

M. Pavlovich's impressions and evaluation of the Baku Congress

✓ Zhizn Natsionalnostei, No.33 (90), October 27, 1920, pp.1-2

.... The historic significance of the Congress of the Eastern Peoples consist first of all that this first congress has broken through a gap in the Chinese Wall which heretofore has separated the Eastern peoples both from each other and from the revolutionary West. The Congress has laid the beginning for the unification of a few scores of Eastern nationalities, which previously have either been hostile to each other or have known little about each other.

It stands to reason that this unification can be achieved and strengthened only if in all Eastern countries the toiling popular masses take power into their own hands. So long as the reins of government remain in the hands of landlords and speculators, the Eastern peoples will be hostile to each other and will be under the yoke of their own and of foreign capitalists....

Everywhere in the East - Persia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Egypt - we have within the ranks of British administration also Indians - representatives of rich families. Similarly in Persia, Afghanistan, and Bokhara, rich classes, for fear of the revolutionary movement of the popular masses, tend toward capitalist Britain, as the greatest world power which supports the division of society all over the world into two classes - the class of exploiters, of landlords, large merchants, speculators, on one hand, and the class of the exploited workers, peasants, small merchants etc., on the other hand. Thus, the Congress of the revolutionary representatives

of the Eastern peoples has recognized quite correctly that the struggle for national self-determination can be crowned by success and bring about the overthrow of foreign oppression only on condition that simultaneously with the war against capitalist Britain there will be conducted in every country a war against local native exploiters, against native landlords and capitalists as well....

This peasantry is almost the only producing class in all the East. Upon this peasantry rests the chief burden of all the state taxes and levies. We must unite these peasants around Soviets of workers, Soviets of the oppressed. Through agitation and propaganda, by relating what has been done in this respect in Russia, we shall prepare the ground for Soviet revolution all over the East and shall thus manage to break the backbone of world imperialism. Only in an energetic and ruthless struggle against the propertied classes shall we rally the popular masses of the Moslem East under our banner and shall we defeat the marauding imperialism.

It stands to reason that in its first phases the revolution in the colonies will not be a Communist revolution; but if from the very start, it is headed by the Communist vanguard, the revolutionary masses will be led onto the right road toward the goal they have set themselves and will gradually acquire revolutionary experience. However, as is quite correctly emphasized in Roy's theses, ✓ adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist

✓ The theses are given above Chapter 00, pp. 000

International, it would be entirely erroneous to settle the agrarian question along pure Communist principles. During the first developmental stage in the colonies the revolution will merely introduce petty bourgeois

reforms, such as subdividing the land, etc. The freeing of colonies from the imperialist yoke, a necessary and important fact in itself, will play a tremendous role in destroying the power of capital in the metropolises as well. European imperialism gets its strength to a large extent from its colonial possessions; without large colonial possessions needed for the marketing of the goods, for the surpluses of production, which plague all industrial countries which do not possess sources of raw material so abundant in the East, the capitalist order would have broken down long ago under its own weight. Thus fighting for their own liberation the peoples of the East are powerfully aiding the European proletariat in its struggle against capitalism. The separation of colonies, the transformation of the oppressed, dependent, disfranchised nations and countries into free and rightful nations jointly with the proletarian revolution of the metropolises will overthrow the capitalist order in Europe and in America.

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