

# Speech at the opening of the Conference of Communists of the Tyurk People of the R.S.F.S.R. [1](#)

*January 1, 1921*  
(Record in the Minutes)

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After declaring the conference open and mentioning the unsatisfactory character of the work of the Central Bureau which was to be elected anew, Comrade Stalin went on to describe briefly the conditions of the development of communism among the Tyurk peoples in the R.S.F.S.R.

The development of communism in Russia has a long history, covering several decades, of theoretical work and theoretical struggle within the Russian socialist movement. As a result of that struggle a compact group of leading elements was formed, possessing sufficient theoretical knowledge and firmness of principle to lead the Party membership.

In the eastern part of our country, however, communism arose only recently, in the course of the practical revolutionary struggle for socialism, without the preliminary theoretical stage of development. Hence, the weakness of Tyurk communism in the field of theory, a weakness that can be eliminated only by the creation of a literature, based on the principles of communism, in the Tyurk languages spoken in our country.

In the history of the development of Russian communism, the struggle against the nationalist deviation never played an important part. Having been in the past the ruling nation, the Russians, including the Russian Communists, did not suffer national oppression, did not, generally speaking, have to deal with nationalist tendencies in their midst, except for certain moods in the direction of "dominant-nation chauvinism," and therefore did not have to overcome, or hardly had to overcome, such tendencies.

The Tyurk Communists, on the other hand, sons of oppressed peoples who have gone through the stage of national oppression, always had to deal and still have to deal with the nationalist deviation, with nationalist survivals in their midst, and the immediate task of the Tyurk Communists is to overcome these survivals. This circumstance undoubtedly serves to retard the crystallisation of communism in the eastern part of our country.

But communism in the East also enjoys an advantage. In the practical work of introducing socialism, the Russian Communists had little or no experience of the advanced European countries to go by (Europe provided experience chiefly of the parliamentary struggle) and, consequently, they had to lay the road to socialism by their own efforts, so to speak, and inevitably made a number of mistakes.

Tyurk communism, on the other hand, arose in the course of the practical struggle for socialism, waged side by side with the Russian comrades, and the Tyurk Communists were able to utilise the practical experience of the

Russian comrades and avoid mistakes. This circumstance serves as a guarantee that communism in the East has every chance of developing and gaining strength at a rapid rate.

All these circumstances determined the relatively mild policy of the Central Committee of the Party towards Tyurk communism, which is still very young, a policy directed towards helping the firm communist elements in the East to combat the above-mentioned weaknesses and shortcomings of Tyurk communism.

The Central Bureau is the apparatus through which measures must be carried out to combat nationalist survivals and for the theoretical strengthening of communism in the eastern part of our country.

*Pravda*, No. 6, January 12, 1921

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### **Note**

1. The conference of Communists of the Tyurk peoples of the R.S.F.S.R., convened by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), took place in Moscow on January 1-2, 1921. It was attended by Party workers from Azerbaijan, Bashkiria, Turkestan, Tataria, Daghestan, the Terek Region, Kirghizia and the Crimea. It discussed the report of the Central Bureau of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East, and organisational and other questions. On January 2, J. V. Stalin delivered a report on the organisational question (no verbatim report was taken). On J. V. Stalin's report, the conference adopted "Regulations Governing the Central Bureau for Work Among the Tyurk Peoples of the R.S.F.S.R.," in conformity with which the Central Bureau of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East, which had existed since 1918, was transformed into the Central Bureau for Agitation and Propa- ganda Among the Tyurk Peoples of the R.S.F.S.R.

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