A Remarkable Document on the Policy and the Régime of the Communist International

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4 October 1928 (the Jiangsu Committee resolution is dated 7 May 1928)


We referred above several times to the remarkable resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP (November 1927), precisely the one which the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ci) charged with ‘Trotskyism’, and about which Lominadze justified himself in such a variegated manner while Stalin very monotonously slunk off in silence. In reality, this resolution is a combination of opportunism and adventurism, reflecting with perfect precision the policy of the Executive Committee of the Communist International before and after July 1927. In condemning this resolution after the defeat of the Guangzhou insurrection, the leaders of the Communist International not only did not publish it but did not even quote from it. It was too embarrassing for them to show themselves in the Chinese mirror. This resolution was published in a special Documentation, accessible to very few, printed by the Chinese Sun Yat-sen University (no. 10).

No. 14 of the same publication, which reached our hands when our work (The Chinese Question After the Sixth Congress) was already completed, contains a no less remarkable document, even though of a different, that is, of a critical character: it is a resolution adopted by the Jiangsu District Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on 7 May 1928, in connection with the decisions of the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. Remember that Shanghai and Guangzhou are part of the province of Jiangsu.1

This resolution, as has already been said, constitutes a truly remarkable document, in spite of the errors in principle and the political misunderstandings it contains. The essence of the resolution amounts to a deadly condemnation not only of the decisions of the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of

1 Guangzhou is actually in Guangdong, not Jiangsu.
the Communist International, but, in general, of the whole leadership of the Comintern in the questions of the Chinese revolution. Naturally, in conformity with the whole régime existing in the Comintern, the criticism directed against the Executive Committee of the CI bears a camouflaged and conventionally diplomatic character. The immediate point of the resolution is directed against the Central Committee itself as against a responsible ministry under an irresponsible monarch who, as is known, ‘can do no wrong’. There are even polite eulogies for certain parts of the resolution of the Ecci. This whole way of approaching the question by ‘manoeuvring’ is in itself a harsh criticism of the régime of the Communist International; hypocrisy is inseparable from bureaucratism. But what the resolution says in essence about the political leadership and its methods has a much more damning character.

‘After the 7 August (1927) conference’, the Jiangsu Committee relates, ‘the Central Committee formulated a judgement on the situation which was tantamount to saying that even though the revolution had suffered a triple defeat, it is nevertheless going through a rising phase’.

This appreciation is entirely in conformity with the caricature Bukharin makes of the theory of the permanent revolution, a caricature he applied first to Russia, then to Europe and finally to Asia. The actual events of the struggle, that is, the three defeats, are one thing and the permanent ‘rise’ is another.

The Central Committee of the Chinese party draws the following conclusion from the resolution adopted by the Eighth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (in May):

‘Wherever this is objectively possible, we must immediately prepare and organise armed insurrections’.

What are the political premises for this? The Jiangsu Committee declares that in August 1927 ‘the political report of the Central Committee pointed out that the workers of Hunan, after the cruel defeat, are abandoning the leadership of the Party, that we are not confronted with an objectively revolutionary situation . . . but in spite of this . . . the Central Committee says plainly that the general situation, from the economic, political and social [precisely! – L.T.] point of view is favourable to the insurrection. Since it is already no longer possible to launch revolts in the cities, the armed struggle must be transferred to the villages. That is where the centres of the uprising must be, while the town must be an auxiliary force’.

Let us recall that immediately after the May Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, which entrusted the leadership of the agrarian revolution to the Left Guomindang, the latter began to exterminate the workers and peasants. The position of the Ecci became completely untenable. At all costs, there had to be, and that without delay, ‘left’ actions in