

[From an account by A. Merezhin, participant in the Baku Congress]

....1891 delegates assembled....Thirty-eight nationalities were represented. But the number was unimportant in comparison with the fact that among these nationalities there were many who for decades and even centuries had been cutting each others throats.... There were fifty-five women delegates; women were also included by unanimous vote in the Presidium; they, i.e., women, delivered speeches, which were received with attention and sympathy.

I also attended an evening entertainment of Eastern music arranged for the delegates; opera stars performed and there were dances. All this was accepted by the delegates as a matter of fact and was judged by the quality of the performance.

The afore-said should not lead us to suppose that there were no conscious revolutionaries among the participants at the Congress.... There were 1273 Communists among the delegates. I had occasion to talk to the Turkish and other delegates who had arrived from Anatolia and other localities. There were and still are class conscious revolutionaries with European experience - among them participants in the Spartakus movement in Germany, the Bolshevik movement in the Caucasus, Persia, Khiva, Bokhara, etc.

The first congress of the Turkish Communist Party was scheduled to meet in Baku September 15 [1920]. The delegates to that Congress were at the same time delegates to the Congress of Eastern Peoples.

The Congress, its organizers, and its leaders set themselves the task of not descending to the level of the backward, prejudicial, and hardhearted spirit of the East, but of exploring everything and lifting the masses toward themselves.... ✓

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✓ Izvestia, No. 209 (1056), September 21, 1920, p. 1

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....While supporting the general national revolutionary movement in the East, in as much as it is directed against imperialism, at the time we raised the question of whether or not the East can liberate itself independently....without the help of the West-European proletariat....

The Turkish, Chinese, and Persian revolutions of 1908-1910 have demonstrated that it cannot....The only guarantee of victory lies in the union of the Eastern peasantry with the Western proletariat....

The second proposition is contained in the postulate adopted by the Second Congress of Comintern to the effect that the overthrow of feudalism does not mean the establishment of capitalism in its place....

Both these propositions explain the decision of the [Baku] Congress to the effect that it is necessary to establish independent proletarian organizations, while for the time being supporting the general national movements.

....Baku was merely a supplement to Moscow - there are not isolated Western and Eastern policies, but there is a united struggle, which is

being conducted by the toiling masses in the West against their own  
bourgeoisie, and in the East against the foreign and native bourgeoisie.... ✓

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✓ Izvestiia, No. 215 (1062), September 28, 1920, p. 1

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