Economic Council
Sovnarkom	Council of People's Commissars
SR	Socialist Revolutionary
STO	Council of Labor and Defense
Uchraspred	Department in the Bolshevik Party responsible

	for registering the members and assigning them to different tasks
Uyezd	County
Volost	Rural district
VSNKh	Supreme Economic Council
VTsIK	All-Russia Central Executive Committee (organ derived from the Congress of soviets)
Zemstvo	Administrative body in country areas before the Revolution

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2. The fight for rapid industrialization and for priority for heavy industry

From January 1928 on, elements of a political line different from that approved by the Fifteenth Congress began to be formulated explicitly. They made their appearance in the speeches delivered by Stalin in Siberia (at Novosibirsk, Omsk, Barnaul, etc.), where he went in order to call for vigorous application of the emergency measures.^[1]

In these speeches, Stalin did not speak only about those measures. He also dwelt upon the *technical superiority* of the collective and state farms. He stressed that these farms produced "marketable surpluses" larger than those produced by the kulak farms. He even mentioned quantitative targets which had not been contemplated by the Fifteenth Congress, saying that it was necessary to ensure that, "in the course of the next three or four years the collective farms and state farms, as deliverers of grain, are in a position to supply the state with at least one-third of the grain required."^[2]

I. The clashes in the first months of 1928

The three first months of 1928 were marked by the development of divergences (which were not publicly proclaimed) between, on the one hand, the "three" (Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky) and, on the other, Stalin, Molotov, and Kuibyshev. The remaining members of the PB vacillated, more or less, between these two camps.

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(a) The plenum of April 1928

During the plenum of April 1928 no direct clash occurred between Stalin and Bukharin. Nevertheless, each of them presented a different picture of the situation.

Stalin denounced those who wanted a policy for the rural areas that would "please everyone" saying that such a policy had "nothing in common with Leninism."^[3] On his part, Bukharin denounced the tendency of "certain people" to look upon the emergency measures as something

"almost normal," and to "exaggerate the recourse to administrative measures."^[4]

In general, however, the April plenum passed off without obvious tension between the members of the PB. Broadly, the resolution which was adopted on the question of procurement and preparations for the agricultural campaign of 1928-1929 repeated the theses of the Fifteenth Congress. *It explained the procurement crisis essentially by mistakes made in the application of economic policy*, referring only in a subordinate way to the "kulaks' offensive": it was the mistakes which had been made, said the resolution, that had been exploited by the kulaks and speculators. The resolution consequently stressed the need to establish "more correct proportions between the different elements in the economy."^[5]

(b) The first clashes in the summer of 1928

The resumed application of the emergency measures at the beginning of the summer of 1928 resulted in a sharp increase in the tension between the two tendencies that existed in the PB. From then on they fought each other harder and harder, each of them trying to win the support of those members of the PB who were still hesitant.

However, it was not in the PB that the first systematic criticism of the policy actually being followed by the Party's administrative organs was formulated. This was done by the Communist Frumkin, who was assistant commissar of finance. On June 15, 1928, he declared, in a letter addressed to the PB, that the policy applied since the Fifteenth Congress repre-

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sented a "new political line in relation to the countryside." He said that this line was harmful, having "led to lawless actions against the entire peasantry" and aroused anti-Soviet feeling among the peasants, a feeling which was "already beginning to spread to the working-class centres." According to Frumkin, the acts of sabotage being committed should be attributed primarily to the worsening of the internal situation, due to *political mistakes*, and only to a secondary extent to influences from outside.^[6]

The PB decided to circulate Frumkin's letter to the members of the CC, following it up with a reply from the PB itself. This reply was composed by Stalin personally, and was sent directly to the members of the CC, contrary to the decision taken by the PB. Bukharin, Tomsy, and Rykov, reacting against this irregularity, accused Stalin of substituting his individual leadership for the collective leadership of the PB, and treating the PB not as the Party's highest organ but as a mere advisory council attached to the general secretary's office. The other members of the PB did not see Stalin's initiative in this light, and agreed only to a mild reprimand, in the form of an admission by the PB that Stalin's reply to Frumkin had been "incomplete."^[7]

This incident was one of the first to indicate, more or less formally, *a serious departure from the principle that leadership was the prerogative of the PB*. It was the start of a gradual shifting of political authority, which passed increasingly out of the hands of the PB and the CC and into those of the general secretary. At that stage, however, the decisions taken by the PB and the CC continued to determine, in the main, the conditions governing application of the political line formally decided on by the Party's congresses and conferences, or the modifications introduced into this line.

During the summer of 1928 the divergences that developed within the PB were not always made explicit to the world outside (not even to the CC plenum of July 4-12, 1928). Yet these divergences were becoming sharper and sharper, and echoes of them even reached the CC. Until the end of the year, however, the myth of the "unity of the PB" was preserved.^[8]

At the meetings which preceded the plenum of July 1928 serious disagreements were expressed *within the PB*.^[9] Bukharin and Stalin clashed, coming close to a rupture between them. The former demanded that a general discussion be opened regarding all the problems posed by the procurement crisis, especially in connection with the tempo of industrialization, and Stalin was unwilling to agree to this. Bukharin prepared draft theses for submission to the CC. Stalin said that he accepted them, but the other members of the PB gave only partial approval. To avoid an open rupture, Bukharin accepted the text as amended (which, he said, included "nine-tenths" of his theses).^[10] The PB adopted this text unanimously, and submitted it to the CC.

This unanimity was only for show: in fact, the lines advocated by Stalin and Bukharin were more and more divergent. In his speech of July 9 Stalin defended the emergency measures and maintained that rapid industrialization would make it possible to strengthen the alliance with the peasantry. He expounded the idea that "the alliance between the working class and the peasantry cannot be stable and lasting . . . if the bond based on textiles is not supplemented by the bond based on metals."^[11]

In this speech Stalin brought up the crucial question of *how industrialization was to be financed*, and said that there could be only "two such sources: firstly, the working class, which creates values and advances our industry; secondly, the peasantry."^[12] Thus for the first time he systematically supported an idea very close to that of "primitive accumulation," advocated by Preobrazhensky (whose ideas had previously been condemned by the Party), namely, that the peasantry must of necessity pay relatively high prices for industrial products and be "more or less underpaid" for their own produce. Stalin explained: "It is something in the nature of a 'tribute', of a supertax, which we are compelled to levy for the time being in order to preserve and accelerate our present rate of industrial development, . . . in order to raise further the standard of life of the rural population and then to abolish altogether this additional tax, these 'scissors' between town and country."^[13]

In a speech made next day, July 10, Bukharin, while not

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openly attacking Stalin's position, took what was practically the opposite view. He stressed the idea that steady industrialization could not be achieved without a prosperous agriculture, whereas the requisition measures were causing agriculture to decline. He asserted that mass discontent was developing in the villages, which constituted a threat to Soviet power and risked uniting the middle peasants around the kulaks. While agreeing that the emergency measures had been needed in the past, he declared that the CC should abolish them for the future. Economically, he said, they no longer made any substantial contribution, and politically they were producing harsh consequences of a deeply negative character, "bringing us into conflict with the broadest strata of the peasantry." He emphasized the need to distinguish clearly between pressure exerted on the *kulak*, in conformity with the Party's decisions, and pressure exerted on the *middle peasant*, which was inadmissible, since it jeopardized the worker-peasant alliance. He warned against the desire to advance simultaneously in all directions: certain balances ought to be maintained, through correct planning, and price policy should be improved so as to strengthen the alliance with the peasantry. Bukharin ended by opposing exaggerated state centralization such as would stifle initiative.^[14]

Tomsky supported Bukharin's views, as also did Andreyev, who spoke about peasant riots;^[15] Osinsky, who called for an increase in the prices paid to the peasants;^[16] and Rykov, who criticized the emergency measures. Molotov and Kaganovich, on the other hand, supported the emergency measures and the price policy which had been followed so far.

The plenum itself learned little of the respective positions of the two opposing tendencies. The resolution put before it by the PB was apparently more favorable to the theses of the "Right," coming down in favor of an upward readjustment of grain prices and repeating most of Bukharin's arguments.^[17] The usual formulations regarding the relation between industry and agriculture were repeated, such as this: "While industry itself is a powerful drawing-force for agriculture, making possible its transformation on the basis of socialist indus-

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trialization, agriculture constitutes the foundation for the development of industry. . . ."^[18]

The resolution emphasized that *collective farms must be formed only on a voluntary basis* ^[19] and explained the procurement crisis mainly by *economic imbalances and political mistakes*, which capitalist elements in town and country had been able to exploit. It acknowledged that revolutionary legality had been violated, arousing protests among the peasants and enabling "counter-revolutionary elements to spread gossip about N.E.P. being abolished."^[20]

Altogether, the voting of the resolution on the economic situation seems to have reflected "victory" for those who were soon to be denounced as representatives of a "Right deviation." The resolution did indeed embody their principal theses. This was how the vote was usually interpreted by persons who were already aware of the existence of a serious conflict of tendencies within the leadership.^[21]

In fact, however, during the plenum of July 1928 *the Right suffered a defeat*. It actually lost ground. The resolution adopted merely repeated what had already been set forth in the resolutions of the Fifteenth Congress, while the theory of the "tribute" to be levied from the peasantry *had not aroused real objections* on the part of the majority in the CC. On this essential point, the July plenum marked the implicit triumph of a thesis which the future majority in the Party leadership would strive to put into effect in order to realize the policy of industrialization which was to be adopted a few months later.

II. The deepening of the split in the Party leadership in the late summer and autumn of 1928

Immediately after the closure of the plenum the positions of the Right were attacked in various ways by their opponents, who developed their offensive first of all on the international plane.

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(a) The extension of the divergences to international questions

The first of these attacks was launched against Bukharin during the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (July 17 September 1, 1928). As chairman of that organization, Bukharin presented the principal reports. These contained an evaluation of the situation and prospects in international affairs which resulted not from the discussions at the July plenum of the CC but from discussions which had not been published.^[22] According to echoes from these, and also to subsequent discussions, the disagreements between Bukharin and the majority in the CC (which did not emerge publicly at this time) related to the tactics to be adopted by the Comintern in a situation when a world capitalist crisis was in the offing.

For Bukharin, the development of an economic crisis in the advanced capitalist countries *would not lead directly to a prospect of revolution*. He thought that the metropolitan centers imperialism would not experience internal collapse in the years ahead, and that the center of gravity of the world revolution lay in the countries of the East (thereby developing further one of the ideas set forth by Lenin in his last writings^[23]).

Bukharin and his supporters therefore condemned as being "radically wrong, harmful and grossly mistaken from the tactical standpoint" the statement that the crisis of Western capitalism would prove to be the eve of a revolutionary upsurge.^[24] Bukharin thought that it was necessary to declare in favor of unity in the struggle of the working class, and not to launch into a sectarian line that would result in "isolation" of the Communist Parties, with a tragic outcome. The characterization of Social Democracy as "Social-Fascism"^[25] seemed to him extremely dangerous: the ideological struggle against the Social Democratic parties must, of course, lead to their being denounced as bourgeois parties, but *not* to identifying them with Fascist organizations.

Stalin and the majority at the plenum of July 1928 appreciated the situation differently. *As they saw it, the*

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advanced capitalist countries were then on the brink of revolutionary upheavals,^[26] and this dictated three tactical requirements: (1) refusal of any collaboration with the Social Democrats, and the need to create new, revolutionary trade unions, so as to take advantage of the new situation (which corresponded to what was called the "third period"^[27]; (2) destruction of reformist influence over the working class, for in this new situation the Social Democratic parties became the main enemy of the working class; (3) purging of the Communist parties of all vacillating elements, and especially of the "Right deviationists," who, in the existing circumstances, became the main danger within the Communist movement. In his speeches and in the theses he put before the Comintern Congress,^[28] Bukharin, taking as his point of departure the fact that the Social Democratic parties and the trade unions under their influence embraced the immense majority of the European workers, refused to draw a line through these organizations, to regard them as "Social-fascist" and denounce them as the main enemy of the labor movement. Taking account, however, of attitudes which had been revealed during the plenum of July 1928, he made use of a cautious formulation: he said that "social-democracy has social-fascist tendencies," but at once added that "it would be foolish to lump social-democracy together with fascism." He opposed the idea that Communists might ally themselves with Fascists against Socialists, saying: "Our tactics do not exclude the possibility of appealing to social-democratic workers and even to some lower social-democratic organizations, but we cannot appeal to fascist organizations."^[29]

These formulations were criticized by the delegation of the Soviet Communist Party, which put down a number of amendments,^[30] thereby seriously undermining, for the first time, Bukharin's international prestige, and splitting the Congress into two tendencies, one "pro-Bukharin" and the other "pro-Stalin." In fact, Stalin, who was unusually active at this Congress of the Comintern, came out openly against Bukharin.^[31] He was elected to the Congress Presidium, to the Program Commission, and to the Political Commissions entrusted

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with drawing up the theses on the international situation and the tasks of the Comintern.

The adoption of important amendments to his theses meant a grave defeat for Bukharin. It revealed that he was in a minority in the Soviet delegation, so that his standing within his own party was lowered. Furthermore, the content of some of the amendments passed was later to be

used against Bukharin and his supporters in the Bolshevik Party.^[32]

(b) The denunciation of a "Right danger" and of a "conciliationist mood" in the Bolshevik Party

During the Sixth Congress no mention was made of the existence of a "Right danger" in the Soviet Communist Party -- only in the foreign sections of the Comintern. On September 18, 1928, however, *Pravda* denounced a "basically Right-wing mood" alleged to be present in the Soviet Party. A month later, the problem of this "Right danger" was put on the order of the day by Stalin in a speech delivered on October 19, 1928, before the Moscow Party Committee.^[33]

In this speech he still spoke only of a "Right danger," not of a deviation in the strict sense. He referred to "a tendency, an inclination that has not yet taken shape, it is true, and is perhaps not yet consciously realised, but nevertheless a tendency of a section of the Communist Party to depart from the general line of our Party in the direction of bourgeois ideology."^[34] Stalin went on to define what this Right tendency consisted of, saying that it "*underestimates* the strength of our enemies, the strength of capitalism." This led, he claimed, to a readiness to make concessions to capitalism, to calling for a slowing-down of the pace of development of Soviet industry, to treating the question of collective and state farms as secondary, and so on. He linked the existence of this danger with the fact that "we live in a small-peasant country" and that the roots of capitalism had, therefore, not been torn out, which implied "the *possibility* of the restoration of capitalism in our country."^[35]

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Stalin said that the danger of a "Left" (Trotskyist) deviation still existed, but that the Right danger was now more important, because less obvious. He therefore called for stress to be laid upon the Right danger, though without relaxing the fight against the "Left." Finally, he said that the danger of a Right deviation was present in the Party at almost all levels, either in the form of representatives of this ideological tendency or in that of a conciliatory mood. The latter, he alleged, had been shown even in the CC at the July plenum. Nevertheless, "in the Political Bureau there are neither Right nor 'Left' deviations nor conciliators towards those deviations. This must be said quite categorically."^[36]

Thus, at the end of 1928, public criticism of Bukharin's positions began to take shape, although neither he nor Rykov nor Tomsky was attacked by name. Not considering themselves officially as being the targets aimed at, the three associated themselves with the denunciation of the "Rights" and the "conciliators." Their position was consequently to become practically untenable when they found these epithets applied to themselves.

(c) Bukharin's attempt at a counterattack

All the same, Bukharin did not remain silent at the end of 1928. He even tried to counterattack in a long article^[37] published in *Pravda* (which he edited) on September 30, 1928, under the title, "Notes of an Economist."^[38]

This article constituted an implicit reply to Kuibyshev's statements in defense of the new program of industrial development put forward by the VSNKh, which included a rate of development higher than had been provided for in June. An increase of 20.1 percent in gross industrial production was proposed for 1928-1929, with one-third of all investment allocated to the building of new factories. These figures, already very high, were regarded as inadequate by the leaders of industry, whose views Kuibyshev supported: they refused to contemplate any

reduction in industrial investment, despite

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the difficult budgetary situation. Kuibyshev accused of "defeatism" those who criticized this program, and he asserted the need, at all costs, to concentrate investment in heavy industry, even if this meant provoking economic imbalances and "discontent and active resistance" on the part of the population.^[39]

Bukharin vigorously opposed a conception of an industrialization to be achieved at the expense of the standard of living of the masses and, as he thought, first and foremost, at the expense of agriculture and of the peasants, thereby destroying the foundations of the worker-peasant alliance. Bukharin's article remained on the terrain of theory and principles: he did not openly attack any specifically defined "tendency" still within the Party, but rather the ideas of the Trotskyist "super-industrializers." Indeed, his real "political target" could be recognized only by those, in the leading circles of the Party and of the state machine, who were already aware of the discussions that had been going on. At that period, as has been said, this was practically true, also so far as the "political target" aimed at by the attacks on the "Right deviation" was concerned.

In his "Notes of an Economist" Bukharin developed systematically the principle (laid down by the Fifteenth Congress) that it was necessary to work out a plan which would permit harmonious development of industry and agriculture and of the different sectors of industry themselves. According to him, this plan must respect certain proportions dictated by the demands of expanded reproduction of the different branches of the economy. It must not give one-sided preference to one branch at the expense of the others, leaving these to stagnate, to lag behind or even to regress.

In referring to the demands of expanded reproduction, Bukharin emphasized that if these were not respected, the economic and political consequences could be grave. He said that, in "the society of the transition period," account must be taken of the relations shown in the diagrams of Marx's *Capital*, volume II, so as to ensure "the conditions for exact co-

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ordination of the different spheres of production and consumption and of the different branches of production among themselves, or, in other words, to establish the conditions for a 'dynamic economic equilibrium.'" And he added: "Serious mistakes in the direction of the economy, violating the fundamental proportions of the economy . . . can cause regroupings of classes to take place which would be extremely unfavorable to the proletariat."^[40]

Bukharin described refusal to strive for *correct proportions* in the development of the different sectors of the economy as a surrender "to petty-bourgeois indecision: 'It will work out all right, one way or another -- something good will come of it.'"^[41]

Taking up the problem of transferring to industry part of the value created in agriculture, he agreed that this could and even must take place, but he opposed too large a transfer, *which would hinder expanded reproduction in agriculture*. On this subject he wrote:

Naively, the ideologists of Trotskyism suppose that by squeezing as much as possible each year out of the peasantry so as to invest it in industry we could ensure the fastest rate of development for industry in general. But, clearly, this is not so. The highest permanent rate of development is to be obtained by a combination in which industry will grow on the basis of an economy in rapid growth. . . . This presupposes that rapid real accumulation can take place in agriculture, something which is remote from the Trotskyist policy. . . . *The Trotskyists do not understand that the development of industry depends on the development of agriculture.*

At the same time Bukharin attacked those whom he called "the petty-bourgeois 'knights' who stand forth to forbid our imposing any burden at all upon the agriculturists for the benefit of industry," and whose standpoint was that of "the survival of petty economy for ever and ever," adding that these "ideologists of the 'farmer' prepare the way for real kulak elements."

Bukharin concluded: "While the Trotskyists do not understand that the development of industry depends on the de-

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velopment of agriculture, the ideologists of petty-bourgeois conservatism do not understand that the development of agriculture is dependent on industry. . . ."^[42]

Concretely, Bukharin accepted the maintenance of investment at the level attained, but not the way this investment was distributed. He declared that the future growth of investment required that the situation of agriculture be improved. For him, refusal to recognize this requirement meant not realizing that *agriculture was the basis for the actual development of industry* (as was still acknowledged to be the case in the resolution of the plenum of July 1928). As he saw it, steps must be taken quickly to overcome the inadequacy of the production of grain and of industrial crops (sugar beet, cotton, flax, oil seeds, etc.), and it must be appreciated that the shortage of industrial products and raw materials was due to the growth in the investment of money running ahead of the growth of production, with the result *that industry was lagging behind the demand engendered by its own rate of expansion*. This being so, to speed up the tempo would merely worsen the shortages and protract the period in which factories were being built thereby adversely affecting the long-term rate of development of the economy as a whole.^[43]

Bukharin therefore wanted an upper limit to be fixed for the expansion of industrial investment, so that the sums allocated to industry could be employed in "real" construction. "It is not possible," he said, "to build today's factories with tomorrow's bricks."^[44] In this connection he denounced what he called "a kind of fetishism of money" the effect of which was that "people think that, if they have money, they can automatically have everything else," whereas it is *material shortages* that have to be reckoned with at each moment, so as to overcome them in reality.^[45]

The article called for costs of production to be reduced drastically, through an appeal to the masses combined with the use of science. In Bukharin's view, no appeal to the masses could succeed unless "over-centralisation" was renounced, and that meant taking "some steps towards the Commune State," together with a struggle against "the elements of a

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bureaucratic degeneration absolutely indifferent to the interests of the masses," so denouncing "functionaries . . . who are ready to draw up any sort of plan" -- a phrase aimed directly, though without naming them, at the specialists of the VSNKh.^[46]

On the theoretical plane this article amounted, as can be seen, to a systematic onslaught on the increasingly great priority accorded, in a one-sided way, to investment in industry, and on the claim that this priority would make possible the solving of the problems of agriculture, and particularly that of grain procurement. The argument set out showed that, in the immediate future, such a conception could only worsen the economic situation and the tension between the Soviet government and the peasantry.

This article of Bukharin's was far from answering all the questions that had arisen at that time in the domains of economics and politics. It had the twofold defect of not showing *how to help*

the poor and middle peasants to advance along the road to collective forms of production (failing to show the decisive role that ideological and political struggle must play in doing this), and of not defining what *concrete measures might be taken on the basis of the practical experience* of the peasants themselves. Despite these weaknesses, however, the article had the merit that it stressed (referring, moreover, to the decisions of principle previously taken by the Party) the necessity of *not attacking the standard of living of the masses*; of respecting certain *objective relations* between consumption and accumulation, between industry and agriculture, and between heavy and light industry; and of not setting targets which failed to correspond to the material and human resources available, and which, instead of enabling the economy to operate with *reserves*, actually multiplied shortages.

"Notes of an Economist" also indicated the negative consequences, from the angle of the class struggle, of failure to respect a number of objective requirements. Yet this article made practically no political impact at all: as it attacked, in principle, only certain conceptions which had been con-

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demned long since -- those of the Trotskyists -- it did not give rise to any real discussion.

(d) The open offensive against the "Right deviation" and the plenum of November 1928

At the meeting (November 16-24, 1928) of the plenum of the CC an offensive was launched against what was thereafter officially called the "Right deviation" -- without its principal representatives being named as yet. It was still claimed that there were no adherents of this deviation in the PB, nor any "conciliators" toward it. This statement conformed, moreover, to a request presented by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky, who thereby shut the door on any possibility of discussing, clearly and precisely -- at least at the level of the CC -- the different conceptions held and the significance of the resulting divergences of view.

From the Trotsky Archives and Kamenev's notes on his talks with Bukharin (their meeting on July 11 had been followed by several others) we know that, during the meeting of the PB which preceded the plenum, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky had asked Stalin to deny the "baseless rumours" about divergences in the PB. They also asked for a general discussion to be opened on the situation in the country. Though given satisfaction on the first point,^[47] they were rebuffed on the second.

Following this rebuff, and that given to their demand for a reduction in the proposals for investments, which they considered to be too large and liable to interfere seriously with the regular supply of goods to the population, Rykov (who was then chairman of the Sovnarkom) and Bukharin wished to resign from the responsible posts they held, so as to dissociate themselves from the line which had been adopted and which they saw as running counter to the decisions of the Fifteenth Congress. After a compromise had been reached on some secondary matters, they withdrew their resignations: had they gone through with them, this would have started a crisis of

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leadership and made it very hard to persist with the policy they criticized.

The plenum of November 1928 was dominated by Stalin's speech on "[Industrialisation of the Country and the Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)".^[48] This speech contained some

propositions which, though they did not appear word for word in the draft resolution before the plenum, Stalin considered were implicit in this resolution.^[49] They expressed, in fact, the way in which Stalin, from this time on, was to present the problem of industrialization and collectivization. We must therefore examine closely these propositions destined to play such a decisive role, for they constituted the initial formulation of a new political line which broke with the resolutions previously adopted by the Party Congresses and endorsed the actual practice of the economic and administrative organs.

*(e) The beginning of a break with the
Bolshevik Party's previous line*

Two of Stalin's propositions call for special attention.

*(1) Stalin's view on industrialization and
the expansion of industry producing
means of production*

He considered the key factor in industrialization to be "the development of the production of the means of production, while ensuring *the greatest possible speed of this development*." ^[50] This contradicted the resolution of the fundamental role of agricultural development in the continuity and maintenance of the balanced character of industrialization. By stressing development "at the greatest possible speed" of the production of means of production (which meant heavy industry), he ignored the need to respect certain ratios between the development of the different branches of the economy: hence his assertion that what was needed was "the maximum capital investment in industry."^[51]

This assertion also broke with the resolutions previously

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adopted by the Party's congresses and plenums.^[52] It went even further than what was said in the resolution put before the plenum of November 1928 by the PB, which spoke merely of "the most rapid development possible of the socialist sector of the economy," of an "intense rate of development of industry," with the word "maximum" used only in relation to "the mobilisation of the Party and of the worker and peasant masses."

Subsequently, the idea of the necessity for maximum investment in heavy industry was to be repeated many times, to the point of affirming that "the basic economic law of socialism" was "inseparably linked with the law of priority development of industries producing means of production,"^[53] this law having allegedly been propounded by Lenin. It is true that Lenin spoke of the necessity for priority development of the production of means of production, but when he did so he was speaking of capitalism. In his polemic with the Narodniks, Lenin referred to this "priority" as being related to the capitalist forms of uneven development. Under capitalism, he said, "to expand production . . . it is first of all necessary . . . to expand that department of social production which manufactures means of production . . .," adding that "it is well known that the law of development of capital is that constant capital grows faster than variable capital. . . ."^[54]

This law of capitalism is a consequence of its contradictions: it tends to develop the productive forces even when this development keeps coming up against the limits to growth in the masses' capacity to consume which are set by the striving for profit.

In Stalin's speech of November 19, 1928, the problems of industrialization and of

"development of the production of the means of production at the greatest possible speed" were not yet presented in terms of a "basic law." They were considered from the angle of the conditions, both external and internal, in which the Soviet Union was then placed.^[55]

Examination of the external conditions, with which Stalin began, showed that the USSR was "a country whose technical equipment is terribly backward," while being surrounded by

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many capitalist countries with much more highly developed industrial technique. Hence, said Stalin, there was a contradiction between the extremely backward technique possessed by the Soviet Union and its soviet system, which was "the most advanced type of state power in the world."^[56] This contradiction must be resolved if the Soviet Union was not to find itself in a situation with no way out.

Stalin "generalized" the argument by saying that what was at stake was not only the building of socialism but the defense of the country's independence: "economic backwardness," he said, had been "an evil" even before the Revolution -- and in this connection he referred to Peter the Great, who "feverishly built mills and factories"^[57] in order to defend Russia.

Developing his argument, Stalin quoted from Lenin's article "[The Impending Catastrophe And How to Combat It](#)," written in September 1917. But, although this article does indeed say that it is necessary to surpass, as quickly as possible, "the economically advanced countries," it says nothing about *maximum* investment in industry or about *priority* development for the industries producing means of production.

As regards the "internal conditions" invoked to justify the tempo of industrialization proposed, Stalin abandoned the formula according to which agriculture was the *foundation* of the economy, while industry was its *driving force*. He now put forward the idea of "industry as the main foundation of our entire national economy" and of the need to "reconstruct agriculture on a new technical basis,"^[58] which would require the provision of the maximum quantity of instruments and means of production. Emphasis was placed here upon *technical changes*, not on changes in production relations.

(2) *Stalin's view on the reconstruction of the technical basis of agriculture*

Referring to a speech by Lenin at the Eighth Congress of Soviets (in December 1920, well before Lenin's writings on cooperation and material aid to the poor and middle peasants), Stalin expounded the second theme of his speech. This was

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the affirmation that the rate of development of agriculture was lagging behind that of industry, and that this fact accounted for the grain problem, which could be solved only by reconstructing agriculture "*on a new technical basis*."^[59]

Here we observe a constant sliding from consideration of one type of contradiction to consideration of another type, these two types being: (1) the contradictions arising from the existence of *two social forms of production* (state-owned industry, socialist in character, on the one hand, and petty peasant production, on the other); and (2) the contradictions due to the existence of two "technical bases" of production (the up-to-date, large-scale industrial production units, on the one hand, and on the other, "backward" small-scale production). The argument aimed at justifying development of the industries producing means of production at

the greatest possible speed brought forward as the "principal contradiction" in this domain the existence of two technical bases. *Changing the social forms of production seems here to be subordinate to changing technique and developing heavy industry.*

Yet there is no such subordination. Socialist development of collective forms of production is a matter above all of ideological and political class struggle, not of technique.^[60] This development makes it possible in a first phase (as was proved by the experience of the "spontaneous" forms of collective labor and production which appeared during the NEP) to increase production without providing "new" technical means on a massive scale. Actually, in 1928 a far from negligible increase in production by the poor and middle peasants could have been achieved merely by supplying simple instruments of labor which would not have necessitated huge investments in heavy industry.

More generally, the idea of eliminating as quickly as possible the diversity of the "technical bases" of production does not correspond to any objective requirement for the building of socialism. This can, on the contrary, be carried out on the basis of a great diversity of techniques, by "walking on both legs," as they say in China nowadays. Such diversity makes it possible to *advance faster*, without any sharp increase in the

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rate of investment, and to progress steadily, without excessive strain, so that increasing mastery of increasingly advanced means of production is ensured, in agriculture and industry alike.

The possibilities of *technical diversification* opened up by socialism, and the varying forms that can be assumed by mastery of technique on the part of the direct producers, were denied by Stalin in his speech of November 19, 1928. In so doing he went against the Party's earlier resolutions and against Lenin's last writings. We see outlined here a path of economic development dominated by expanded production of means of production. It is upon this that the success of collectivization is made to depend -- collectivization being seen not as the outcome of the struggle of the poor and middle peasants to free themselves from production relations that oppress them and make possible their exploitation, but as a *technical change* having the purpose of increasing agricultural production and, in particular, *the marketable part of this production* which the state is allowed to acquire at stable and relatively low prices.^[61]

Thus, Stalin's speech of November 19, 1928, opened the way to a certain conception of industrialization and of agricultural development which enjoyed the approval of the VSNKh and of the leaders of industry. It accorded priority to industry and to heavy industry in the first place, and it made agricultural development depend on increased industrial production.

Apparently, however, this path of development was not the only one considered. Stalin's speech also assigns great importance in principle to immediate aid to the farms of the poor and middle peasants, to multiplying the *links* between these farms and the trading apparatuses of the state and the cooperatives (by extending a system of contracts between them, providing for reciprocal obligations) and to increasing forthwith the supply of goods and credits to these farms. From this standpoint, the NEP did not seem to have been abandoned, and transition to collective forms of production remained subject to the explicit wishes of the poor and middle peasants.^[62]

In reality, however, the magnitude of the investments pro-

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vided for heavy industry, and the aggravation of the shortage of industrial products supplied to the rural areas which resulted from this (especially as regards means of production such as the

poor and middle peasants could use), increasingly negated, at ground level, the intentions expressed regarding aid to be given to the bulk of the peasant producers. Consequently, the *immediate possibilities* of growth in agricultural production, and, above all, in grain production, continued to be gravely compromised. Also compromised was the strengthening of the worker-peasant alliance, for the policy that was pursued in practice tended to demand more and more produce from the peasant masses without the necessary measures being taken to increase the supply, in exchange, of the industrial products that the poor and middle peasants needed.

The adoption by the plenum of the "control figures" for 1928-1929,^[63] and the effort made to put them into effect, giving priority to heavy industry,^[64] helped to worsen the discontent which had been gathering in the rural areas since the beginning of 1928. In this way, a basis was created for a real threat to the Soviet power, through the dissatisfied peasants rallying behind the kulaks. At the same time, the possibility of drawing the mass of the poor and middle peasants on to the path of collectivization on a *voluntary basis* was reduced because of the weakening of the Party's leading role among the peasantry.

III. The open split in the Party leadership

During the winter of 1928-1929 the way in which the decisions of the plenum of November 1928 were applied, and in which the targets of the First Five-Year Plan were defined, confirmed that the basic principles of the NEP were being increasingly abandoned. An open split became inevitable, between the positions of Bukharin and his supporters (who wanted to lay down a path of industrialization that would remain within the framework of the NEP) and the positions of

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those who considered, in fact (if not in words), that rapid industrialization of the country was now incompatible with maintenance of the NEP.

The articles, speeches, and declarations of the supporters of the two contrasting policies of industrialization resembled less and less a discussion aimed at convincing those who held a different view: debate gave way to polemic, and *reciprocal accusations* tended to take the place of arguments and analysis of the concrete situation. It is therefore futile to try to reconstitute a "debate" which was no debate. Instead, we must try to bring out those few facts and arguments which, in spite of everything, were put forward, on one side or the other, during the winter of 1928-1929 and at the beginning of spring 1929, and which enable us to grasp better the political and ideological meaning of the split which was consummated at the plenum of April 1929.

(a) The positions defended by Bukharin during the winter of 1928-1929

It was in the winter of 1928-1929 that Bukharin defended his positions publicly for the last time, while continuing to expound his views before the PB and the CC. He was, of course, repeating many of his earlier formulations, but these were often articulated in a new way and, on certain points, were more fully elaborated.

One argument frequently advanced by the supporters of accelerated industrialization (which was to be carried out "for the time being" at the expense of agriculture) was that an imperialist attack on the Soviet Union was probably imminent. Bukharin did not deny that this danger existed. However, his analyses led him to emphasize especially the revolutionary role of the peoples of Asia and also to declare that *the decisive factor in the defence of the Soviet Union*

was its internal political situation -- in particular, the firmness of the worker-peasant alliance. To take a road which would compromise this alliance for the sake of promoting a more rapid

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industrialization program therefore seemed to him extremely dangerous.^[65]

Bukharin emphasized the conditions for the strengthening of the worker-peasant alliance, largely repeating the content of Lenin's last articles, which, he said, set out "a vast long-term plan for all our Communist work. . . ." As Bukharin saw it, the future of the revolution depended on a firm and trusting alliance with the peasantry, and it was essential for the Party to seek to strengthen this alliance through organizational and cultural work that took account of the peasants' interests. He warned against the idea of a "third revolution" which would impose collective forms of production from above. He maintained that industrialization and accumulation must be carried out in a way that respected conditions of exchange which were acceptable to the peasants, through efforts aimed at economy and efficiency. These themes were in conformity with the resolutions of the Fifteenth Congress, but when reaffirmed at the beginning of 1929 they looked like a criticism of the political line which had been followed de facto for the past year. They brought many attacks on Bukharin from the supporters of maximizing investment in heavy industry. One of these, Postyshev, described Bukharin as a "vulgar peasant philosopher."^[66]

In the same period as Bukharin's articles were published there appeared in *Pravda*, on January 20, 1929, an article by Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, entitled "Lenin and the Building of Collective Farms." Recalling the decisive place given by Lenin to the development of cooperation and the formation of collective farms, she emphasized that he had said that the peasants ought not to be forced to take the path of cooperation and collective farming against their will. She recalled also the importance ascribed by Lenin to Engels' article published in *Die Neue Zeit* in 1894 ("The Peasant Question in France and Germany"), in which he said that socialism would not expropriate the peasant but would help him to go over to cooperation and communes by using the power of example, and showing all the patience needed. In conclusion, she said that she thought it stupid to try and upset "from above" the

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economic relations in which the middle peasant was involved, and to resort to measures of coercion in order to do so.

This article of Krupskaya's came as a reply to those among the supporters of absolute priority for heavy industry who were declaring themselves increasingly in favor of forced collectivization. Krupskaya defended, on this point, the same positions as Bukharin.

The latter's public statements accounted for only part of his writing at that time. He also prepared a "platform" destined for the PB. He read this at the meeting of the PB held on January 30, 1929, and came under violent attack from the advocates of the speediest possible development of heavy industry. His position, which was supported by Rykov and Tomsky, did not apparently give rise to a genuine fundamental discussion. A few days earlier (on January 20, the day when Trotsky was expelled from the Soviet Union), a clandestine Trotskyist sheet had published a report of the talks between Bukharin and Kamenev, and it was essentially Bukharin's conduct -- described as "factional" -- that was attacked by his opponents.^[67]

All that we know of the "platform" presented by Bukharin on January 30 and of the declaration made by the "three" on February 9 are a few quotations -- which, nevertheless, enable us to reconstitute the bulk of what they said during that session of the PB.

One of the reproaches addressed by the three to the executive organs related to their failure to observe the decisions taken by the Fifteenth Congress and by the plenums of the CC regarding help to the farms of the poor and middle peasants. The notion of industrialization based on a "tribute" to be levied from the peasantry was also subjected to systematic criticism. The tribute idea entailed, as the three saw it, the risk that it could lead to "military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry." These terms were reproduced and condemned in the PB resolution of February 9.^[68] In the report he presented to the plenum of April 1929 Stalin was to defend the idea of the tribute, while maintaining that it was inconceivable for the peasantry to be "exploited" in the Soviet Union.^[69]

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Bukharin considered it necessary to develop collective farming, but he refused to see this process as dependent on measures of coercion aimed primarily at using it as a means to serve an industrialization policy which assigned very high priority to heavy industry. Bukharin stressed that development of collective farming must be associated with a real *ideological struggle*, and he recalled, in this connection, what Lenin had written on the necessity of a *cultural revolution*.

Bukharin's opposition to the levying of a tribute from the peasantry as the basis for industrialization was bound up, first and foremost, with his conception of the worker-peasant alliance, which, he considered, must be based on a policy of systematically reducing the gap between the standard of living of the peasant masses and that of the working class. This attitude of his was inspired also by his view that important sources for accumulation and industrial development existed elsewhere than in agriculture. What was referred to here was, especially, the possibility of cutting down the size of the administrative machinery of the state, through greater decentralization and the freeing of local initiative that would make possible "real participation by the real masses" (as Lenin put it) in developing the productive forces.^[70] Yet Bukharin did not really ask himself *why* what he was advocating had not actually been done, although this same line had long figured in the Party's resolutions. Formulating *this* question would have obliged him also to question himself regarding the social forces and social relations which obstructed the actual execution of some of the Party's decisions, and the forms of struggle that would make it possible to break through these obstacles: but, then, men never pose problems to themselves for which they cannot find solutions.

At the meetings of the PB in March and at the beginning of April 1929, held to prepare the plenum of the CC on April 16-23 and the Sixteenth Party Conference on April 23-29, Bukharin and Rykov put forward counterproposals to the draft of the Five-Year Plan which had been submitted to the PB. This draft provided for investment in the state sector to be

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multiplied by three or four, depending on the variant, and for 80 percent of this investment to be destined for heavy industry. Their counterproposals were rejected, together with a draft plan submitted by Rykov which aimed at developing agriculture, seen as the basis for industrial development. After this plan had been rejected, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky abstained from taking part in the vote by which the PB gave its approval to the industrial provisions of the Five-Year Plan.

At the same time as they criticized the economic conceptions of the advocates of one-sided priority for the development of heavy industry and of financing this development by a massive transfer of resources from agriculture to industry, the three, and Bukharin in particular, also criticized *the developments that were going on in the superstructure*. Their criticism related to the *distention of the state apparatus* and the increase in it that could be foreseen if collectivization was not carried out voluntarily but so as to serve as a device for extracting a tribute from agriculture.^[71]

Bukharin also criticized various aspects of the way the Party functioned. His arguments concerned primarily the content of the discussions that were held in the Party -- these, he said, dealt mainly with internal problems of organization, instead of analyzing the concrete situation and systematically consulting the masses:

Problems of great seriousness are not even discussed. The entire country is deeply concerned about the grain problem, and the problem of food supplies. Yet the conferences of the proletarian party in power remain silent. The whole country feels that all is not well with the peasantry. Yet our Party conferences say nothing. . . . This policy fails to face up to the real difficulties, it's no kind of policy at all. The working class must be told *the truth about the situation*, we must take account of the *needs of the masses*, and in our management of their affairs we must identify ourselves with the masses.^[72]

The stress laid on Soviet democracy, on the role of the masses, and on organizing the supervision that the masses should exercise over the various apparatuses, corresponded to

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a long-standing preoccupation of Bukharin's. This was reaffirmed in an article he published in *Pravda* on December 2, 1928, and in his speech on "Lenin's political testament," in which he called for multiplication of "all possible forms of association by the working people so as at all costs, to avoid bureaucratisation," and to ensure that the Party knew the feeling of the masses and their reasons for discontent. This attitude of Bukharin's was later to be charged against him as showing a tendency to bow before "the backwardness and discontent of the masses."^[73]

Bukharin's argument was also aimed at what he regarded as the development of a sort of blind discipline in the Party. He called on Party members "to take not a single word on trust . . . to utter not a single word against their conscience." He appealed to Bolshevism's tradition of critical thought.^[74] For Bukharin there was a connection between the tendency to give up critical thought and what he saw as the gradual disappearance of collective leadership by the CC, in favor of the growing concentration of authority in the hands of one man.

This challenge to the type of discipline practiced in the Party was rejected by the majority of the PB, who insisted on the need for "iron discipline" and emphasized the weak points in the positions of the three. The absence of a sufficiently precise statement of *how* they conceived the conditions for transition to collective forms of agricultural production, their tendency to lay special stress on the *economic* forms of the worker-peasant alliance (based on the supply of consumer goods to the villages), their reservations regarding the role of the agricultural tax imposed on the well-to-do peasants -- all these features made it easy to identify the positions of the three with defense of the status quo of the NEP, or even with defense of the interests of the kulaks. And the majority in the PB resolved to take that step. They also blamed Bukharin and Sokolnikov for their contacts with Kamenev, and Bukharin for publishing in the press writings which had not been previously discussed by the PB. These actions were considered as amounting to factional activity.

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(b) *The condemnation of the positions of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky by the PB and by the plenum of the CC and the CCC*

All these accusations and reprimands were summed up in a draft resolution for submission to the PB and to the Presidium of the CCC. However, a commission of the CC was given the task of composing a "compromise" document: if the three voted for this, the draft resolution would

be withdrawn. Acceptance of this compromise by the three^[75] would have implied Bukharin's withdrawal of his resignation from his posts at *Pravda* and in the Comintern. On February 7, the three refused to vote for it and decided to keep their resignations in force until the April plenum (Rykov alone was subsequently to go back on this decision).

This action meant a *complete break* between the three and the majority in the PB. Stalin, in particular, saw the three thenceforth as constituting a "distinct group" whom he accused of opposing the Party line and wanting to "compel the Party . . . to stop fighting against the Right deviation." In his speech to the April plenum, Stalin declared that it was not possible to tolerate "in our own ranks, in our own Party, in the political General Staff of the proletariat . . . the free functioning of the Right deviators, who are trying to demobilise the Party [and] demoralise the working class," for that would "mean that we are ready . . . to betray the revolution."^[76]

The PB majority passed a resolution on "the internal affairs of the Party"^[77] and ratified a resolution dealing with the same matters which had been voted on February 9 by the PB and the Presidium of the CCC.^[78] These documents condemned Bukharin's criticisms in "Notes of an Economist" as being groundless, "eclectic," and calculated to "discredit the line of the CC." They also condemned, for the same reasons, Bukharin's declaration of January 30, 1929, and what was said about his positions in the notes taken by Kamenev. In its conclusions, however, the resolution of the plenum laid special stress upon the *hesitations* of Bukharin and Tomsky in rela-

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tion to the "new" line, and upon the need to safeguard Party unity. In contrast to the severer criticisms of Bukharin expressed in Stalin's speech,^[79] the plenum resolution did not accuse the three of being Right deviationists. It spoke of their "*de facto* solidarity" with the opportunist tendencies in the Comintern and the role of "centre of attraction played *objectively* " by the three where those tendencies were concerned. Later on, the same resolution spoke of a "convergence on *basic questions* between the positions of the 'three' and those of the Right deviation."^[80]

These formulations implied that the political positions of the three and those of the Right deviation did not fully coincide. The practical consequence of this was that the three kept their membership in the PB, even though they had not agreed to vote for the compromise document of February 7. The resolution forbade the three to give any public expression to their disagreements, thereby imposing new limits to the ideological struggle, which was being allowed to take place only inside an ever narrower circle.

While refusing to accept the resignation of Bukharin and Tomsky, the plenum relieved them of their posts, at *Pravda* and in the Comintern in the case of Bukharin, and in the trade-union leadership in the case of Tomsky.^[81] The three had suffered a heavy defeat, and one that was to prove final.

The resolution of the PB which was ratified by the plenum also included a series of criticisms of the three. In particular, it rejected Bukharin's analysis of the economic situation. It declared that the supply of goods to the rural areas was better than in the previous year, and that procurement was proceeding in a way that could be regarded as satisfactory.^[82] This appreciation of the situation had nothing in common with reality. *Except during two months, the procurement of grain in the first half of 1929 fell far below the figure for the previous year : for these six months as a whole it came to 2.6 million metric tons, as against 5.2 in 1928.*^[83] Besides, these results had only been obtained by bringing strong administrative pressure to bear on the middle peasants, which had given rise, in a number of regions, to *open expressions of discontent*

by *broad strata of the peasantry*. The grain shortage which then developed brought about a considerable rise in the market price of grain, and there were cases of speculation.^[84] The plenum of April 1929 willfully ignored these realities, and that was to have serious effects later on, both economic and political

(c) *Stalin's speech at the plenum of April 1929*

The bulk of this speech^[85] was devoted to criticizing the positions of the three. In close connection with this critique Stalin put forward certain theses^[86] to which we must now turn.^[87]

(1) *The intensification of the class struggle*

The first thesis concerned the intensification of the class struggle "*at the present stage of development and under the present conditions of the relation of forces.*"^[88] It was thus not a "general thesis" but a formulation aimed at characterizing the conjuncture of a particular moment.

This characterization was correct, yet inadequate, for it was not derived from a many-sided analysis of the conjuncture. Thus, Stalin declined to explain the intensification of the bourgeois class struggle by the mistakes made by the Party in its handling of the problems of the poor and middle peasantry, as a result of the weakening of the machinery of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of its connections with the masses. As he saw it, any analysis of the situation which took account of such factors amounted to trying to attribute the intensification of the class struggle to "causes connected with the character of the apparatus,"^[89] or to saying that what had been "good" last year had suddenly become "bad"^[90] (for he denied that there had been any change in this matter during the intervening period).

Restricting in this way his analysis of the causes of the intensification of the class struggle amounted to focusing one-

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sided attention upon the attempts made by the adversaries of the dictatorship of the proletariat, without examining what it was, in the disposition of the latter's forces, that enabled these adversaries to *transform their attempts into effective counteroffensives*. Whether they could do this or not depended on the firmness of the bonds between the working class and its allies, and on the political line of the Party. What the analysis left out was therefore the main thing, the political line and its contradictions: this prevented correct treatment of these contradictions and speedy introduction of the necessary rectifications.

(2) *The problem of the "tribute" and of the possibility of the peasantry being exploited by the Soviet state*

The second thesis set out in this speech of April 1929 was that of the need to impose upon the peasantry "something in the nature of a tribute," so as to make possible industrialization of the Soviet Union.^[91]

In the general way in which it was presented, this thesis was both true and false. It was true

in the sense that, in the concrete conditions in which the Soviet Union was placed, no industrialization of any magnitude was possible unless the peasantry made *a certain contribution* [92] to the effort of industrial development.

Formulated, however, in so general a fashion, this thesis could open the way for a wrong policy, one entailing grave consequences, for it was not accompanied by any indication of *the limits which this tribute must not exceed* if it was not to jeopardize the worker-peasant alliance and the requirements for expanded reproduction in agriculture. The facts were not slow in revealing that these limits were being exceeded.

The negative consequences of the "tribute" thesis set forth in these general terms were enhanced decisively by the linking of this thesis with another, false one, namely, the assertion that "the very nature of the Soviet regime precludes any sort of exploitation of the peasantry by the state." [93]

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Such a formulation did not allow for either the *contradictory nature of the Soviet state* (a state of the working class but *also* a "bourgeois state," as Lenin put it, in so far as it ensured the reproduction of certain bourgeois relations, particularly on the plane of distribution), or for the presence of bourgeois elements in the Soviet state machine. Yet these factors could constitute the objective conditions for *despoiling and exploiting* the peasants (and the workers, too, for that matter) and drive the peasantry into opposition to the Soviet power. This formulation of Stalin's was therefore a *step backward* as compared with Lenin's.

(3) *The "new forms of the bond" and the "technical basis" for increasing agricultural production*

Stalin's speech at the plenum of April 1929 set forth a thesis of the necessity for "new forms of the bond between town and country." These new forms were to involve the supplying by industry of *means of production* to agriculture -- agricultural machinery, tractors, fertilizers, etc. -- for, now, "it is a question of reconstructing agriculture," reorganizing agricultural production "on the basis of new technique and collective labour." [94]

This thesis developed and sharpened the contrast which had been made up to that time between a worker-peasant alliance based on textiles and that based on steel. The prospect which it opened up certainly corresponded to future needs, but the formulations used gave rise to a series of problems, and the following in particular:

(a) Even at the end of the NEP period the "restoration" of agriculture was far from having been completed. Millions of small- and medium-sized farms still lacked the most elementary instruments of production. [95] In practice, this meant that it was still possible to help the poor and middle peasants to bring about a rapid increase in agricultural production in return for *modest investments*, and without having to wait for the building of new steelworks, new tractor factories, and so

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on. The problem of waiting periods and rates of progress therefore did not really arise in the terms in which it was formulated at the plenum of April 1929. [96]

(b) According to Stalin, the period of "restoration" was one which had to be a period when what predominated was a form of the worker-peasant alliance aimed at satisfying "*mainly* the

personal requirements of the peasant, hardly touching the productive requirements of his economy."^[97] True, this was how the alliance had been practiced, but that practice had been mistaken: from the very beginning of the NEP, supplying the peasant farms with means of production, even if only rudimentary ones, should have been a priority task, as Lenin had said. The alliance based mainly on textiles had not helped the poor and middle peasants to free themselves from domination by the rich ones.

(4) *Mechanization and collectivization*

Stalin's speech presented collectivization as having been necessitated by technical changes and by the need for increased marketable production. The development of collective production in agriculture did not appear as a form of class struggle but as a technical and economic necessity.

What was stressed was "the danger of a rift between town and country" due to the inadequate rate of growth in agriculture as compared with industry, from which Stalin drew the conclusion that, "in order to eliminate this danger of a rift, we must begin seriously re-equipping agriculture on the basis of new technique. But in order to re-equip it we must gradually unite the scattered individual peasant farms into large state farms, into collective farms."^[98]

In this conception, which was the one that eventually prevailed, the aspirations and needs of the poor and middle peasants were not the main consideration. It was the needs *of the towns and of industry* that dictated the *technical conditions* of agricultural production and these, in turn, that dictated its *social conditions*. We may well wonder why such a conception took shape (I shall return to this question when I deal

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with the changes in the Bolshevik ideological formation), but what is certain is that its implementing explains why collectivization was carried out in the way it was, and also its "counterproductive" consequences -- a setback to agricultural production instead of an advance.

(5) *Mechanization and industrialization*

The thesis of the urgent need for a technical transformation of agriculture having been laid down, that of the need for rapid industrialization could be "deduced" therefrom: "it will be impossible to supply the countryside with machines and tractors unless we *accelerate* the development of our industry."^[99]

Here Stalin argues in a circle: agriculture must be rapidly supplied with up-to-date equipment so that it does not lag behind industry, and industry's rate of development must be accelerated so that it may rapidly provide the equipment for agriculture. Illusory movement around this circle was what compelled the continual readjustment upward of the targets of the First Five-Year Plan.

(6) *The procurement crisis of 1928-1929 and the relations between classes*

In Stalin's speech at the plenum of April 1929 the difficulties experienced in grain procurement were explained essentially by the alleged "economic strengthening" of the kulaks. Having asked what were the causes of these difficulties, Stalin answered himself with the following formulation: "During these years the kulak and well-to-do elements have grown, the

series of good harvests has not been without benefit to them, they have become stronger economically; they have accumulated a little capital and now are in a position to manoeuvre in the market.^[100]

Unfortunately, this "economistic" explanation of the procurement crisis begs some questions: (a) When was this "series of good harvests"? The last good harvest had been that of

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1926. (b) Starting in early 1928, it had been necessary to employ emergency measures, and the exhaustion of the grain stocks held by the rich peasants had, as the Party leadership admitted, compelled the extension of these measures so that they affected the middle peasants. This being so, how could the "capital" held by the kulaks in 1929 be larger (in the form of grain, at any rate) than it had been in 1927?

In reality, if the position of the kulaks had indeed been strengthened between 1927 and 1929, this was because *their ideological and political influence had grown*.

And this growth in the kulaks' influence was due to the mistakes made by the Party in its peasant policy. Any examination of these mistakes, however, such as would have been necessary if they were to be eliminated, was ruled out from the start in Stalin's speech. When he mentioned the procurement difficulties, he asked: "Perhaps the policy of the Central Committee is responsible for this?" only to answer himself with an unproved assertion: "No, the policy of the Central Committee has nothing to do with it."^[101]

This last formulation -- which contradicted everything that had been admitted in 1928 -- made it necessary to "explain" the procurement crisis by an economic strengthening of the kulaks, and prevented any correction of the policy followed, since this was held to "have nothing to do with" the situation.

Stalin's speech at the April plenum was of quite special importance. On the one hand, the theses contained in it, even when they were inadequate, or contradicted reality, were not subjected to any systematic criticism: the ideological campaign waged during the period preceding the plenum was such that any questioning of these theses was immediately repudiated as constituting a "pro-kulak" position, and the development of a real movement of criticism and self-criticism, which would presuppose respect for democratic centralism, was consequently blocked. On the other hand, these theses were the point of departure for a new turn in the Party line, a turn toward the road of an accelerated industrialization the burdens of which were to be borne by the peasantry. This was

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confirmed (though still in hesitant fashion) by the Sixteenth Party Conference, which led to the "great change" effected at the end of 1929.

IV. The Sixteenth Party Conference (April 23-29, 1929) and its consequences

The Sixteenth Party Conference saw a last attempt at strengthening socialist relations *while basically remaining within the framework of the NEP and laying the foundations for transition to a higher stage*. The decisions it took are therefore of considerable interest, even if the prospect outlined by this conference failed to materialize. The contradictory character of some of these decisions, and the rapid course taken by the class struggle, meant that, a few months

after the Sixteenth Conference, the Party leadership was faced with a choice -- either to renounce some of the economic (especially industrial) targets defined in April 1929, or to try and realize these targets by taking *economic and political measures other than those provided for* by that conference (including brusque abandonment of the NEP).

The second of these roads was the one that was followed. It was to take the Soviet Union into a *wholly new era*, before the conditions had matured for mastering many of the new and immense problems it presented.

Analysis of the principal aspects and decisions of the Sixteenth Conference enables us to see more clearly the conditions that made it seem possible, in April 1929, to reconcile maintenance of the NEP with the launching of a process of rapid social and economic changes. This analysis, together with examination of the concrete situation at that time, can also enable us to see the contradictory character of the decisions taken by the Sixteenth Conference, and some of the reasons which explain why these contradictions were "resolved" during the second half of 1929 in the sense which has been mentioned.

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(a) The condemnation of the political positions of the "three"

One of the characteristic features of the Sixteenth Conference was the way that the problem of political divergences within the PB was dealt with. These divergences, despite their importance and the seriousness of the questions they raised, were *not gone into in a fundamental way*.

It was only on the eve of the closure of the conference, and "at the request of the delegates," that Molotov gave a report on the work of the plenum which had just been held. He then put down a short resolution which "noted" that "the Bukharin group" had departed from the Party's general line and was pursuing a "Right deviation." This resolution was adopted without discussion. Though it approved the decision taken by the CC regarding "the Bukharin group"^[102] it was not included in the report of the Sixteenth Conference published in 1929: nor did this report include those passages in delegates' speeches in which they attacked Bukharin.^[103]

For several months yet, the existence of profound divergences within the PB was still kept secret. Rykov was even included among those entrusted with presenting a report to the Sixteenth Conference on the Five-Year Plan, and he continued to serve as chairman of the Sovnarkom.^[104]

The lack of a broad discussion dealing with the opposing political positions did not help to clarify the situation, and, in particular, to distinguish between what, in the positions of the three, might properly be called a Right deviation and what might be correct views.

The reasons why no real discussion was ever held have never been given. It may be supposed that desire to demonstrate the "unity" of the PB was the decisive factor, since such a discussion was sought neither by the majority nor by the three. Nobody wanted to risk a split in the Party. While the majority in the PB enjoyed the support of a section of the proletariat in large-scale industry and of many of the leaders of economic and industrial organizations, the positions of the three were backed by a high proportion of the Party members

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working in the countryside, by many trade-union cadres, and by a section of the workers in the consumer-goods industries, especially in the textile mills.^[105] It should be added that, the greater the tension in the rural areas became, the more dangerous it seemed to allow the Party leadership to seem divided, since open resistance to the "emergency measures" might then develop among the peasantry.

At all events, the absence of a genuine discussion made it impossible for the respective positions to be clarified, with identification of what was and what was not correct in the theses of the two sides. This being so, the contradictions in the resolutions of the Sixteenth Conference were not analyzed, either. Thereafter that tendency prevailed which accorded one-sided priority to heavy industry and ignored the demands of the worker-peasant alliance. Significantly, some of the supporters of the former opposition, especially the Trotskyists among them, considered that the line of the Sixteenth Conference was such that they could ask to be readmitted to the Party -- though Trotsky, from his exile abroad, condemned this move.^[106]

(b) The fight against "bureaucracy"

An important aspect of the Sixteenth Conference was its placing on the agenda "the fight against bureaucracy." The conference linked this question closely with that of the economic and social changes to be brought about, with collectivization and industrialization. *A connection was thus made between radical transformation of the state machine (revolutionizing of the superstructures) and success in socialist transformation of the economic basis.*

The resolution adopted on this subject by the Sixteenth Conference sought to define some of the requirements which must be satisfied if a real breakthrough by the masses into the activity of the soviets and the administrative bodies was to be achieved, and resistance to the revolutionary changes overcome in this way. It denounced the harmful political conse-

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quences of the manner in which the state apparatus functioned. Thus, the resolution in question ^[107] declared:

The struggle by the Party and the Soviets against bureaucratic perversion of the machinery of state, which often conceals from the broad masses of the working people the actual nature of the proletarian state, constitutes one of the most important forms of the class struggle.

The tremendous tasks laid down by the Five-Year Plan . . . cannot be accomplished without a decisive improvement in the machinery of state, without simplifying it and reducing its cost without precise execution of their respective tasks by each link in the chain, without decisive overcoming of inertia, red-tape, bureaucratic suppression, mutual 'covering-up' and indifference to the needs of the working people. . . .^[108]

The contradiction between the magnitude of the tasks and the agrarian and technological changes laid down by the Five-Year Plan and the way the bureaucratic apparatus functioned was thus clearly appreciated. Nevertheless, the ideological conditions for revolutionary transformation of the machinery of state were left imprecise. The questions raised by such a transformation were approached, mainly from the angle of *organization*, and this was not adequate for showing the path whereby the initiative of the masses could succeed in smashing the tendency of the apparatuses to dominate them and to function in a bourgeois rather than a proletarian way. On the plane of organization, the resolution of the Sixteenth Conference stressed mainly the following points:^[109]

(1) *Checking up* on the execution of the Party's political line. The resolution recalled what Lenin had said about the state machine often working "against us"^[110] -- which testified to how little improvement had been made in this situation since Lenin's death. It suggested, among other measures, that increased scope be given to rank-and-file control commissions, stating that

"these commissions must be elected directly in the factories and workshops and by the Soviets of the corresponding towns."^[111]

(2) Improvement in the composition of the personnel of the state machine, and introduction of a system of leadership cor-

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responding to the economic system and to the demands of the building of socialism^[112] -- these were two themes which were also emphasized in this resolution of the Sixteenth Conference. The indications given for realizing these aims were, however, vague and even contradictory. There were a number of considerations regarding "decentralization of leadership functions," "personal leadership," labor discipline, and "active participation by the masses in leadership," without it being made clear which of these were of principal importance and which were secondary. This resulted from the presence of contradictory tendencies: one favoring reinforcement of the existing organs of leadership and the other favoring broader intervention by the masses in the drawing up of plans and the taking of decisions.

Finally, this part of the resolution seems to have been dominated above all by concern to obtain "*economic*" results : rationalization of the production apparatus, increased productivity of labor, cutting down of the unproductive departments and services in the enterprises, reduction in the costs of the state trading apparatus, and so on.

(c) The organization of supervision by the masses

The organization of supervision by the masses occupied a central position in this resolution, which called upon the non-Party workers and peasants to learn to make use of the rights which the Soviet Republic guaranteed them -- for, as the resolution said, "any fight against bureaucracy which is not based upon the activity and initiative of the working class, but seeks to substitute for supervision by the workers and peasants themselves the activity of some apparatus or other is doomed, however good its intentions, to produce no serious result as regards real improvement in and fundamental reconstruction of the machinery of state."^[113]

The resolution then listed various experiments which had already been made^[114] and urged that these be learned from. Nevertheless, it did not analyze why these experiments had

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produced such limited results, and nothing was said about what should be done to ensure that things would be different in future.

"The tasks of the fight against elements of bureaucracy in the Party and in the state machine" were also dealt with in the resolution.^[115] This part of the document was, in principle, one of the most important, for it tried to define the road leading to reversal of the trend which had separated the Party from the masses and caused the latter to hesitate to criticize the Party and Party members, as Stalin had observed in his report to the plenum of April 1928.

In that report Stalin had noted that, because of the growing prestige of the Party leadership, "the masses begin to look up at [the leaders] from below and do not venture to criticize them" -- which "cannot but give rise to a certain danger of the leaders losing contact with the masses and the masses getting out of touch with the leaders," so that the latter are in danger of "becoming conceited and regarding themselves as infallible. . . . nothing can come of this but the ruin of the Party."^[116]

The resolution spoke of the need for developing *criticism from below, without respect of persons*, so as to eliminate bureaucratized elements and those who were connected with the kulak and capitalist elements still present in the country; of the need to combat *violations of democracy in the Party*, to hold elections in order to remove those who had lost the sympathy of the masses and contact with them, and to resist the tendency of leading bodies to substitute themselves for the organs they were supposed to lead (e.g., usurpation by the presidiums of soviets of the functions of the soviets themselves).^[117]

This resolution, the principal terms of which I have summarized, therefore presented as *a condition for the building of socialism a fundamental reorganization of the machinery of state and of the way that this functioned*. It revealed that what had already been said on this subject over several years had remained more or less inoperative. Reading this document, we can see, too, that there was great uncertainty regarding the

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targets to be aimed at. Were they, *first and foremost*, increased "efficiency" in the machinery of state? Or did they consist in transforming this machinery in revolutionary fashion so that new proletarian political relations might develop? The resolution gave no clear answer to this question -- or, rather, this question was hardly raised in it. It could therefore not give a precise answer to the *concrete problems of the road to be followed* in order to transform the machinery of state: hence the juxtaposition in it of various recommendations the relative priority of which was not indicated.

In practice, during the months that followed the adopting of this resolution, the tasks laid down in the sphere of industrialization were amplified, and the pace at which these targets were to be reached was speeded up. Thereafter, most attention was focused upon economic questions, while the priority which had been accorded to the requirements for transforming the machinery of state was lost sight of. The few changes that were carried out, all the same, were carried out *from above*, which did not fail to bring with it some negative consequences, and in particular to reduce, instead of increasing, the place accorded to intervention and supervision by the masses.

(1) *The need to purge the Party, and its significance*

The Sixteenth Conference formally decided on a Party purge.^[118] This operation was bound up with the attempt to recast the state machine, but also with the general crisis of the NEP and the fight against Right deviation. The conference recalled that the purge to be undertaken would be the first *general* purge since the one carried through in 1921, at the outset of the restoration period.^[119]

Between 1922 and 1929 there had indeed been only partial purges,^[120] connected with the regular activity of the CCC.^[121] The decision of the Sixteenth Conference, however, aimed at an operation of an exceptional and general character.

A few days before he placed before the Sixteenth Conference the theses on purging the Party, with the corresponding

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resolution, Yaroslavsky gave a report on these questions to a conference of the Moscow Party organization. His report was especially severe in what it said about the rural Party organizations. He also criticized those factory workers who had kept their ties with the village,

for, he said, these workers looked on their work in industry merely "as a means of enriching their farms." He stressed that the purge must be effected on ideological lines, every member being judged "from the standpoint of the accomplishment of the tasks of the class struggle. At the same time, he warned against "inquisitorial methods," "enquiries among neighbors," etc.[122]

The theses on the purge were examined by the Sixteenth Conference only on the last day of its discussions. The corresponding instructions for the local control commissions were dispatched even before this examination had been undertaken. The resolution on the purge did not give rise, therefore, to any real debate. Nevertheless, the interruptions made by certain delegates show that a section of the conference feared that this purge would serve principally to restrict discussion in the Party. However, the resolution was passed unanimously.[123]

The policy of purging the Party was inspired by the ideas which underlay the resolution on the fight against "bureaucracy." Several paragraphs of that resolution concerned the Party itself, and deserve to be mentioned here. The following paragraph is especially noteworthy.

The conference draws the attention of the whole Party and of every Party member individually to the need to wage *the most resolute, the most determined, the most persevering struggle against elements of bureaucracy in the Party itself, in the Party apparatus: these elements result from the many ties between the Party apparatus and the soviets, from the involvement of a very large number of Party members in administrative work, and from the influence exerted upon Communists working in the state machine by elements belonging to the bourgeois intelligentsia and to the corps of officials.*[124]

This paragraph is remarkable because of the importance it ascribes to the fight against "bureaucracy" in the Party; but also because of the *limited character of the reasons it gives for the*

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existence of this phenomenon which restricted the practical significance of the methods recommended for struggle against it. Problems of the division of labor and of participation by the cadres in productive work were thus not put in the center of the analysis of what constituted, in reality, the development of bourgeois political practices.

The measures proposed were difficult to apply. However, the list of the principal measures which was given illustrates the way in which the Party worked on the eve of the "great change," and also the attempts made to modify this way of working so as to reduce the "bureaucratization" of the Party.

Among these measures was reduction in the number of paid Party functionaries and their replacement, wherever possible, by a group of especially active Party members (the Party "activists"). These should form, in every factory, locality, administration, etc., where they were sufficiently numerous, an organization called the Party's *aktiv*. Organizations like this did indeed develop in 1929, but without, apparently, causing a real reduction in the number of functionaries on the Party's payroll.[125] The extent of any such reduction would, in any case, not have been obvious, for a very large proportion of the Party cadres held jobs in the state machine and were paid in that capacity.[126]

The resolution on the Party purge also mentioned the need to fight against violations of democracy within the Party, so as to eliminate "bureaucratized" elements who had lost the confidence of the masses. It linked changing the Party's style of work and its makeup, on the one hand, with correct fulfillment of the tasks arising from the reconstruction of the economy and the industrialization of the country, on the other. It pointed out that during the NEP period, the Party had recruited, not only hundreds of thousands of proletarians, but also petty bourgeois who, by their personal and social example, "bring disorganization into the ranks of the Party, [who] despise the opinions of the workers and the working peasants, . . . [and] are careerist

elements . . . whom the Party has got rid of only to an inadequate extent through the systematic, day-to-day work of the control commissions. . . ."^[127] Hence the need for a more thoroughgoing purge.

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The formulations used in the resolution showed that in 1929 the composition of the Party was even worse than it had been in 1922, when the situation was already far from satisfactory.^[128] They also showed the need, if the road to new social changes was to be followed successfully, for a series of measures to be taken which would place the Party under supervision by the masses and remove from it the elements alien to communism.

The resolution made the point that, although the factory and workshop cells were the soundest section of the Party, this did not imply that those cells did not equally need purging, for, there too, "elements have infiltrated which are incapable of playing the role of a Communist vanguard," owing to their thirst for personal enrichment, their failure to participate actively in improving labor discipline, or the fact that they had not broken with religion, or that their antisemitism showed that they had a counter-revolutionary attitude, etc.^[129] The resolution declared that, without purging the entire Party it would not be possible "fully to draw into the Party's ranks the best elements from the considerable body of non-Party proletarian activists," and thereby put the Party in a position to fulfill the "great and complex tasks of the new phase."^[130]

The resolution was even more severe on the situation prevailing in the rural cells. It stressed the need to show special care in checking the composition of these cells, so as to remove from them elements alien to the ideology and politics of the proletariat. It provided a long list of the characteristics of persons who ought to be expelled from the Party.

Finally, the resolution mentioned the need to purge the cells operating in the "non-productive" sectors, pointing out that the specific role played by these called for particular attention to be given them.^[131]

(2) *The ways in which the policy of purging was applied, and its limitations*

On the plane of *principle*, the resolution emphasized the need to bring the masses into the application of the policy of purging the Party. Thus, dealing with purges to be carried out in the village cells, with the help of "activists" from among the

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agricultural workers and the poor and middle peasants, it declared that such purges must be effected before the eyes of the broad masses of the peasantry: "only a purge like that can transform the rural cells."^[132]

On the plane of *concrete measures*, however, the resolution put the problem mainly in terms of organization, and *not of a mass movement*. It dealt essentially with the part to be played by the CCC and the local control commissions, and merely mentioned participation by the non-Party masses in purging operations. The masses were not called upon to *develop their initiative* so as to remove from the Party the elements that were not genuinely proletarian and Communist, or to insist that those Party members who had made mistakes be placed in conditions which would enable them to turn over a new leaf. The results of the purges would thus depend mainly on the way that the control commissions functioned, their notion of their task and of the requirements for a thorough cleanup in the Party, and the information they could

collect (in the absence of a broad mass movement) on the practices and relations engaged in by the Party members whose cases they examined. Given that the members of the control commissions were actually chosen from among the Party cadres, they were unable, in most cases, to act otherwise than in accordance with what those whom they were called upon to "judge" considered proper. Since there was no mass movement, they were therefore led to "punish," in the main, only the most glaring cases of careerism, corruption, contempt for the masses, and bureaucratic and bourgeois behavior, while "ordinary" cases were usually passed over, although it was also upon the treatment of these -- especially when they were numerous -- that the masses' trust, or lack of it, in the Party and its members depended, and so the Party's own capacity for revolutionary action.

The way in which the question of purging the Party was presented included other aspects, too, for the commissions were required to take into consideration the members' opinions^[133] and ensure that "hidden" supporters of various trends -- such as the "Democratic Centralism" group, Myasnikov's supporters, and other "anti-Party groups," including

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the Trotskyists -- were "ruthlessly expelled." What was struck at here was not any *activity*, but mere opinions, *including supposed opinions*, since the resolution spoke of "hidden opinions," which were to be the target of a "ruthless" struggle.^[134] This made it possible to expel anyone who expressed reservations regarding some of the Party leadership's appreciations of the economic or political state of the country, or who drew different practical conclusions from these appreciations. In the absence of adequate control from below, and of genuine desire for unity, and without clear awareness that it was inevitable for ideological contradictions to arise in the Party, and that these must be dealt with otherwise than by coercion, the terms of the resolution favored resorting to "administrative methods" in the sphere of the ideological struggle. And that entailed grave consequences for the Party itself, for Marxism can develop only in open struggle and discussion: besides which, if the Party is to have *concrete knowledge* of the economic, social, and political situation as it really is, then every Party member must be allowed to express his views.

It was precisely because the resolution on the purge, and the directives sent to the local control commissions by the CCC, emphasized expulsions as the means of uniting the Party ideologically,^[135] that Yaroslavsky's speech at the Sixteenth Conference was interrupted by delegates who were unhappy about the content of the resolution, and about the fact that they were not allowed to discuss it. These interruptions were all the more significant because, in his speech, Yaroslavsky avoided dealing with the directly political aspects of the purge. It was also remarkable that the delegates who had interrupted and criticized Yaroslavsky's speech nevertheless eventually adopted the resolution, which was passed unanimously.^[136]

(3) Remarks on some immediate effects of the purges

From the quantitative standpoint the purge of 1929-1930 was relatively less important than that of 1921-1922. Whereas in the earlier period the purge eliminated a quarter of the

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Party's membership, in 1929-1930 it affected only about 11 percent -- and some of these were subsequently readmitted.^[137]

The effects of the purge upon relations between the Party and the masses were also very limited. The purge was mainly carried out by internal Party commissions, without active

participation by the worker and peasant masses, as the resolution of the Sixteenth Conference had demanded. Actually, that resolution had hardly been adopted when the bulk of the Party's forces found themselves committed to the struggle for industrialization and large-scale collectivization. As a result, the purge carried out in 1929-1930 did not lead to the decisive changes in the functioning and composition of the Party that the Sixteenth Conference had considered necessary: the changes did not enable the Party to become the indispensable instrument for a real socialist transformation of social relations, with authentic knowledge of the situation and aspirations of the broad masses of the peasantry. This knowledge was, instead, darkened thereafter by the fear which members of the Party's basic units might feel regarding the consequences of reporting difficulties which were due to mistaken directives from the higher authorities, since such initiatives could easily be identified with manifestation of "ideological dissent" and punished by expulsion. More generally, the use of such measures as weapons of "ideological struggle" reduced the Party's capacity to enrich itself from the experience and thought of the majority of its members: the latter were often led, through concern not to "make trouble for themselves," to express agreement with every directive, however trivial, and not to reveal any opinion that might differ from that held by the leadership. The development of this attitude had a profoundly negative effect on the functioning of democratic centralism, on Party life, and on the Party's relations with the masses.

In the immediate period, however, the measures taken in 1929-1930 helped to make the Party a more "efficient" *instrument for carrying out decisions* than it had previously been, and this was what the leadership had wanted, so as to be able to cope with increasingly heavy tasks of economic construction.

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(d) The plans for industrial development

The Sixteenth Conference was a decisive moment -- but only one such moment -- in the conflict between the advocates of "maximum" industrial growth and those who advocated "optimum" growth. This moment, in contrast to what had happened at the Fifteenth Congress, saw the victory of the former over the latter. A new, explicit political line of immediate and accelerated industrialization was thus defined, which was to produce a series of effects on class relations, and especially on the worker-peasant alliance. The more this line hardened and developed, the more clearly its class consequences were to emerge; and that was not yet the situation at the time when the Sixteenth Conference was held.

In order to evaluate correctly the implications of the decision taken regarding industrial policy, we must see how the contrasting lines on this matter were reflected -- before, during, and after the Sixteenth Conference -- in the "plan figures" for industrialization and investment. We must also see how the line that prevailed meant bringing nearer the final break with the NEP: this was a contradiction within the resolutions of the Sixteenth Conference, which actually resolved that the NEP should not be abandoned in the near future.^[138]

*(1) The evolution of the plans for industry
and investment before the Sixteenth
Party Conference*

We have seen how, after the Fifteenth Congress, two lines on industrialization were in conflict.^[139] One line continued to defend the orientation of the Congress, declaring that, while industry was the "driving force" of the economy, agriculture was its "basis," and upholding the need for *allocating investments in such a way as to enable every branch of the economy to develop at a rate that would enable it to meet the needs of the other branches and those of the*

consumers (hence the idea of an "optimum" development). The other line asserted that what was required was "maximum" development of in-

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dustry, with priority given to investment in heavy industry. We have seen that this second line, to which Stalin adhered more and more closely, until he became its defender, tended to win the battle -- implicitly, at least, since, until the spring of 1929, no formal resolution decided clearly between these two orientations.

The increased influence of the advocates of "maximum" industrial growth was reflected in the gradual raising of the targets of industrial production and investment proposed by the various organs which participated in the framing of the plans. Thus, in December 1927 Gosplan forecast that, during the First Five-Year Plan (which was then intended to end in 1931-1932), production by large-scale industry would be multiplied by 1.77 (according to the "minimum" version of the plan) or by 2.03 (according to the so-called optimum version).^[140] In August 1928 the VSNKh proposed a draft which forecast that at the end of the five-year period (now ending in 1932-1933), production by large-scale industry would be 2.27 times as great. In December 1928 the so-called optimum variant prepared by Gosplan and the VSNKh forecast a coefficient of 2.68. In April 1929 the "optimum" variant adopted by the Sixteenth Conference forecast a coefficient of 2.79. *Thus, between December 1927 and April 1929, the "forecast coefficient of five-year growth" in large-scale industry increased by 37 or 60 percent, depending on the variant.*^[141]

Parallel with this increase, the amount forecast for gross investment in plant rose from 16 milliard roubles (March 1927) to 64.6 milliard (April 1929).^[142] Thus, within two years, the forecast for investment had increased fourfold. More than 40 percent of this investment was earmarked for industry, and, within that total, heavy industry's share rose from 69.4 percent to 78 percent.^[143]

This "growth" in the targets for investment and industrial production was all the more significant because it did not result from a more rigorous analysis of the Soviet economy's potentialities and the prospects opened up by the changing of property relations and production relations. Examination of the successive drafts of the Five-Year Plan shows that the

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"growth" in the industrial targets reflected, fundamentally, a change in the political line -- that is, increased influence by the advocates of rapid industrialization. To convince oneself of this it is enough to look at the resolution on the Five-Year Plan adopted by the Sixteenth Conference and by the Congress of Soviets, together with the decisions and forecasts relating to the industrial targets.

(2) *The decisions of the Sixteenth Party Conference and of the Congress of Soviets*

The resolution on the Five-Year Plan adopted by the Sixteenth Conference was ratified in May 1929 by the Congresses of Soviets of the RSFSR and the Ukraine and by the Fifth All-Union Congress of Soviets.^[144] This resolution adopted the so-called optimum variant of the draft prepared by Gosplan. It declared (thereby rejecting the conclusions of the Fifteenth Party Congress) that the plan must ensure "maximum development of production of means of production as the basis for the industrialization of the country."^[145] *The principle according to which agriculture was the basis of the economy was thus no longer stated.*

In the resolution adopted by the Sixteenth Conference, realization of the forecasts for increases in industry and investment presupposed that agricultural production would increase to more than 50 percent over the prewar figure.^[146] Yet agricultural production had not increased since 1926, and was even tending to decline, as a result of the application of the "emergency measures." Nothing, therefore, justified such optimism (which facts were, moreover, to refute absolutely) where the progress of agricultural production was concerned. The forecasts for agriculture were also unrealistic in assuming that, throughout the five-year period, there would be only *good* harvests.^[147]

By adopting the hypothesis of maximum and uninterrupted growth, the resolution on the Five-Year Plan took no account of a number of points made by Lenin regarding the need, if

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one was to draw up an economic plan properly, to follow the method of *guiding links*, so as to proceed from the determining of one task to another. Lenin also spoke of the need to define the minimum (not "optimum") conditions that would have to be fulfilled if the various tasks were to be accomplished, and to prepare several variants to be applied in the light of the conditions that actually prevailed -- which meant not persisting in the attempt to fulfill certain tasks if the conditions for their fulfillment failed to materialize. Lenin also stressed that, in the actual situation of Soviet Russia, the point of departure, or base factor, for the compiling of the plan must be the actual availability of foodstuffs, which, in practice, meant grain. None of these points made by Lenin was taken into account in 1928-1929, either in the drawing up of the optimum version or in connection with what happened later on, when harvests turned out to be much poorer than had been forecast in the Plan.^[148]

The resolution on the Five-Year Plan also forecast that the productivity of labor in industry would increase by 150 percent. This forecast was actually nothing but a *wish*. It was based on no objective facts, and contradicted the actual evolution of productivity -- and it was not realized. However, on the basis of these "forecasts" regarding agriculture and the productivity of labor, the Plan provided for real wages to rise by 71 percent, while costs of production would fall by 35 percent in industry and 50 percent in building.^[149] These forecasts of reductions in costs were based on the hypothesis (which nothing justified, and which was not fulfilled) of a very great improvement in the use made of raw materials and power.

There were many reasons why forecasts were adopted which were so unrealistic^[150] and which were known to be such by a large number of Party members and cadres, though they dared not say this publicly. Among these reasons were the development of *unemployment* during the preceding years, and the *steadily growing difficulties in the sphere of food supplies*, which impelled the Party to seek a way of *escaping from a situation which had become dangerous for the Soviet power*. The worsening of relations with the peas-

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antry as a result of the application of the emergency measures meant that, for many Party members and cadres, this way out of the crisis had to take the form of industrialization at the fastest possible rate, while they looked upon as "defeatists" those (very few) who took upon themselves the risk involved in pointing out what was unrealistic and contradictory in a number of the forecasts. The worsening of the worker-peasant alliance which began early in 1928 thus played a considerable role in the rallying of support for the forecasts of the Five-Year Plan as it was then laid down. This support reflected the illusion that a technological and economic solution could be found for the political problem presented by the deterioration of the alliance. It gave expression to a "technicist-economist" component in the Bolshevik ideological formation (something to which I shall return) -- a component which acquired special importance under the impact of a series of factors: the enthusiasm for industrialization with

which a section of the working class, especially the youth, was fired; pressure by the heads of the big enterprises and industrial trusts; the influence of a nationalism which was flattered by the idea of "catching up with and surpassing" the industrialized countries within a short period; and so on.

A set of objective and subjective conditions thus favored the elaboration and acceptance of an industrial plan which was extremely ambitious,^[151] to the extent that it contained not only unrealistic forecasts but also many internal contradictions.

Even a moderately close study of the forecasts of the Five-Year Plan, and of the way the economy actually functioned, reveals, indeed, that in a certain number of sectors the material resources needed for reaching the set of targets laid down were not available, and would not become available within the five-year period. Thus, in 1928-1929, the quantity of iron and steel products needed for satisfying the needs arising from the Plan's targets was 30 percent larger than the production actually available, which meant that 30 percent of the demand engendered by the Plan could not be met. A similar "deficit," on the order of 25 percent, was observed where nonferrous metals were concerned, and the same was true in relation to many other products.^[152]

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The incompatibilities between the various targets of the Plan, and the unrealism of some of its forecasts, were not unknown to the economists and technicians who prepared it. However, in the atmosphere of "ruthless struggle" against the Right which reigned at the beginning of 1929, most of them preferred to keep quiet, or to voice their doubts only cryptically, for such warnings might easily be described as expressions of "defeatism" and signs of one's adherence to the "Right tendency."

Strumilin, though himself an advocate of ambitious targets, noted that most of the specialists working on the Plan were no longer prepared to point out its weaknesses, or the adjustments that needed to be made in it. He wrote on this subject: "Unfortunately, it would not be reasonable to put to the test the civil courage of these specialists, who are already saying, in the corridors, that they prefer to stand for higher tempos rather than sit [i.e., in prison] for lower ones."^[153]

It was not only fear of repressive measures that led such men to keep their mouths shut about the unrealistic character of certain aspects of the Plan (which called in question the "realism" of the Plan as a whole), but also the ideological and political atmosphere which developed during 1928, in connection with the rupture, already far advanced, of the worker-peasant alliance. Even those Party leaders who favored rapid industrialization, but who were aware of the unrealism of certain forecasts, ceased to voice their doubts in public.

A letter sent by Kuibyshev to his wife at the end of 1928 (and not published until nearly forty years later) testifies to the situation in which some leaders were placed, even though they were far from being suspected of "Rightism": "Here is what worried me yesterday and today: I am unable to tie up the balance, and as I cannot go for contracting the capital outlays -- contracting the tempo -- there will be no other way but to take upon myself an almost unmanageable task in the realm of lowering costs."^[154]

In this situation, the plan was drawn up without even any definition of the concrete conditions that would have to be combined if the forecast increases in production and produc-

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tivity were to be realized. Essentially, the plan counted on the effects to be brought about by

technological changes which had not yet been studied, and on the introduction of "up-to-date techniques" which were to be imported, without allowing for the time needed for these techniques to be mastered on the scale of society as a whole.

It must be noted that the plan, which was conceived as a plan for building socialism, *offered no prospect of change in the social organization of labor and production*. The relations which had become consolidated in the state sector during the NEP period seemed untouchable. Nowhere was there any question of realizing the prospect outlined by Marx, who wrote that *socialism would change labor relations* and bring about "a new organisation of production, or rather the delivery (setting free) of the social forms of production in present organised labour (engendered by present industry) of the trammels of slavery, of their present class character. . . ." [\[155\]](#)

In the absence of development of new forms of the organization of labor, an increase so rapid as was forecast for the productivity of labor in industry was expected to result mainly from the exercise of increased authority over the workers by the managers of enterprises. The resolution on the Five-Year Plan gave precise attention to this point. It called for "determined struggle against unjustified absenteeism and slackness in production" and for strengthening labor discipline. [\[156\]](#)

*(3) Labor discipline, material incentives,
and the role of the trade unions*

At the beginning of 1929, a broad campaign was launched for the strengthening of discipline. On January 17 a CC resolution drew a harsh picture of the situation in the Donbas mines, denouncing "a decline in labor-discipline among the miners and the technical personnel responsible for supervising the lower echelons." It also denounced "inadequate improvement in the productivity of labour." [\[157\]](#) On February 21 the CC called for stricter labor discipline. [\[158\]](#) On March 6 the Sovnarkom adopted a decree imposing severer punishments for ab-

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senteism and unpunctuality. The managers of enterprises were called upon to enforce the strictest penalties, and the labor exchanges to give priority to workers who had not been dismissed for indiscipline. [\[159\]](#) In the same month, the head of the department of "labour economy" in the VSNKh, I. Kraval, complained of the inadequacy of penalties for offences against discipline, and the indulgence shown in such cases by the arbitration commissions, the inspectorate of labor and the courts. [\[160\]](#) Thus at the very moment when the First Five-Year Plan was relying on labor discipline to bring about a rapid increase in productivity, the existing conditions failed to justify this expectation. The Party therefore increasingly called upon the trade unions to help in strengthening discipline. After adopting the resolution on the Five-Year Plan, the Sixteenth Conference addressed an "appeal to all the workers and working peasants of the Soviet Union," [\[161\]](#) which stressed the gigantic scale of the tasks that had to be accomplished in order to ensure a rapid development of industry. This document emphasized the role that should be played by emulation in the phase that was opening, and the "indissoluble link which binds together *emulation* and the Five-Year Plan." It called for the adoption by the trade unions and by the economic organs of "a system of incentives for those who engage in emulation." [\[162\]](#)

We have seen [\[163\]](#) that a large number of trade-union leaders, including Tomsy, resisted, to some extent, directives which, in their eyes (with the knowledge they possessed of the workers' day-to-day problems) implied the exercise of too strong a pressure upon the workers. They considered that, carried beyond a certain point, this pressure might produce negative effects. Hence their reservations regarding the scale of the tasks projected in the domain of productivity of labor and reducing production costs.

Already in December 1928, at the Eighth Congress of the trade unions, open clashes took place between Tomsy and those who supported his views, on the one hand, and, on the other, the advocates of a "maximum" tempo of industrialization.

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Pravda of December 12 uttered a warning to trade unions which gave insufficient attention "to the new tasks of the reconstruction period." At the Congress itself, Kezelev, one of the leaders of the metalworkers' unions, denounced this charge as "a calumny against the trade-union movement," including in his rebuttal also some articles of the same sort which had appeared in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. In these articles he saw "an attitude of disdain" toward the interests of the working masses and a revival of "Trotskyism" (alluding to the controversy of 1920-1921 about the "statisation" of the trade unions).^[164] He declared that taking the road of industrialization required that "increased attention be given to the everyday personal interests and needs of the worker masses."^[165]

A large proportion of the trade-union cadres who supported this view were relieved of their posts by a decision of the Party. In 1929-1930, in Moscow, Leningrad, the Ukraine, and the Ural region, between 78 and 86 percent of the members of factory trade-union committees were replaced.^[166] These very high percentages show that the overhauling of the factory committees was due to disagreement on the part of the majority of the trade-union officials with demands which they considered could only produce a loss of confidence in the trade unions among the working class.

After this overhaul, the trade-union apparatus was better equipped to act so as to bring about an increase in the productivity of labor, particularly by helping to revise wages and work norms.

A situation thus developed which was marked by a hardening of labor discipline and by the introduction of output norms imposed from above -- a situation unfavorable to an increase in initiative on the part of the masses and to their participation in the fight against "bureaucracy" for which the Sixteenth Conference had appealed.

(e) Agrarian policy

While the Sixteenth Conference inaugurated a new political line in the industrial sphere, it reaffirmed existing principles,

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those of the NEP, so far as relations with the peasantry were concerned.

True, the resolution on agriculture^[167] dwelt upon the development of collective and state farms, but it stated that this must be brought about very gradually, in view of the amount of ideological and political work that the Party would first have to undertake in the rural areas. The middle peasant thus continued to be presented as "the central figure"^[168] in agriculture, and was due to remain so for a long time yet. Here are some indications of how cautiously the problem of collectivization was still dealt with at that time.

(1) The Sixteenth Conference and the problems of agriculture

According to one of the resolutions adopted by the Sixteenth Conference, the maximum

possible development of the "socialised sector" (state and collective farms) would enable the sown areas of this sector to be increased to 26 million hectares in 1933, or 17.5 percent of the entire area to be sown in that year. It was forecast that in 1933 this sector would provide 15.5 percent of the gross production of grain, and 43 percent of the marketed production, or over 8.4 million metric tons.^[169]

Individual farming was thus still to play the predominant role in agriculture, providing nearly 90 percent of total gross production.^[170]

Furthermore, the resolution on agriculture said that "in the next few years the principal increase in agricultural production will come from the individual farms of the poor and middle peasants," for "small farming is still far from having exhausted its potentialities, and will not exhaust them so soon. . ."^[171]

The complete transformation of the agrarian structures was thus situated in a perspective of at least a decade, and kept within the framework of the NEP.^[172]

The resolution on agriculture adopted by the Sixteenth Conference dwelt at length on "the systematic aid that the Soviet

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power must render to the poor and middle peasants in order to increase the productivity of their labour."^[173] Consequently, the state farms and the machine-and-tractor stations were being called upon to *help individual peasants*. The contract system (*kontraktatsiya*) was also regarded as a means for increasing the productivity of the farms of the poor and middle peasants, while constituting a form of linkage between agriculture and industry -- which was to give priority to supplying means of production to peasants who had entered into contracts for delivery of their produce.^[174]

Thus, the Sixteenth Conference stressed, above all, consolidation of the worker-peasant alliance, within the setting of the NEP, this consolidation implying massive aid to individual farms by supplying them with means of production: this was one of the "new forms of the bond." It was to be combined with an increase in direct aid to the peasants by workers going into the countryside to help with the work in the fields, and to develop ideological and political activity there so as to contribute to the struggle of the poor and middle peasants against the kulaks.^[175]

The political line drawn by the Sixteenth Conference was meant to be, for several years, appropriate to the requirements for strengthening Soviet power in the rural areas. It was therefore a "cautious" line, which should avoid improvisations and precipitancy.

(2) *The reasons for the "caution" shown in the agrarian policy decided on by the Sixteenth Conference*

The "cautious" character of the agrarian policy decided on by the Sixteenth Conference makes a striking contrast with its ambitious industrial policy. This "caution" reflected the Party's knowledge of the very great weakness of its rural organizations and its inadequate implantation among the peasantry. It also took account of the weakness of the village soviets, whose authority, still almost entirely formal in 1929, would have to be strengthened if it was desired that the Soviet power should

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exercise real influence on rural life and stimulate a broad movement for collectivization.^[176]

V. The contradiction between industrial and agricultural policy, and the "great change"

The caution which characterized the agrarian policy resolved upon by the Sixteenth Conference soon came into contradiction with the industrial policy it had adopted. Carrying out the latter required that the countryside supply the towns and industry, and also the export trade, with quantities of agricultural produce very much larger than the peasants were prepared to hand over under the conditions of what remained of the NEP. The industrial policy decided on at the beginning of 1929 actually entailed fresh violations of the principles of the NEP, for the increasing resources absorbed by industrialization reduced further and further the possibility of supplying the villages with manufactured goods. Consequently, at a time when the procurement organs were striving to get more produce out of the rural areas, the towns were becoming less and less capable of supplying these areas with products of industry.

In 1929 the peasants found that the system of emergency measures was growing more burdensome, and that it now functioned continuously. The discontent resulting from this led to reductions in the sown area, increased difficulty in getting supplies for the towns, and cuts in food rations. There were even disturbances in some regions.^[177]

Thus, the contradiction between the Party's industrial and agricultural policies soon made itself felt. This meant that either one policy or the other, or both together, would have to be revised, so that they could be coordinated.

The predominance of the will to industrialize (which was connected with the worsening of the internal contradictions of the urban sector) and the conviction that any "retreat" in face

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of peasant discontent would jeopardize industrialization, as that process was conceived, led to the industrial policy being maintained, and measures adopted which were more and more overtly in breach of the NEP, even if the latter was not yet "officially" abandoned.

(a) The attempt to speed up industrialization and the turn toward rapid collectivization

The growing deterioration of the worker-peasant alliance gave, paradoxically, an incentive to accelerating industrialization still further. The Party leadership thought that in this way they could reduce the time during which the shortage of industrial products would be felt. In the immediate period, however, this shortage was aggravated still further.

Similarly, the deterioration of the alliance impelled the Party leadership to turn toward rapid collectivization of farming^[178] (the ideological and political conditions for which were still not present), because state and collective farms increasingly appeared to offer the only solution to the difficulties in agriculture and the problems of feeding the towns. Since collectivization and mechanization were seen as being linked, accelerated collectivization led to raising the targets for production of tractors and agricultural machinery, which meant that more steel was needed, and caused the tempos laid down for increases in industrial production to be speeded up still further, becoming ever more unrealistic.

Thus, the plan approved by the Sixteenth Conference forecast an increase of 22 percent in industrial production in one year. A few months later, without anything having happened to justify such a revision, the annual plan for 1929-1930 raised this forecast to the fantastic height of 32 percent. Eventually, the official statistics recorded an actual increase of 20 percent -- and that was an optimistic estimate, since it did not fully reckon with the effects of increased prices on the "value" of industrial production.^[179]

The replacement of the targets agreed to at the Sixteenth Conference by others which were more and more "radical"

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meant a new break with the still apparently "NEP" line adopted by that conference.

(b) The break with the line of the Sixteenth Conference and its effects on political relations within the Bolshevik Party

In the history of the Bolshevik Party, the break with the line of the Sixteenth Conference hastened the development of a new style of leadership, a new type of relations between the Secretariat and the Party's highest bodies -- the PB, the CC, the conferences and the congresses of the Party. Thus, between April and December 1929, numerous decisions of historic significance -- since they led to the complete abandonment of the NEP -- were taken without the highest Party bodies being consulted. When these bodies met, all they could do was to ratify decisions which were already being carried out and which had been announced publicly: to question them would have meant opening a crisis of leadership that would be highly dangerous in the situation that the country was in. Consequently, during those months of 1929, the CC did no more than seek (ineffectually) to restrict somewhat the degree of the "turn" away from the decisions of the Sixteenth Conference.

The "Right opposition" suffered its final defeat in this period. In May and June 1929 Bukharin published the last article in which he tried, cautiously, to show disagreement with certain aspects of the economic line which was becoming dominant.^[180] Thereafter he was to be deprived of the opportunity to give the slightest public expression to his doubts. On August 21 and 24 *Pravda* launched an open attack on Bukharin. It was the start of a "general offensive" conducted by the entire press and directed against all who were associated in any way, real or supposed, with the positions of the "Right." Nearly all such persons were dismissed from their posts. These measures even affected Lenin's widow and his sister, N. Krupskaya and Maria Ulyanova.^[181] In contrast to what had happened in the case of previous oppositions, no chance to reply was allowed to the Right opposition, even for the pur-

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pose of refuting baseless charges. Still less was there any question of letting them express their disagreement with decisions taken which ran counter to the resolutions of the Sixteenth Conference.^[182] Under these conditions, the Party cadres' opportunities for studying the situation as a whole became extremely restricted.

Worse still, fear of being penalized for "Right deviation" caused most of the cadres to present a falsely optimistic picture of the situation. In this way, under the impact of the contradictions between the industrial and agricultural lines, and of a set of illusions regarding the real situation, the policy of the "great change" began -- the starting point of a process of collectivization carried out under conditions such that its consequences for the worker-peasant alliance and for agricultural production were profoundly different from what the Party

leadership expected.

VI. The "great change" at the end of 1929

The principal aspect of the "great change" was the abandonment of the line of the Sixteenth Conference which had advised a step-by-step approach to collectivization, so that this might be based on firm foundations, in particular by making the transition to collective forms of production depend on the willingness of the peasant masses. It was concern for this that had guided the fixing of the targets to be reached in the agrarian sphere by the end of the First Five-Year Plan. A few points will serve to illustrate the speed and sweep with which the line of the Sixteenth Conference on agriculture was abandoned.

(a) Accelerated collectivization and abandonment of the Sixteenth Conference line

As regards the speeding-up of collectivization, two periods need to be distinguished clearly: one covering the months

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June to October 1929, the other beginning in November 1929 and ending in early March 1930.

The first of these periods was one which saw the development of a collectivisation that was basically voluntary and in accordance with the aspirations of the poor and middle peasants who were then taking the road of collective farming. During this first period, 900,000 peasant households joined the collective farms, which meant an increase in the percentage of collectivized households from 3.9 to 7.6,^[183] a considerable leap forward. However, there were some circumstances which limited the implications and significance of what happened at that time.

(1) During this period it was poor peasants who made up the main body of recruits to the collectivized households: they accounted for 78 percent of the members of the "communes," 67 percent of the members of the "artels," and 60 percent of the members of the "tozes,"^[134] whereas they made up only 35 percent of the rural population (according to the same statistical sources).^[135] It could not be said, therefore, that the *middle* peasant had taken the road to the collective farm, even though, toward October, the proportion of middle peasants did increase a little.^[186]

(2) The development of the movement was extremely uneven, and this was still the case at the end of 1929.^[187]

(3) Collectivization was only voluntary *on the whole*. Already in September 1929 the collective-farm leadership issued directives regarding the formation of collective farms in which they said that what must be aimed at was the collectivizing of "entire localities" (this was what was called "complete," *sploshnaya*, collectivization), the collectivizing of practically all the means of production, and the forming of *large-scale kolkhozes*.^[188] But the collectivizing of an "entire locality" rarely corresponded to the will of the peasants concerned: it was exceptional at that period for *all* the peasants of a locality to be ready at the same time to join the *kolkhoz*. Likewise, it was rare for them to be ready to renounce individual ownership of almost all their means of production and to form large-scale *kolkhozes*.

Already in the summer of 1929 administrative pressure was

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being brought to bear on the peasants to get them to enter the *kolkhozes*. This pressure took, first of all, the form of "economic threats." The local authorities said to the peasants, including the poor peasants: "If you don't join the kolkhoz you will be given neither seed nor machinery. [189] In some regions, however, the pressures soon became more direct. Those who declined to join the *kolkhoz* were subjected to fines, given a spell in prison, and threatened with deportation to another part of the country. [190]

The period that began in November 1929 was marked by a considerable increase in the pressure exerted on the peasants, so that the nature of the collectivization movement changed. The article by Stalin entitled "[A Year of Great Change](#)" [191] opened this period. In it he announced for the coming year (1930) targets that were a great deal more ambitious than those which had been laid down for 1932-1933. He said that in 1930 the state and collective farms would provide over 50 percent of the marketed production of grain -- 1.8 and 4.9 million metric tons respectively. [192] The sown areas of these farms taken as a whole were to cover 18.3 million hectares, as against 6 million in 1929. Thus, the tempos which had been forecast only a few months earlier were now to be exceeded, and the line of the Sixteenth Conference abandoned.

But the revision of tempos did not stop there. Less than a month after Stalin's article appeared, the Sovnarkom decided that 30 million hectares must be collectivized in 1930, and that the *sovkhozes* must cover an area of 3.7 million hectares [193]: about a quarter of all peasant households were to be collectivized during 1930.

The close link between the forecasts for collectivization and the targets for procurement shows that the deciding factor in fixing the pace of collectivization was not the transforming in depth of the situation of the peasant masses, but the will to establish as quickly as possible structures that would facilitate securing from the countryside the quantities of grain needed for the realization of the industrial targets.

This speeding-up of collectivization was based upon an exaggeratedly optimistic view of the situation in the rural

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areas -- a view that underlay a series of mistakes which were to have the gravest consequences for the subsequent functioning of the *kolkhozes* and for the worker-peasant alliance.

(b) The optimistic view of the situation at the end of 1929

Already in his article of November 1929 Stalin felt able to say that "*the middle peasant is joining the collective farm*," adding that this was "the basis of that radical change in the development of agriculture that constitutes the most important achievement of the Soviet government during the last year." [194] He went on to say that "the new and decisive feature of the present collective-farm movement is that the peasants are joining the collective farms not in separate groups, as was formerly the case, but by whole villages, *volosts*, districts and even *okrugs*." [195]

These formulations considerably overestimated the progress achieved by the collectivization movement. Actually, at the time when Stalin's article appeared, collectivization embraced only a minority of peasant households, mainly those of poor peasants, and "complete"

collectivization was exceptional.^[196]

The weeks that followed showed (as we shall see shortly) that accelerated collectivization, in the forms which it assumed, came up against strong resistance from the peasant masses. This was to be admitted in March 1930.

However, in the speech he gave on December 27, 1929, to a conference of Marxists specializing in agrarian problems, Stalin emphasized once more the "ease" with which, according to him, the collective farm movement was developing. One of the reasons he mentioned as explaining this feature of the movement was the fact that "in our country the land is nationalised, and this facilitates the transition of the individual peasant to collectivist lines."^[197] Stalin reaffirmed that the conditions existed for "complete" collectivization to be carried out successfully in many regions, adding that this was why it was possible to go over "from the policy of restricting

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the exploiting tendencies of the kulak to the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class."^[198]

A study of what actually happened in the rural areas during the winter of 1929-1930 shows that the entry of the peasants into the collective farms took place under conditions that were far from being as favorable as might be supposed from the statements just quoted.

(c) The concrete conditions of the "turn" toward collectivization in the autumn of 1929

The "turn" toward collectivization in the autumn of 1929 took place under very contradictory conditions. On the one hand, there was the continuing and broadening movement of many poor peasants, and of a certain proportion of the middle peasants (especially those who had only recently emerged from poverty), into collective farming: this movement was facilitated by the help which, since the Sixteenth Conference, the Party and the state apparatus gave to newly formed *kolkhozes*. On the other hand, though, this turn was due (and to an increasing extent) to the intensification of administrative pressure exerted upon the peasants.

The fixing of "collectivisation targets" which were continually being raised, and which were determined without any preliminary investigation, contributed to the multiplication of these administrative pressures. The local authorities engaged in a kind of "emulation" in scoring high percentages of collectivization. They were moved to act in this way by fear of the penalties that could rain down upon the cadres in places which "lagged behind,"^[199] and by the false notion they had that a "general advance" of the movement^[200] was in fact going on, so that they were apprehensive of being left behind. Furthermore, increasing intervention by elements from outside the villages, usually very enthusiastic but also very ignorant of the local situation, contributed to the employment of measures which had nothing in common with an effort to persuade the peasants -- something that would have required more time

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than was available to the delegates or teams sent from the towns to speed up collectivization. The "delegates for collectivisation" were often assigned tasks to be fulfilled within a very short period, with penalties for nonfulfillment, and this prevented them from engaging in time-consuming mass work.^[201]

The forms of pressure brought to bear on the peasants (in order to "encourage" entry into the

kolkhoz by those who were not ready to join it voluntarily) were very diverse. They could be measures of an administrative, economic, or penal character -- the last being usually connected with the operations of "dekulakization" to be described later.

The two "non-penal sanctions" most commonly used against peasants who were unwilling to join the *kolkhoz* were: a ban on the trading organs selling them any goods whatsoever, and depriving them of their land (which was taken by the *kolkhoz*). In other cases, peasants who failed to join the *kolkhoz* found themselves compelled to exchange the land they cultivated for other land, of poor quality, situated far from the village. Sometimes their seed corn, their cattle, and all or some of their instruments of labor were confiscated. They were allowed a few days in which to make up their minds.^[202]

To these sanctions others could be added, such as fixing a high level of taxation on an individual peasant, forbidding the children of peasants who were not collective farmers to attend school,^[203] and so on. Such measures were "illegal" and were subsequently condemned by the Party leadership. However, between November 1929 and March 1930 they were widely employed by the local authorities.

At the same time, the policy of "dekulakization" was used to get as many peasants as possible into the *kolkhozes*. In principle, this policy should have meant taking severe measures only against a minority of kulaks. Thus, shortly before the end of 1929, a subcommission of the CC proposed that the kulaks be divided into three categories. The first was to consist of the active opponents of Soviet power, guilty of hostile acts. Those belonging to this category were to be sentenced to prison or exile. At the time, the number of heads of families belonging

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to this category was estimated at about 52,000. The second category of kulaks would consist of nonactive opponents of Soviet power. The village assemblies were to decide their fate. In principle, the subcommission considered that these kulaks should be banished from the village, but not sent to Siberia: their number was estimated at 112,000. Finally, the third category was to be made up of those thought to be "capable of re-education": its members could be allowed to join the *kolkhoz*, but without the right to vote for five years, after which they would become full-fledged members. In the RSFSR alone this category was estimated to include about 650,000 households. The subcommission considered that it was important to make use of the labor power of the kulaks' families, numbering in all some five million persons (this being presumably the figure for the USSR as a whole).^[204]

However, the PB rejected this proposal. In their view, it did not answer to the requirements of the policy of "eliminating the kulaks as a class." At the November plenum Molotov had said that it was necessary to "adopt towards the kulak the attitude that has to be adopted towards our worst enemy not yet liquidated."^[205]

At the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 dekulakization was carried out without any precise political orientation. In principle, it was supposed to be a task for the poor peasants, but, in practice, this group was not organized, and so dekulakization was carried out in most cases by elements from outside the village -- workers' "brigades," or the GPU -- who, with (or sometimes without) the help of some poor peasants (real or alleged), themselves drew up the list of "kulaks" and divided them into three categories. Those who fell into the first category were arrested by the GPU. Those in the second category were exiled. Those in the third category were allowed to remain where they were, with a minimum of possessions, and were assigned poor-quality land outside the village: if they failed to supply the procurement quota fixed for them, their possessions could be confiscated and themselves exiled. The information available indicated that only a minority were assigned to the third category.^[206]

In relation to collectivization as it was carried out at the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930, dekulakization became a means of forcing the poor and middle peasants to join the *kolkhozes*, since, if they failed to do so, they could easily be labeled "kulaks." Under these conditions, many peasants joined the *kolkhoz* not from conviction but from fear of being "dekulakized" by the local authorities. The numbers sent into exile in 1930 were considerable. Entire trains, called by the peasants "death-trains," carried the exiles off toward the north, the steppes, and the forests. Many of them died on the way, from cold, hunger, or disease. Anna Louise Strong wrote: "Several times during the spring and summer I saw these echelons moving along the railroad: a doleful sight, men, women and children uprooted."[\[207\]](#)

Sometimes only the women and children were exiled, since the head of the family had been arrested; at other times, entire families were exiled; and at yet other times, the children were left behind, to become beggars and tramps (*besprizornyye*).[\[208\]](#)

Such activities (which were denounced in March 1930) played a considerable role in the collectivization campaign of the winter of 1929-1930, and seriously affected the quality of the *kolkhozes* formed under such coercion. Thus, writing of collectivization in the Ural region, the agrarian journal *Na Agrarnom Fronte* said: "The local organisations in the rural areas found in dekulakisation a powerful means for drawing peasants into the *kolkhozes* and for changing some *kolkhozes* into communes. The recourse to intimidation, associated with other procedures, was often accompanied by threats of dekulakisation against those who did not let themselves be 'drawn in.'"[\[209\]](#)

In these circumstances, the expression "kulak" no longer meant merely a rich peasant: it now meant any peasant who did not want to join the *kolkhoz*.

Generally speaking, it referred to a certain attitude to collectivization. In 1930 a publication of the Communist Academy wrote: "By 'kulak' we mean the carrier of certain political tendencies which are most frequently discernible in the *podkulachnik*, male or female."[\[210\]](#)

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The documents and publications of the time show that there were many cases in which poor or middle peasants were dekulakized in this way. Dekulakization might also result in the possessions of those dekulakized being appropriated, or bought at absurdly low prices, by the persons who carried out the operation: a house was bought for a rouble, a cow for 15 kopecks.[\[211\]](#) The absence of previous implantation of the Party in the countryside, and the intervention of "dekulakization agents" coming from outside and acting in haste, thus resulted in the expropriation, arrest, or exiling even of agricultural laborers and of persons known to be poor peasants.[\[212\]](#)

As the journal *Na Agrarnom Fronte* put it: "The peasant is beginning to associate with this idea [the idea of mass collectivization] the possibility that he too may find himself one day among the dekulakised, falling thus into the camp of the enemies of Soviet power."[\[213\]](#)

(d) *Accelerated collectivization halted in
March 1930*

A situation of insecurity and tension thus developed in the rural areas which was most detrimental to the worker-peasant alliance. In March 1930 an article by Stalin called a halt to the methods which had characterized the "great change" and speeded up the tempo of collectivization. The article appeared in *Pravda* on March 2, 1930, under the title: "[Dizzy with](#)

[Success](#).^[214] A few days later (March 15th) came a decision by the CC entitled: "On the Fight Against Distortions of the Party Line in the Collective-Farm Movement."^[215]

An essential feature of Stalin's article "Dizzy with Success" was the warnings which it contained, directed against certain "dangerous and harmful sentiments," of which, however "it cannot be said that [they] are at all widespread in the ranks of Our Party."^[216]

One of the tendencies which Stalin denounced in this way was that which violated the principle that peasants should join the *kolkhoz* without coercion. Another was shown in allowing insufficiently for the diversity of conditions in the different regions of the USSR.

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Stalin deplored the fact that, instead of the preparatory work needed to get the peasants to join the *kolkhozes* of their own free will, there had been "bureaucratic decreeing of the collective-farm movement." He mentioned that in certain regions, and specifically in Turkestan, the local authorities had coerced the peasants who did not want to join the *kolkhoz* "by threatening to use armed force, by threatening that peasants who are not yet ready to join the collective farms will be deprived of irrigation-water and manufactured goods."^[217] Stalin said of these methods that they were worthy of Sergeant Prishibeyev. He emphasized that such practices were a violation of the Party line and could only have the effect of "discrediting the idea of the collective-farm movement."^[218]

Another tendency denounced in Stalin's article of March 2 was that which failed to respect the *artel* form as the predominant form of collective farm. He mentions attempts to "leap straight away into the agricultural commune," which, he says, can only result in "irritating the collective-farm peasant" and making it harder to deal with "the grain problem," which "is still *unsolved*."^[219]

The article then tries to analyze the reasons why these tendencies have appeared. The explanation offered is that the "easiness" of the successes achieved had "gone to the heads" of a certain number of Party members and cadres: they had "become dizzy with success," so that they thought that complete collectivization could be achieved very quickly, even by being forced upon reluctant peasants.

The article included an appeal: "*We must put an end to these sentiments. That is now one of the immediate tasks of the Party.*"^[220]

The appearance of this article caused much disarray among the local Party cadres, who were wholly committed to the fight for collectivization and had not previously received any serious warnings against the methods to which they were having recourse. At first, some cadres thought that the article must be a forgery, and attempts were made, at the level of the Party's basic units, to prevent its republication in the regional press and stop its diffusion among the masses: some newspapers containing the article were even confiscated from peasants.^[221]

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The CC's decision published on March 15, 1930, reaffirmed that the practices denounced by Stalin were indeed to be regarded as "deviations from the Party line," and detrimental to the future development of the collective-farm movement.

One month after his article "Dizzy with Success," Stalin returned to the subject of the conditions under which collectivization had proceeded in the winter of 1929-1930. He did this in the form of a "reply" to the numerous letters provoked by his earlier article.^[222]

In this "reply" Stalin said that the *root* of the mistakes made lay in "a wrong approach to the middle peasant. Resort to coercion in economic relations with the middle peasant. Forgetfulness of the fact that the economic bond with the masses of the middle peasants must be built not on the basis of coercive measures, but on the basis of agreement with the middle peasant, of alliance with him."^[223] He mentioned three "chief errors," namely: violation of the principle that peasants' entry into the collective farms should be voluntary; forgetting the fact that the rate of progress of collectivization could not be the same in every region; and violation of the Leninist principle of "not running ahead of the development of the masses, of not decreeing the movement of the masses, of not becoming divorced from the masses."^[224]

The explanation given remained the same as that presented a month previously. It was only a matter of "some of our comrades, intoxicated by the first successes of the collective farm movement," who "forgot" the instructions of Lenin and of the CC and fell victim to the "dizziness" of "vanity and conceit."^[225]

And so, a serious violation of the Party line, affecting the entire country, was "explained" by referring to a mere psychological metaphor -- "dizziness from success" which had proved too much for "some of our comrades." Given the scale of what had happened, and the gravity of its consequences, such an "explanation" is obviously inadequate. Mistakes made on such a scale and persisted in for several months could only result from a political line and a style of leadership that engendered certain practices.

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This political line was the one based on the proclaimed existence of a "great change" which, in reality, had not occurred. Because of this false estimate of the situation, the local cadres of the Party were given collectivization targets which did not correspond to the state of mind of the peasant masses. The pressure brought to bear on the cadres had caused the local authorities to develop practices which had nothing to do with any "dizziness from success" but were *bourgeois practices* -- meaning recourse to threats and coercion against the masses, which was the method used very widely to drive the peasants into the collective farms against their will.

Moreover, it must not be lost sight of that the Party leadership allowed matters to go on like this *for several months*. This means, since the leadership cannot have been wholly out of touch with reality, that it let *these practices continue*, because, from its point of view, attainment of the "targets" of collectivization seemed at that time more important than respect for the will of the peasant masses. The CC called a halt^[226] at a moment when these "targets" had been attained and even exceeded, and when continuing to apply such crude coercion risked bringing about extremely dangerous consequences both politically and economically (in particular, compromising the prospects for the spring sowing).

In any case, the stop put to certain methods of dekulakization and collectivization did not prevent some of those who had been labeled "kulaks" from continuing to be sent into exile (for months on end whole trains were devoted to this task, even hindering the transport of goods ^[227]), nor did it prevent similar methods from reappearing after a few weeks had passed.

(e) The immediate effects of the "great change" and of the halt called in March-April 1930

The magnitude of the operation carried out during the winter of 1929-1930 dealt a decisive blow to the kulaks. They practically ceased to exist as a class. In a few months, the main

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base of private capitalism in the Soviet Union was smashed, and this meant the beginning of a radical change in the social relations which had prevailed until then in the Soviet countryside.

Nevertheless, the blow struck at the kulaks had been struck, in the main, by forces from outside the village, and using practices which hit hard at broad strata of the peasantry. The result was that serious damage was done to the worker-peasant alliance. Stalin admitted this when he said that, if the mistakes made were "persisted in," and "not eliminated rapidly and completely" (which they were not), they would "lead us straight to the discrediting of the collective-farm movement, to dissension in our relations with the middle peasants, to the disorganization of the poor peasants."^[228]

The "discrediting" of the collective-farm movement soon revealed itself in quantitative terms. By February 20, 1930, 50 percent of the peasant farms had been collectivized, which was considered at the time to be a real and serious success, for "we had *overfulfilled* the five-year plan of collectivisation by more than 100 percent."^[229] The percentage of collectivization even advanced to 59 percent by March 1, 1930.^[230] In his article "Dizzy with Success," Stalin declared that the task of the hour was "to *consolidate* the successes achieved and to *utilize* them systematically for our further advancement."^[231]

Instead of a consolidation and a continuation of the advance made, however, what happened was something quite different. The relaxation of constraint was accompanied by a rapid reduction in the percentage of households collectivized, a reduction which continued until October 1930, by which time this percentage had fallen to 21.7 percent.^[232] The dimensions of the retreat show how brittle was the "collectivization" accomplished in the winter of 1929-1930. It was all the more so because some of the *kolkhozes* which had been formed in haste and which survived the "halt" of March 1930 functioned very poorly, as is apparent from a number of documents and indices.^[233]

A few words must be said here about the qualitative aspect of the collectivization of the winter of 1929-1930. This aspect

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was dominated by a certain number of features which were far from being eliminated later on. On the one hand, some of the collective farmers, who had entered the *kolkhozes* against their will, worked grudgingly: some peasants who had been supporters of Soviet power until then were even turned into more or less hostile elements. This was one aspect of the very grave damage done to the worker-peasant alliance. On the other hand, quite a few peasants who were not hostile to Soviet power had joined the *kolkhozes* without being convinced of the superiority of collective farming. They retained their outlook as individual petty producers, and did not bring to the *kolkhoz* the spirit of collective initiative which was needed if it was to work properly. This circumstance found reflection in the considerable amount of stealing of collective property that went on, and also in the fact that many *kolkhozes* were managed in such a way that some of their marketable production was sold otherwise than through the lawful channels.^[234] The Soviet government was soon convinced of the necessity to put the *kolkhozes* under the control of elements alien to the peasantry, so as to impose work norms and standards of management by means of disciplinary measures. New hierarchical relations were established in the countryside, which prevented the collective farmers from running their own affairs.

Furthermore, the peasants who had been made to join the collective farms against their will had often slaughtered some of their cattle,^[235] so that the collective farms lacked draft animals and, in general, had very little livestock.

Thus, a series of objective and subjective conditions compromised the success of collectivization from the start. This explains why it was that, for many years, collective farming

produced material results that were much inferior to the farming of the NEP period, and why, in order to appease peasant discontent and help to bring about a certain recovery in production, the Soviet government decided in 1930 to permit the collective-farm peasants to cultivate individual holdings which were quite sizable, and to possess livestock of their own. Later, it was even necessary to reestablish a "legal" free

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market and to allow collective farms and collective farmers to dispose of part of their production therein. These measures, by their scope and because of the conditions in which they had to be taken, produced in their turn a negative effect on the proper functioning of the *kolkhozes*, for the private activities of the collective farmers seriously encroached upon their work in the collective-farm fields.^[236] Thus, by setting in motion an immense social transformation without the active participation of the broad masses of the peasantry, and frequently even against their will, serious prejudice was done not only to the worker-peasant alliance but also to collective farming itself and to the role that it might have played in the development of agricultural production. The subsequent political consequences of all this, which had a marked effect on class relations as a whole, were such as to raise the question whether accelerated collectivization, in the form that it took at the end of 1929, was really necessary.

(f) *The question of the need for accelerated collectivization and of the forms this took at the end of 1929*

What we know about the conditions in which the accelerated process of collectivization that was set going in the last months of 1929 actually developed permits us to conclude that it corresponded to a *political* necessity, and not to an "economic necessity." In 1929 it was materially possible to bring about a rapid increase in industrial and agricultural production without undertaking unprepared "mass collectivization." This increase could have been effected in such a way that the poor and middle peasants strengthened their positions and became organized so as to *take the offensive themselves against the kulaks and go over to collective production*. What was missing that was wanted if matters were to take this course was the *ideological and political* conditions for working out and applying such a line, together with the time needed for these political conditions to be prepared. But if there was no time, that was not because of "economic difficul-

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ties" which had to be coped with in a hurry. There "was no time" because the way in which the *class struggle* had developed since 1927 had created a situation that was increasingly dangerous for Soviet power. The dangers which had accumulated were largely due to the contradictions in the political line followed after 1927, the line of speeding up a certain type of industrialization which increasingly deprived the rural areas of manufactured goods and led to indiscriminate application of the emergency measures.

In the situation which gave rise to these measures, the Bolshevik Party leadership presented the problem of the rapid development of collective farms and state farms first and foremost *in economic terms*. As they saw it, this development offered the only means of quickly increasing the production of grain (the Soviet Union was expected to become "in about three years' time . . . one of the world's largest grain producers, if not the largest") and this was to enable the state to achieve "decisive successes" in grain procurement and the accumulation of emergency reserves.^[237] Transformation of social relations and struggle against the kulaks thus appeared as *conditions* to be realized in order to reach the *economic targets* aimed at. At the outset, the turn

toward collectivization was presented as an integral part of an *economic policy* aimed at establishing new forms of production, and class struggle was, as it were, *subordinated* to the purposes of the Party's economic policy. Very soon, however, the actual process took a quite different course,^[238] as a result of the development of the contradictions. The latter had become extremely acute through not being correctly dealt with in good time, and engendered a series of pragmatic measures which did not constitute a coherent political line (hence the succession of hasty "turns" and "halts," made without preparation because they were not foreseen). It was the interlinking of these contradictions (between classes in the village, between the Party's industrial and agricultural policies, between the interests of town and country, etc.) and the interventions to which they gave rise (interventions not inspired by an overall analysis) which caused a process of uncontrolled collectivization to

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begin. And this, despite the victory won over the private bourgeoisie, led to a split in the worker-peasant alliance and a profound weakening of Soviet agriculture.

The absence of control over the collectivization process resulted in a succession of more or less improvised measures, intended to deal with a series of unforeseen "crises" for which the Party had been unable to prepare itself. If, despite the lack of a coherent political line, the process of collectivization seems to have developed with a certain "logicality," that was because of the "objective logic" of the succession of crises and because the measures taken to deal with them were themselves dictated by a relatively stable ideological conception.

Underlying the collectivization process were the developing and shifting contradictions between classes. The form it took was largely the result of political and ideological determinations. It was due, among other things, to the Bolshevik Party's extremely weak implantation in the countryside and the inadequacy of the help given to the poor and middle peasants -- especially the almost complete lack of support for the efforts that some of these peasants had made to follow the path of collectivization. It was due to a conception of industrialization that was oriented increasingly toward modern large-scale industry, requiring large investments and imports of equipment. It was due to a style of leadership which did not allow the true lessons to be drawn from the experience accumulated by the workers and peasants during the first five years of the NEP. It was due, finally, to a style of discussion within the Party which was aimed above all at striking down anyone who expressed views different from those of the majority in the PB or of the Secretariat. When the right and the opportunity to express their views had been taken from such dissenters,^[239] and they tried to make their voices heard nevertheless, penal measures were taken against them, and they were treated as enemies.^[240] Yet it was necessary, if the questions raised were to be clarified, that democratic centralism should really operate, that genuine discussion should develop, that the refutation of errors should be based on concrete analyses, and not, as increasingly came to be the practice

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during the last years of the NEP, on the use of a selection of quotations from Lenin, usually torn from the context in which the ideas they contained had been formulated.

The style of discussion which became established in the last years of the NEP did not help to *show up* the mistakes made by the various oppositions, so that as soon as these groups had been eliminated, usually by organizational methods, the substance of some of their theses easily reemerged, in some more or less modified form -- the best example of this being the theory of exacting "tribute" from the peasantry, which was, basically, only another version of the theory of "primitive socialist accumulation."^[241]

This same style of discussion led, as a rule, to rejection *en bloc* of everything said by the opposition: thus, after the Sixteenth Conference, when the "Right" opposition stressed the need to undertake a form of industrialization compatible with the principle that agriculture was the basis of economic development (a thesis which the majority of the Party had accepted up to that time), this position was denounced as "pro-peasant," "pro-kulak," and hostile to industrialization.

On the plane of ideology, the form taken by the collectivization process -- which, in practice, did not put "in command" the task of strengthening the alliance with the poor and middle peasants -- was determined by the growing predominance in the Bolshevik Party's ideology of an "economist-technicist" element. This led to the belief that the difficulties that arose during the last years of the NEP would be solved through the development of modern industry and the transformation of the "technological bases" of production, especially in agriculture. The increasing role ascribed to "technological progress" extended even to ideological and political problems. Consequently, recognition of the necessity for ideological and political struggle against the petty-bourgeois and individualist ideas existing among the peasantry tended to be replaced by the thesis according to which it would be by the introduction of machinery into agriculture that the "peasant mentality" would be changed.^[242]

This conception could not but favor an accelerated process

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of collectivization, carried through even without the peasants having first been convinced of the correctness of the collective-farm road. Indeed, it led to a belief that through the use of machinery the peasants' ideas would change, this use of machinery being the "essential" means for changing the "peasant mentality."

From this example it can be seen that changes in the superstructure were subordinated to technological changes. In order to understand how such subordination can have appeared "acceptable," we need to take an overall view of the Bolshevik ideological formation, and of the way in which this was itself transformed.

Notes

1. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, p. 3. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[Grain Procurements and the Prospects for the Development of Agriculture](#)". -- DJR] [p. 398]
2. *Ibid.*, p. 7. [p. 398]
3. *Ibid.*, p. 52 (Stalin's report to the Moscow Party organization, April 13, 1928). [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission](#)". -- DJR] [p. 399]
4. N. Bukharin, *Uroki khlebozagotovok, Shakhtinskogo dela, i zadachi partii*, pp. 32-33. (Article first published in *Pravda*, April 19, 1928). [p. 399]
5. *K.P.:S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 372 ff., especially p. 377. [p. 399]
6. Frumkin's letter is known to us only in part, from the quotations from it included by Stalin in a reply dated June 20 (*Works*, vol. 11, p. 121 ff.), and from a speech by Thälmann reported in *Pravda*, August 11, 1929 (M. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 336, n. 17). [p. 400]
7. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 300. [p. 400]
8. These divergences were "publicly" acknowledged by Stalin in a speech in February 1929, to a restricted audience -- a joint meeting of the PB and the Presidium of the CCC. The text of this speech was published for the first time in volume 11 of Stalin's *Works*, the Russian original of which appeared

in 1949. (See *Works*, vol. 11, p. 335). [Transcriber's Note: See Stalin's "[Bukharin's Group and the Right Deviation in Our Party](#)". -- DJR] [p. 400]

9. There had, in fact, been a stormy discussion between Rykov and Stalin in February 1928, when the general secretary returned from his tour of Siberia and Rykov spoke against the way the

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emergency measures were being applied. In the Trotsky Archives there is a letter (T.1106) mentioning this discussion. At the seventeenth Party Congress Rykov himself said that the "Right Opposition" had begun at the time of the application of the emergency measures decided upon in the winter of 1927-1928. See *XVII-y Syezd VKP(b)* (1934), p. 210, quoted in Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 61, n. 5. [p. 401]

10. At the time of the July plenum, Bukharin called on Kamenev, the former leader of the united opposition, who had been expelled from the Party by the Fifteenth Congress but was then in the course of applying for readmission. It is mainly from Kamenev that we know of Bukharin's reactions to the discussions in the PB and the plenum in the summer of 1928. The account of Bukharin's conversation with Kamenev is document T.1897 in the Trotsky Archives (quoted in Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 82, n. 1). [p. 401]
11. Actually, the "bond based on metals" was one of the requirements of the NEP as it had been formulated by Lenin. This requirement, which implied, first and foremost, supplying to the poor and middle peasants adequate quantities of instruments of labor, even if only simple ones, had been very little honored between 1923 and 1928, as was shown by the *underequipment* of the farms worked by these peasants. In 1928 Stalin gave a different interpretation of the "bond based on metals": for him, it had to mean the *large-scale supply of tractors and machines* to agriculture. His speech, entitled "Industrialization and the Grain Problem," is in *Works*, vol. 11, p. 164 ff. (see especially p. 172). [Transcriber's Note: This is the second of three speeches Stalin delivered at the "[Plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR] [p. 401]
12. Ibid., p. 167. [p. 401]
13. Ibid. The full text of this speech was not published until twenty years later, doubtless because this declaration signified a break with the resolutions adopted previously on the need to continue a policy of "closing the scissors." [p. 401]
14. What Bukharin said is known to us only indirectly, in particular from document T.1901 in the Trotsky Archives. See also Robert V. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia*, pp. 331-333; Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 79; and Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 303-304. [p. 402]
15. Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 65. [p. 402]
16. Ibid., pp. 76-77. [p. 402]

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17. *K.P.S.S. D rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 372-379. [p. 402]
18. Ibid., p. 392. In November 1926, as we saw, Stalin had said something similar: see his report to the Fifteenth Party Conference, in *Works*, vol. 8, p. 301. [Transcriber's Note: See Stalin's "[The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party](#)". -- DJR] [p. 403]
19. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 393. [p. 403]
- Ibid., pp. 394, 395. It is to be observed that the position that the NEP was not
20. being abandoned was kept up not only through 1928 but for long after, even when nothing was left that corresponded to the principles of the New Economic Policy. Thus, *Pravda* of March 21, 1931, was still saying: "N.E.P. has not yet ended." The persistence of this claim was due not only to the fact that throughout the 1920s the NEP had become the symbol of the worker-

peasant alliance, but also to the fact that the economic, political, and ideological conditions Lenin had stated were necessary before it would be possible to proceed to a stage higher than the NEP had not been attained, so that it was difficult to proclaim officially the going over to a different policy.
[p. 403]

21. Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 81. [p. 403]
22. See document T.1897 in the Trotsky Archives, quoted by Cohen, *Bukharin*, pp. 291-292. [p. 404]
23. On this see volume I of the present work, pp. 423-424. [p. 404]
24. See the article by E. Goldenberg, a supporter of Bukharin's views, on "The German Problem," in *Bolshevik*, March 15, 1928, p. 35. [p. 404]
25. This characterization of Social Democracy had been given for the first time by Zinoviev in the early 1920s, but was then dropped by him (see Theodore Draper, "The Ghost of Social-Fascism," in *Commentary*, February 1960, pp. 29-42). Stalin took up the idea in 1924, notably in an article published in *Bolshevik*, no. 11 (1924), with the title: "[Concerning the International Situation](#)." In this he wrote: "Fascism is not only a military-technical category. Fascism is the bourgeoisie's fighting organization that relies on the active support of Social-Democracy. Social Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of Fascism. . . . These organizations . . . are not antipodes, they are twins" (*Works*, vol. 6, p. 294). Nevertheless, this conception did not dominate Comintern policy in 1924, and until the Sixth Congress the Communist Parties practiced the "united front" in various forms. [p. 404]
26. At the plenum of April 1929 Stalin was to assert that "the elements of a new revolutionary upsurge are accumulating in the

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capitalist countries" (*Works*, vol. 12, p. 17 [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR]) -- an assertion refuted by events. [p. 405]

27. The "third period" followed that of "relative stabilization," between 1923 and 1927, itself having been preceded by the revolutionary period of 1917-1923 (see F. Claudin, *The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform*, especially pp. 156-157). [p. 405]
28. In his report to the CC plenum of April 1929 Stalin said that his first disagreements with Bukharin on international questions arose at the time of the Sixth Comintern Congress. According to Stalin, Bukharin there put forward theses which, contrary to the rules normally observed, had not been previously submitted to the Soviet Party delegation, so that the latter was obliged to move twenty amendments, which "created a rather awkward situation for Bukharin" (*Works*, vol. 12, p. 21). [p. 405]
29. Bukharin's speeches are in *VI Kongressy Komintern*, vol. III, pp. 30-31, 137-138, 143-145; and vol. V, p. 130; quoted in Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 293. English translations will be found in *International Press Correspondence*, vol. 8, nos. 41, 49, 56, 59 (July 30, August 13 and 27, September 4, 1928). [p. 405]
30. See above, note 28. [p. 405]

31. At the plenum of April 1929 Stalin spoke about his disagreements with Bukharin which had been reflected in the amendments voted by the Sixth Congress. He mentioned four fundamental points of divergence:
 - (a) The international situation. The Soviet Party delegation had moved an amendment declaring that aggravation of the world economic crisis opened up "the prospect of maturing conditions for a new revolutionary upsurge."
 - (b) The fight against Social Democracy. The Soviet Party delegation criticized Bukharin's theses for saying no more than that this fight was one of the basic tasks of the sections of the Comintern, for it considered that this statement did not go far enough. Its amendments declared that, if the fight against Social Democracy was to be carried through successfully, "stress must be laid on the fight against the so-called 'Left-wing' of Social Democracy, that 'Left' wing which, by playing with 'Left' phrases and thus

adroitly deceiving the workers, is retarding their mass defection from Social-Democracy."

(c) Bukharin's theses spoke of the need to fight against the Right deviation, but said nothing about the need to fight against conciliation with the Right deviation.

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(d) Party discipline. Another fault found in Bukharin's theses was that "no mention was made of the necessity of maintaining iron discipline in the Communist Parties" (Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 23-24). [p. 405]

- These few points indicate what the lines of cleavage were that separated
32. Bukharin's views from those of the majority of the July 1928 plenum, where international problems were concerned. I do not propose to analyze here the reasons for and significance of these divisions, and still less to discuss the attitudes taken up by the various delegations at the Sixth Comintern Congress. However, it is to be noted that the resolutions adopted by the Sixth Congress committed the Comintern to a particular form of struggle by the working class, since these resolutions failed to show clearly the need for *class alliances*. Noteworthy also is the clash at the Congress between the sharply opposed views expressed by Ercoli (Togliatti) and by Thaelmann. For the former,

Fascism, as a mass movement, is a movement of the petty and middle bourgeoisie dominated by the big bourgeoisie and the agrarians; moreover, it has no basis in a traditional organization of the working class. On the other hand, Social-Democracy is a movement with a labour and petty bourgeois basis; it derives its force mainly from an organisation which is recognized by enormous sections of the workers as the traditional organisation of their class.

For Thaelmann, however, "the 'Left-wing' Social-Democratic leaders are the most dangerous enemies of Communism in the labour movement." It was Thaelmann's formulation that was incorporated in the resolution passed by the Sixth Congress on the international situation, (*International Press Correspondence*, vol. 8, no. 50 [August 16, 1928], p. 879; no. 53 [August 23, 1928], p. 941; no. 83 [November 23, 1928], p. 1571). [p. 406]

33. *Pravda*, October 23, 1928, and Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, p. 231 ff. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[The Right Danger in the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR] [p. 406]
34. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, pp. 234-235. [p. 406]
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 237, 240. [p. 406]
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 242, 244-245. [p. 407]
37. A French translation of this article is included in Bukharin et al., *La Question paysanne*, pp. 213-240. [p. 407]
38. A resolution of the Political Bureau dated October 8, 1928, reprimanded Bukharin for having published this article without

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previous "authorization." The resolution was passed by the majority against the votes of Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin himself (F. M. Vaganov, *Pravy Uklon v VKP(b)*, pp. 161-163 174-175). [p. 407]

39. *Torgovo-Promyshlennaya Gazeta*, September 14, 1928; *Pravda*, September 25, 1928; Robert V. Daniels, *A Documentary History of Communism*, p. 311; Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 295, Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 315-317. [p. 408]
40. Bukharin et al, *La Question paysanne*, pp. 218, 220. [p. 409]
41. *Ibid.*, p. 220. [p. 409]
42. *Ibid.*, p. 222. [p. 410]

43. Ibid., p. 231. [p. [410](#)]
44. Ibid., p. 235. [p. [410](#)]
45. Ibid., pp. 235-236. [p. [410](#)]
46. Ibid., pp. 239-240. [p.]
47. Besides the sources in the Trotsky Archives, already mentioned, references to these requests by Bukharin are to be found in the *Sotsialistichesky Vestnik* (the organ of the Menshevik émigrés), no. 9 (1929), which reproduced the gist of one of Bukharin's conversations with Kamenev, and in a number of speeches at the Sixteenth Party Congress, especially the speech of Ordzhonikidze (see *XVI-y Syezd VKP[b]* [1930], p. 256, quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 315-316). [p. [412](#)]
48. This is the title under which the speech appears in Stalin's *Works*, vol. 11, pp. 255 ff. Delivered on November 19, it was published in *Pravda* on November 24, 1928. Stalin made reference in the speech to Bukharin's article "Notes of an Economist," but without criticizing it, and so without setting out any arguments intended to refute it. A few months later, when the breach with Bukharin had been consummated, this same article was to be presented (though still without any arguments being offered) as evidence of "eclectic confusion inadmissible for a Marxist" (see the resolution adopted on February 9, 1929, by the PB and confirmed by the plenum of April 23, 1929, in *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 436 ff., especially pp. 437-438). [p. [413](#)]
49. "It may be asked where this is said in the theses, in what passage of the theses. (*A voice*: "Yes, where is it said?") Evidence of this in the theses is the sum-total of capital investments in industry for 1928-1929" (Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, p. 266). [p. [413](#)]
50. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 255 (my emphasis -- C. B.). [p. [413](#)]

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51. Ibid., p. 256. [p. [413](#)]
52. These resolutions, as we have seen, emphasized the opposite idea of *optimum* accumulation and respect for a correct *proportionality* in investments, as between the different branches of the economy. [p. [414](#)]
53. See the textbook *Political Economy*, edited by Ostrovityanov and others, p. 533. [p. [414](#)]
54. Lenin, *CW*, vol. 2, pp. 155-156 [*Transcriber's Note*: See Lenin's "[A Characterisation of Economic Romanticism](#)". -- DJR]. This observation has been developed by E. Poulain in his thesis on *Le Mode d'industrialisation socialiste en Chine*, p. 146. He mentions that the Soviet textbook quoted in the preceding note presents as a victory the fact that between 1925 and 1958 the production of means of production in the USSR was multiplied by 103, whereas that of consumer goods was multiplied only by 15.6, and he adds this comment by Mao Tse-tung: "The problem is to know whether or not this proportion of 103 to 15.6 is advantageous or not to the development of industry" (Hu Chi-hsi, ed., *Mao Tsé-toung et la construction du socialisme*, p. 117). [p. [414](#)]
55. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, p. 257. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[Industrialisation of the Country and the Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR] [p. [414](#)]
56. Ibid. [p. [415](#)]
57. Ibid., pp. 258-259. [p. [415](#)]
58. Ibid., pp. 262, 263. [p. [415](#)]
59. Ibid., pp. 255, 263-264 (my emphasis -- C. B.). [p. [416](#)]
60. The respective places assigned by Stalin in his speech of November 19, 1928, to technical changes and to ideological changes is shown by the following formulation: ". . . the reconstruction of agriculture on a new technical basis, causing a revolution in the minds of the peasants and helping them to shake off conservatism, routine" (ibid., p. 279). Here what "acts" is technique, with the peasant *acted upon*. [p. [416](#)]

61. One of Stalin's first pronouncements on the role that the state and collective farms could play in increasing the marketable share of production was his speech of May 28, 1928, to the students of the Sverdlov University (*Works*, vol. 11, pp. 85 ff. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[On the Grain Front](#)". -- DJR]). In this speech Stalin declared that "the basis of our grain difficulties lies in the fact that the increase in the production of marketable grain is not keeping pace with the increase in the demand for grain. . . . The strength of large-scale farming, irrespective of whether it is landlord, kulak or collective farming, lies in the fact that large farms are able to employ machines, scientific methods, fertilisers, to increase the productivity of

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labour, and thus to produce the maximum quantity of marketable grain" (ibid., pp. 86, 88).

These remarks were followed by a table (compiled by Nemchinov) comparing gross production and marketable production of grain in the different types of farm, before and after the Revolution. This table shows that the largest proportion of marketable production (47.2 percent) was that contributed by the collective and state farms (ibid., p. 89).

After July 1928, when Stalin emphasized the need for the "tribute" to be paid by agriculture to industry, the development of collective forms of farming appeared more and more as the most effective means for ensuring that this tribute would be regularly forthcoming. The establishment of this means was itself subordinated to transformation of the technical basis of agriculture, for, as Stalin saw it, the will and initiative of the peasants were not the driving force of new forms of production or of the development of *really new productive forces*. [p. 417]

62. Ibid., pp. 272-279. [p. 417]
63. The resolution on the "control figures" was adopted unanimously by the plenum. Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky did not wish to oppose it publicly. The former "Left" opposition (now absent from the Party's leading organs) supported the line of industrialization based on maximum investment in heavy industry. Kamenev, who was now given permission to rejoin the Party, published in *Pravda* on November 16, 1928, an article attacking those who wanted to launch a "struggle to reduce the given rate of industrialization." [p. 418]
64. Two points need to be noted here:
- (a) In practice, the sums actually assigned to industrial investment exceeded those laid down in the resolution of the November 1928 plenum, but without the conditions specified by that plenum being honored, so that the "shortages" of industrial products in the branches denied priority were made still more severe (Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. I, pt. 1, p. 314, n. 1).
 - (b) The principle of giving priority to heavy industry dominated not only the compiling of the plans but also their execution. This meant that, if the material means needed for realizing *all* the targets fixed by the plan proved not to be available in sufficient quantity (as was indeed the case), then the means actually to be had were assigned preferentially to the priority

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branches -- the others receiving even less than had been provided for in the plan, so that additional distortions ensued. (See, e.g., Kubyshv's statement in *Torgovo-Promyshlennaya Gazeta*, December 4, 1928, quoted in Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 882.) [p. 418]

65. Bukharin expounded these ideas in an article in *Pravda* on January 20, 1929, and, especially, in a long speech he made on January 21 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of Lenin's death. This speech was published in the principal newspapers on January 24, and then as a pamphlet with the title: *Lenin's Political Testament*. [p. 420]

66. Quoted in Vaganov, *Pravy Uklon*, p. 198. [p. 420]
67. The greater part of the resolution passed by the PB on February 9, condemning the positions of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsy, dealt with their demand for a Party discussion of their proposals, their allegedly "factional" activity, Bukharin's contacts with Kamenev, the relations maintained by the three with "supporters of an opportunist line in the Comintern," and so on. The resolution did not examine the basic political positions of the three, but proceeded by way of assertions. Thus, it declared that, "in the recent period, the Bukharin group have passed, where basic questions of our policy are concerned, from oscillation between the Party line and the line of the Right deviation to defence of the positions of the Right deviation" (*K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 432). The three were in this way charged with placing themselves "objectively on the line . . . of a weakening of the positions of the proletariat in the struggle against capitalist economic forms" (*ibid.*). And yet, in January 1929, the three were in fact merely defending the positions they had been defending for a year, positions which were those of the Fifteenth Party Congress. [p. 421]
68. *Ibid.*, p. 435. [p. 421]
69. And yet, during the struggle against the united opposition, Stalin had accused the latter of wanting the Soviet state to exploit the peasantry (see Stalin, *Works*, vol. 8, pp. 368-369). [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[Reply to the Discussion on the Report on 'The Social-Democratic Deviation in Our Party'](#)". -- DJR] [p. 421]
70. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 333 ff. [p. 422]
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 334-335. [p. 423]
72. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 321. [p. 423]
73. See the article in *Pravda*, December 11, 1929, entitled: "Against Opportunism in the Movement of Worker and Peasant Correspondents," and the collective work entitled: *Za Marksistsko-leninskoye ucheniye o pechati*. [p. 424]

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74. Bukharin, *Politicheskoye zaveshchaniye Lenina*, p. 27, quoted in Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 304. [p. 424]
75. The document is reproduced in a speech of Stalin's to the April plenum of the CC (*Works*, vol. 12, pp. 7-8). [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[The Right Deviation in the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR] [p. 425]
76. *Ibid.*, p. 111. [p. 425]
77. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 429 ff. [p. 425]
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 436 ff., especially p. 445. [p. 425]
79. This speech of Stalin's is in his *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 1-113. Cohen notes (*Bukharin*, pp. 453-454) that Stalin's speech as it was in fact delivered certainly called for condemnations more severe than those that were adopted and are mentioned in the version of the speech published twenty years later. [p. 426]
80. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 431, 432, 435 (my emphasis -- C. B.). [p. 426]
81. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 436. This resolution was not published at the time, but only much later. It was not until June-July 1929 that the measures resolved upon against Bukharin and Tomsy took effect publicly (Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 325). [p. 426]
82. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 440. [p. 426]
83. Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 943. [p. 426]
84. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 101-105. [p. 427]
85. This was the speech published as "The Right Deviation in the CPSU(B)," in *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 1-113. In the version printed at the time, about thirty pages were "cut," presumably because of some of the formulations they contained, and were not made public until 1949. [p. 427]

86. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 37ff. [p. [427](#)]
87. Only the principal aspects of these theses are considered here. Their implications will be discussed later, in volume III of the present work. It was in the following years, indeed, that they gave rise to fresh developments, and became linked with a form of political practice that concretized their meaning. [p. [427](#)]
88. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 38. [p. [427](#)]
89. *Ibid.*, p. 39. [p. [427](#)]
90. *Ibid.* [p. [427](#)]
91. *Ibid.*, p. 53. [p. [428](#)]
92. Whether it was correct or not to call this contribution a "tribute" is a point of only secondary importance. [p. [428](#)]
93. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 53. [p. [428](#)]
94. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61. [p. [429](#)]
95. See above, pp. 101 ff. [p. [429](#)]
96. Not only did Stalin consider that the period of "restoration" was

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completed in agriculture (that is, that the former "technical basis" had been restored), but he alleged that the "old technique" was "now useless, or nearly useless" -- a meaningless proposition (*ibid.*, p. 61). [p. [430](#)]

97. *Ibid.*, p. 60. [p. [430](#)]
98. *Ibid.*, p. 62. [p. [430](#)]
99. *Ibid.*, p. 64 (my emphasis -- C. B.). [p. [431](#)]
100. *Ibid.*, p. 92. [p. [431](#)]
101. *Ibid.*, p. 91. [p. [432](#)]
102. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 494-495. [p. [434](#)]
103. This resolution was published for the first time in 1933. The criticisms of Bukharin made by some of the delegates to the Sixteenth Conference, together with Molotov's report, are to be found in later editions of the proceedings of this conference: see *XVI-taya Konferentsiya VKP(b)* (1962), in which Molotov's report appears on pp. 58 ff. [p. [434](#)]
104. Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. II, pp. 92-93. [p. [434](#)]
105. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95. [p. [435](#)]
106. *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 67, 97. Preobrazhensky had already asked for readmission a year before the Sixteenth Conference. [p. [435](#)]
107. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 470 ff. [p. [436](#)]
108. *Ibid.*, p. 470. [p. [436](#)]
109. *Ibid.*, pp. 471-472, 482-483. [p. [436](#)]
110. *Ibid.*, p. 471; see also volume I of the present work, pp. 330-331. [p. [436](#)]
111. *Ibid.*, p. 473. [p. [436](#)]
112. *Ibid.*, pp. 474-475, 477 ff. [p. [437](#)]
113. *Ibid.*, p. 482. [p. [437](#)]
114. It mentioned the work of the sections of Rabkrin, the production conferences, the temporary commissions for "workers' control," the training of worker- correspondents (whose comments and criticisms were sent to the newspapers), discussion by general assemblies of workers and office workers of the results of investigations, and so on. [p. [437](#)]
115. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 483 ff. [p. [438](#)]
116. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 11, p. 34. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission](#)". -- *DJR*] [p. [438](#)]
117. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 483 ff. [p. [438](#)]

118. Ibid., pp. 485 ff. [p. [439](#)]
 119. See volume I of the present work, pp. 317 ff. [p. [439](#)]
 120. Between 1922 and 1928 about 260,000 members left the Party. In 1927 some 44,000 left, of whom 17,000 were expelled by

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- decision of the CCC (the total membership at that time being about 1.2 million): Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 2, pp. 132-133, 474. [p. [439](#)]
121. In 1923 the Party's CCC and Rabkrin were merged. The CCC thus came to operate in the sphere of the state machine as well as supervising the activity of Party members. The role of the CCC became especially important in 1926 and after because of the fight against the oppositions and the application of disciplinary measures. In theory the CCC was independent of the CC (both being directly elected by the Congress), and it sat separately. From 1925 on, however, the CCC more and more often came to sit jointly with the CC, in the form of a "plenum," and it tended to become, in practice, a mere department of the CC (Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 2, pp. 116-117). [p. [439](#)]
122. Ye. Yaroslavsky, *Chistka Partii*, pp. 29-33. [p. [440](#)]
123. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 485, and *XVI-taya Konferentsiya VKP(b)* (1962), pp. 589-611. [p. [440](#)]
124. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 483. [p. [440](#)]
125. The Party's financial problems were not then discussed in public. Only in exceptional cases were a few figures given relating to some of the Party's functionaries and their remuneration (Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 121). [p. [441](#)]
- Nomination to important posts in the state machine was possible only with
126. the agreement of the Party (that is, of the services attached to the Party Secretariat) and, in some cases, of other authorities. The various posts appointment to which was supervised in this way formed part of the *nomenklatura*. Nomination to these posts was not reserved for Party members, but the percentage of Party members nominated to them was, as a rule, higher in proportion to the degree of responsibility of the posts concerned. Thus, in 1927, over 75 percent of the chairmen and members of trusts under the VSNKh were Party members, and 96.9 percent of the managers of major industrial enterprises came directly under VSNKh. In general, it was persons who were already Party members who were appointed to these posts, but it sometimes happened that specialists appointed to them were admitted to the Party at the same time (ibid., pp. 122-125). [p. [441](#)]
127. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 487. [p. [441](#)]
128. See volume I of the present work, especially pp. 308-209, 313-314, 321-322, 426-427, 447-448. Let us recall some of the

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- terms used by Lenin at the beginning of 1922: "Taken as a whole (if we take the level of the overwhelming majority of Party members), our Party is less politically trained than is necessary for real proletarian leadership in the present difficult situation." He expected at that time "a big increase in the efforts of petty-bourgeois elements, and of elements positively hostile to all that is proletarian, to penetrate into the Party" (Lenin, *CW*, vol. 33, pp. 256, 257 [*Transcriber's Note*: See Lenin's "[Conditions for Admitting New Members to the Party](#)". -- DJR]). [p. [442](#)]
129. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 488. [p. [442](#)]
130. Ibid. [p. [442](#)]
131. Ibid., pp. 489-490. [p. [442](#)]
132. Ibid. [p. [443](#)]

133. Ibid., pp. 490-491. [p. [443](#)]
134. It must be pointed out that the resolution on purging the Party which was adopted by the Sixteenth Conference was, in this respect, profoundly different from that which was formulated in June 1921 on Lenin's initiative (see Lenin, *CW*, vol. 42, pp. 315-316 [*Transcriber's Note*: See Lenin's "[Proposals On a Check-Up and Purge of the R.C.P.\(B.\) Membership](#)". -- *DJR*]; Lenin's proposal was approved by the PB on June 25, 1921: *ibid.*, p. 567 [*Transcriber's Note*: This reference is to the endnote of the preceding text. -- *DJR*]). At the time of the purge in 1921 a circular from the CC declared that it was not permissible to expel a member for ideological differences, and the case of members of the former "workers' opposition" was quoted as an example. This circular appears to have been honored, on the whole (T. H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership*, p. 99). [p. [444](#)]
135. Carr and Davies, *Foundations*, vol. 2, pp. 144-145. [p. [444](#)]
136. Ibid., pp. 145-146. [p. [444](#)]
137. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership*, pp. 97, 178-179. [p. [445](#)]
138. This aspect of the decisions of the Sixteenth Conference is analyzed later, under the heading: "The Sixteenth Conference and the problems of agriculture," above, p. 455. [p. [446](#)]
139. See above, pp. 370 ff., and 407 ff. [p. [446](#)]
140. It will be seen that, in reality, what was called the "optimum" version of the plan was a "maximum" version: it presupposed a steady increase in harvests, in productivity of labor, and so on -- in other words, "optimum" objective conditions, and that was why it was called the "optimum" version. The same confusion of terms was to apply where the subsequent alternative versions of the Five-Year Plan were concerned. This confusion facilitated the adoption of a "maximum" version described as an "optimum" version, giving the latter term a meaning quite different from the one intended by the advocates of balanced development of the different branches of the economy. [p. [447](#)]

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141. The figures for the various drafts of the Five-Year Plan are given in Zaleski, *Planning*, p. 54, with mention of the sources for them. [p. [447](#)]
142. Ibid., p. 57, and *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 449. It is to be noted that the resolution of the Sixteenth Conference which adopted the figure of 64.6 milliard roubles declared that the "optimum" variant of the plan was approved (*K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 453), although this variant actually forecast the figure of 74.2 milliards for investment (Zaleski, *Planning*, p. 246). [p. [447](#)]
143. Zaleski, *Planning*, p. 57. [p. [447](#)]
144. The meeting of this Congress coincided with the publication of the detailed Five-Year Plan: *Pyatiletny Plan Narodnokhozyaistvennogo stroitelstva SSSR (1929) -- three volumes, with 1,700 pages in all. It included the list of enterprises to be built or enlarged in order that the targets decided on might be reached.* [p. [448](#)]
145. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 453. [p. [448](#)]
146. Ibid., p. 449. [p. [448](#)]
147. This is only one example of the conditions that were presupposed for the fulfillment of the Plan. These conditions were listed by G. F. Grinko in his article "Plan velikikh rabot," in *Planovoye Khozyaistvo*, no. 2 (1929), pp. 9-10: see M. Lewin, "Disappearance of Planning in the Plan," *Slavic Review*, June 1973, p. 272. [p. [448](#)]
148. These points of Lenin's were set forth in his letter to Krzhizhanovsky, the chairman of Gosplan: *CW*, vol. 32, pp. 371ff. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Lenin's "[To Comrade Krzhizhanovsky, the Presidium of the State Planning Commission](#)". -- *DJR*] [p. [449](#)]
149. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 452, 454. [p. [449](#)]
150. The facts exposed this unrealism, for, while it was possible to say that the First Five-Year Plan was "fulfilled in four years," this could be done only by

taking certain figures as "indices of fulfillment" and ignoring everything that was not fulfilled, in spheres that were vital for the standard of living of the masses (light industry, agriculture, real wages) and for accumulation (productivity of labor, costs of production, etc.). [p. 449]

151. As has been said, while the Plan, as a set of forecasts, was not fulfilled, a circumstance which entailed a series of consequences that were negative in their impact on the worker-peasant alliance and on the working and living conditions of the working class -- the "industrial ambition" that it embodied was, partly, satisfied, for under its impetus Soviet industry made

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gigantic progress in a certain number of spheres. It is useless to speculate whether a more coherent and more realistic plan, putting industry directly at the service of agriculture, would have enabled the same material results to have been achieved without entailing the same negative consequences: history can not be "done over again." [p. 450]

152. See Table IX on p. 87 of Zaleski, *Planning*. [p. 450]
153. *Planovoye Khozyaistvo*, no. 1 (1929), p. 109; partly quoted in Lewin, "Disappearance," *Slavic Review*, June 1973, p. 272. [p. 451]
154. G. V. Kuibysheva et al., *V. V. Kuibyshev: Biografiya*, quoted in Lewin, "Disappearance," *Slavic Review*, June 1973, p. 273, n. 6. [p. 451]
155. Marx, [first outline](#) of *The Civil War in France*, in Marx and Engels, *On The Paris Commune*, p. 157. (The English is Marx's own.) [p. 452]
156. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 454. [p. 452]
157. *Direktivy K.P.S.S. i Sovyetskogo pravitelstva po khozyaistvennym voprosam*, vol. II, p. 7. [p. 452]
158. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17. [p. 452]
159. *Sobranie Zakonov*, no. 19 (1929), art. 167. [p. 453]
160. *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, March 3, 1929. [p. 453]
161. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 495-499. [p. 453]
162. *Ibid.*, pp. 498-499. [p. 453]
163. See above, pp. 235, 345. [p. 453]
164. See volume I of the present work, pp. 384 ff. [p. 454]
165. *VIII-oy Syezd Professionalnykh Soyuzov, SSSR*, pp. 3-14, 24, 55. [p. 454]
166. S. P. Trapeznikov, *Kommunisticheskaya partiya v periode nastupleniya sotsializma*, pp. 40-41. [p. 454]
167. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 455 ff. [p. 455]
168. *Ibid.*, p. 455. [p. 455]
169. *Ibid.*, pp. 451, 459. The text of the Five-Year Plan gave considerably different figures. Thus, in 1933, the population engaged in the "socialized sector" was to constitute only 9.6 percent of the total rural population (that is, 12.9 million people, instead of the 20 million forecast by the Sixteenth Party Conference) and the arable land included in this sector was to account for only 10.6 percent of the total arable land (*Pyatiletny Plan*, vol. 2, pt. I, pp. 323-329; Zaleski, *Planning*, p. 60; *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 451). [p. 455]
170. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 451. [p. 455]

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171. *Ibid.*, p. 459. [p. 455]
172. See the article by Strumilin, an unconditional advocate of rapid planned development, in *Planovoye Khozyaistvo*, no. 3 (1929), especially p. 36; also *Pravda*, June 2 and 16, 1929. [p. 455]
173. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, p. 459. [p. 456]
174. *Ibid.*, pp. 459-460, 468. [p. 456]

175. Ibid., pp. 468-469; also a series of articles in *Pravda* at the beginning of 1929. [p. 456]
176. See above, pp. 163 ff. [p. 457]
177. In the Moscow region alone there were over 2,000 peasant demonstrations; some of these were accompanied by acts of violence. The demonstrations were blamed on the kulaks, who may indeed have instigated them, but this does not explain how it was that the kulaks were able to enlist the support of a sufficient number of peasants to justify talk of peasant demonstrations significant enough to be mentioned (see Kozlova, *Moskovskiye Kommunisty*, p. 43, quoted in Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 330). [p. 457]
178. See above, p. 441. [p. 458]
179. Zaleski, *Planning*, pp. 105,149; *Narodnoye khozyaistvo 1970 g.*, p. 131. [p. 458]
180. This article was published in two parts, in *Pravda* of May 26 and June 6, 1929, under the titles: "Nekotorye problemy sovremennogo kapitalizma i teoretikov burzhuzii" (pp. 2-3) and "Teoriya 'organizovannoy bezkhozyaistvennosti'" (pp. 3-5). It is interesting to observe that in these writings Bukharin criticized bourgeois theories of the "superiority" of the very large enterprise -- theories which obviously influenced the way the Five-Year Plan was conceived and the projects in it. [p. 459]
181. Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 461, n. 272. [p. 459]
182. At the plenum of November 10-17, 1929, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsy made a joint statement in which they gave their analysis of the situation. It was not published, but the majority of the plenum considered it unacceptable. However, no new "organizational measures" were taken, for the time being, against Tomsy and Rykov, whereas Bukharin was removed from the PB (*K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 542-543). A few days later, on November 25 the three published a "self-criticism" in which they declared that their "views" had "turned out to be mistaken," and pledged themselves "to conduct a decisive struggle against all deviations from the Party's general line and,

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above all, against the Right deviation" (Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 335). This "self-criticism" signified publicly the complete political defeat suffered by the three -- but not the end of the attacks upon them. These were aimed chiefly at Bukharin, who was required to make a fuller self-criticism on the occasion of the Sixteenth Party Congress (June 26-July 3, 1930). At that congress Rykov and Tomsy made fresh self-criticisms, but Bukharin refused to follow suit. He was nevertheless reelected to the CC. After some discussion, Bukharin did eventually provide a fresh self-criticism (*Pravda*, November 20, 1930), but this did not put a stop to the attacks upon him. As for Rykov, despite his political attitudes, he remained chairman of the Sovnarkom until December 1930, when he was replaced by Molotov (Cohen, *Bukharin*, pp. 331, 349). The three were now no more than members of the CC, and occupied only secondary posts. However, starting in 1933, Bukharin once again played a role of some importance (Ibid., pp. 354-356). In 1936 the three were accused (but not indicted) during the first of the "great trials," that of Zinoviev and Kamenev. In August 1936 Tomsy killed himself. At the beginning of 1938, Bukharin and Rykov were accused of forming an "anti-Soviet bloc" with the Trotskyists, of having become agents of German and Japanese imperialism, and of a number of other crimes. They were sentenced to death and executed. [p. 460]

183. V. P. Danilov, ed., *Ocherki istorii kollektivizatsii selskogo khozyaistva v soyuznykh respublikakh*, pp. 32-33, 74-75, quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 428. [p. 461]
184. After the October Revolution, and especially under "war communism," peasant practice had created three basic types of collective production, distinguished from each other by the degree to which labor and means of production were socialized. In ascending order of socialization, these were the three forms:

(a) The *toz*, an acronym of the Russian words meaning "association for tilling the soil." This form of collective made "common" the work required for cultivation (as a rule, only of the principal crops) together with the land and major equipment needed for this work. The rest of the land and equipment, together with some of the animals and buildings, remained with the private farms, which thus did not disappear completely. In general, the share-out of the produce of the work done jointly was effected, mainly, on the basis of the amount of labor time put in by each member.

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(b) The *artel* involved a higher degree of socialization. All that remained of the individual farm was a few plots and a little stock, the rest being collectivized. What had been produced jointly was shared out strictly on the basis of each member's contribution in labor.

(c) In the *kommuna* ("commune") there was practically complete socialization of all the means of production. The sharing of what was produced took account not only of the labor contributed by each person but also of the number and age of the members of the different peasant families.

The *artel* was the form preferred by the Soviet government. Subsequently, it was the main form in which collectivization was to develop. [p. 461]

185. *Postroyeniye fundamenta sotsialisticheskoy ekonomiki v SSSR 1926-1932*, p. 291, quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 444, n. 88. [p. 461]
186. Danilov, *Ocherki istorii*, p. 32. [p. 461]
187. See below, p. 495, n. 196. [p. 461]
188. *Materialy po istorii SSSR*, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, vol. VII, pp. 230-231, 236. [p. 461]
189. Vareikis, "O partiinom rukovodstve kolkhoza," in *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, no. 8 (1929), pp. 64-65. [p. 462]
190. Ibid. [p. 462]
191. *Pravda*, November 7, 1929: Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 124 ff. [p. 462]
192. Ibid., p. 132. [p. 462]
193. *Pravda*, December 4, 1929. [p. 462]
194. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 138. [p. 463]
195. Ibid. This rallying of the peasants "by whole villages," and so on, was what was meant by "complete" (*sploshnaya*) collectivization. See above, p. 461. [p. 463]
196. On December 15, 1929 (more than a month after the publication of Stalin's article), only between 0.1 and 5 percent of households had been collectivized in 59 percent of the 1,416 *rayons* of the RSFSR (Abramov, in Danilov, *Ocherki istorii*, p. 96, quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 478, n. 33). At the end of 1929, when very strong pressure was being brought to bear on the peasants, the statistics, even though they tended to "inflate" the results of the campaign, showed only about 10 percent of the *okrugs* as having undergone "complete collectivisation" (N. Ivitsky, "O nachalnom etape sploshnoy kollektivizatsii," in *Voprosy Istorii KPSS*, no. 4 [1962], p. 62). This shows how very unevenly the movement developed. [p. 463]

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197. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 159. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[Concerning Questions of Agrarian Policy in the U.S.S.R.](#)". -- DJR] [p. 463]
198. Ibid., p. 176. [p. 464]

- The administrative officials who were closest to the peasantry were in a position to appreciate better their resistance to large-scale collectivization effected without preparation. They were opposed to a method which fixed "percentages of collectivisation" without any relation to local realities. They were often punished for this. In some regions, nearly half of the chairmen of village soviets were removed from their posts on various grounds (see the Smolensk archives, *VKP* 61, pp. 98-168, quoted in Fainsod, *Smolensk*, p.

- 142). [p. [464](#)]
200. The mistaken idea that a general advance of the collectivization movement was going on sprang not only from the statements made by the Party leadership and the way that the press presented the situation, but also from the boastful claims made by many regional Party secretaries (themselves "caught" by the atmosphere of "competition in percentages of collectivisation" which was then developing). Thus, at the plenum of November 10-17, 1929, some regional secretaries talked of mass entry by the middle peasants into the *kolkhozes*, whereas fewer than 5 percent of these peasants had actually joined in the regions for which these men were responsible (Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 478, n 33). [p. [464](#)]
201. At the end of 1929 and the beginning of 1930 the "delegates for collectivisation" received orders directing them to collectivize certain localities within less than a week. For example, the delegates for the sub-district of Sosnovsky, in the district of Tver, were given in mid-February 1930 the order to carry through in five days the collectivizing of the localities assigned to them. The Party leadership of the subdistrict instructed them to report at 9 A.M. on February 20, at the office of the Party Committee, to give an account of how they had fulfilled their tasks. The order stated: "There can be no excuse for not fulfilling the tasks assigned. Those who have not accomplished their mission will be brought to trial within 24 hours" (Ts.G.A.O.R., collection 374, inventory 9, file 418, sheet 4, quoted in Yakovtsevsky, *Agrarnye otnosheniya*, p. 237; also in *Recherches internationales*, no. 85 [no. 4 of 1975], p. 83). [p. [465](#)]
202. See, e.g., Ts.G.A.O.R., collection 374, inventory 9, file 403, sheets 7-8; and file 418, sheet 61; quoted in Yakovtsevsky, *Agrarnye otnosheniya*, p. 328 (also in *Recherches Internationales*, no. 85 [no. 4 of 1975] p. 84). [p. [465](#)]

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203. Ibid. [p. [465](#)]
204. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 475-476. [p. [466](#)]
205. *Bolshevik*, no. 22 (1929), p. 19. [p. [466](#)]
206. See, e.g., Fainsod, *Smolensk*, pp. 242 ff. [p. [466](#)]
207. A. L. Strong, *The Soviets Conquer Wheat*, p. 88. [p. [467](#)]
208. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 505. [p. [467](#)]
209. *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, nos. 7-8 (1930), p. 95. [p. [467](#)]
210. In V. Ulashevich, ed., *Zhenshchina v kolkhoze*, article by Leikin, p. 28, quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 494. The term *podkulachnik* ("abettor of kulaks") could therefore be applied to a poor peasant. [p. [467](#)]
211. *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, nos. 7-8 (1930), p. 94; *Bolshevik*, no. 6 (1930), p. 21; and also sources quoted in Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, p. 502. [p. [468](#)]
212. Pashukanis, ed., *15 let sovyetskogo stroitelstva*, p. 474. [p. [468](#)]
213. *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, no. 6 (1930), p. 20. [p. [468](#)]
214. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 197-205. [p. [468](#)]
215. *K.P.S.S. v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 2, pp. 548-551. [p. [468](#)]
216. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 198-199. The information and analyses subsequently published showed that in fact, these "sentiments" were extremely "widespread" and had seriously affected collectivization. [p. [468](#)]
217. Ibid., p. 201. [p. [469](#)]
218. Ibid. Sergeant Prishibeyev is a dictatorial old soldier in a story by Chekhov (English translation, *Anglo-Soviet Journal*, vol. XVII, no. 2 [Summer 1956]). [p. [469](#)]
219. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 203-204. [p. [469](#)]
220. Ibid., p. 205. [p. [469](#)]
221. Ts.G.A.O.R., collection 374, inventory 9, file 418, sheets 7 and 72, quoted in Yakovtsevsky, *Agrarnye otnosheniya*, p.331. (Also in *Recherches Internationales*, no. 85 [no. 4 of 1975], p. 87.) [p. [469](#)]

222. This article was published in *Pravda*, April 3, 1930, under the title: "[Reply to Collective-Farm Comrades](#)" (Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 207 ff.). [p. 470]
223. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 208. [p. 470]
224. Ibid., pp. 209-216. [p. 470]
225. Ibid., pp. 216-217. [p. 470]
226. It should be noted that in some regions the local authorities intervened sooner than the CC did. Thus, on February 12, 1930, the Party Committee of Velikive Luki, an area then attached to Smolensk region, sent a circular to local Party organizations in which the exiling and expropriation of poor and middle peas-

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- ants was "unconditionally prohibited" (Smolensk Archives, *VKP* 53, pp. 6 ff., quoted in Fainsod, *Smolensk*, pp. 242-243). [p. 471]
227. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 505-506. [p. 471]
228. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, pp. 217-218. [p. 472]
229. Ibid., p. 197. [p. 472]
230. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 427, 515; Zaleski, *Planning*, p. 102; Bettelheim, *La Planification soviétique*, p. 33. [p. 472]
231. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 198. [p. 472]
232. Same sources as in note 230. In the Moscow region only 7.2 percent of the households were still collectivized in June 1930, as against 73 percent in March (M. Bogdenko, *Istoricheskije Zapiski*, no. 76, pp. 20 ff., quoted in Nove, *An Economic History*, p. 172). [p. 472]
233. This question must be held over for examination in volume III of the present work, where the whole subject of collectivization will be discussed. [p. 472]
234. Lewin, *Russian Peasants*, pp. 436, 464. [p. 473]
235. The importance of this slaughtering of cattle will be considered in volume III of the present work. [p. 473]
236. These points, too, will be gone into in more detail in volume III of the present work. [p. 474]
237. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 12, p. 138. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[A Year of Great Change](#)". -- DJR] Actually, the production of grain declined sharply from 1930 on, and this situation continued until 1935. [p. 475]
238. I shall not, for the moment, consider the fact that the *economic targets aimed* at were not reached. Collectivization did not enable the problems of grain production, or even those of "marketable production" to be "solved more effectively." Nor did it, contrary to a widely held view, enable a better solution to be found to the problem of accumulation (i.e., the question of the tribute to be levied from the peasantry). This will also be considered in volume III of the present work. Some interesting points on the subject are made in the article by J. F. Karez, "From Stalin to Brezhnev: Soviet Agricultural Policy in Historical Perspective" (especially pp. 41-51), in James R. Millar, ed., *The Soviet Rural Community*. [p. 475]
239. We know that, while the "resolution on Party unity" passed by the Tenth Congress prohibited the forming of "factions," it did not forbid discussion. On the contrary, it assumed that any disagreements would be "brought publicly before the whole Party," and it provided for the publishing of a *Discussion Bulletin*-

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tin (see volume I of this work, pp. 399-400). In fact, however, during the NEP period open discussion of differences was increasingly restricted -- and the *Discussion Bulletin* never appeared. [p. 476]

240. Mao Tse-tung constantly urged the Chinese Communist Party to avoid such practices, which weaken the Party. In 1937 he said: "If there were no

contradictions in the Party and no ideological struggles to resolve them, the Party's life would come to an end" ([Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung](#), pp. 260-261 [*Transcriber's Note*: The quote is from "[On Contradiction](#)," p. 317. -- *DJR*]). In 1942 he condemned the method of "lashing out at" those who had made mistakes (ibid., p. 262 [*Transcriber's Note*: See Mao's "[Rectify the Party's Style of Work](#)," p. 50. -- *DJR*]). In 1957 he declared, in connection with discussions taking place outside as well as inside the Party, that even bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas should be allowed expression, so that they might be criticized, for it is through struggle that Marxism progresses. He said that, in any case, "inevitably, the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie will give expression to their own ideologies. . . . We should not use the method of suppression and prevent them from expressing themselves, but should allow them to do so, and at the same time argue with them and direct appropriate criticism at them. . . . However, such criticism should not be dogmatic and the metaphysical method should not be used, but efforts should be made to apply the dialectical method. What is needed is scientific analysis and convincing argument" (ibid., pp. 53-54 [*Transcriber's Note*: This quotation is from "[On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People](#)," p. 411. -- *DJR*]). [p. [476](#)]

241. See above, p. 367. [p. [477](#)]

242. See below, p. 519. [p. [477](#)]

From Marx to Mao	Other Documents	Reading Guide	On to Section 7: Part 4, sec. 3 and Part 5
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