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Dizzy with Success

Concerning Questions of the Collective-Farm Movement

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The Soviet government's successes in the sphere of the collective-farm movement are now being spoken of by everyone. Even our enemies are forced to admit that the successes are substantial. And they really are very great.



It is a fact that by February 20 of this year 50 per cent of the peasant farms throughout the U.S.S.R. had been collectivised. That means that by February 20, 1930, we had *overfulfilled* the five-year plan of collectivisation by more than 100 per cent.

It is a fact that on February 28 of this year the collective farms had *already succeeded* in stocking upwards of 36,000,000 centners, i.e., about 220,000,000 poods, of seed for the spring sowing, which is more than 90 per cent of the plan. It must be admitted that the accumulation of 220,000,000 poods of seed by the collective farms alone — after the successful fulfilment of the grain-procurement plan — is a tremendous achievement.

What does all this show?

That a *radical turn of the countryside towards socialism may be considered as already achieved*.

There is no need to prove that these successes are of supreme importance for the fate of our country, for the whole of the working class, which is the directing force of our country, and, lastly for the Party itself. To say nothing of the direct practical results, these successes are of immense value for the internal life of the Party itself, for the education of our Party. They imbue our Party with a spirit of cheerfulness and confidence in its strength. They arm the working class with confidence in the victory of our cause. They bring forward additional millions of reserves for our Party.

Hence the party's task is to *consolidate* the successes achieved and to *utilise* them systematically for our further advancement.

But the successes have their seamy side, especially when they are attained with comparative "ease" — "unexpectedly" so to speak. Such successes sometimes induce a spirit of vanity and conceit: "We can achieve anything!", "There is nothing we can't do!" People not infrequently become intoxicated by such successes; they become dizzy with success, lose all sense of proportion and the capacity to understand realities; they show a tendency to overrate their own strength and to underrate the strength of the enemy; adventurist attempts are made to solve all questions of socialist construction "in a trice." In such a case, there is no room for concern to *consolidate* the successes achieved and to *utilise them* systematically for further advancement. Why should we consolidate the successes achieved when, as it is, we can dash to the full victory of socialism "in a trice": "We can achieve anything!", "There is nothing we can't do!"

Hence the Party's task is to wage a determined struggle against these sentiments, which are dangerous and harmful to our cause, and to drive them out of the Party.

It cannot be said that these dangerous and harmful sentiments are widespread in the ranks of our Party. But they do exist in our Party, and there are no grounds for asserting that they will not become stronger. And if they should be allowed free scope, there can be no doubt that the collective-farm movement will be considerably weakened and the danger of its breaking down may become a reality.

Hence the task of our press is: systematically to denounce these and similar anti-Leninist sentiments.

A few facts.

1. The successes of our collective-farm policy are due, among other things, to the fact that it rests on the *voluntary character* of the collective-farm movement and on *taking into account the diversity of conditions* in the various regions of the U.S.S.R. Collective farms must not be established by force. That would be foolish and reactionary. The collective-farm movement must rest on the active support of the main mass of the peasantry. Examples of the formation of collective farms in the developed areas must not be mechanically transplanted to underdeveloped areas. That would be foolish and reactionary. Such a “policy” would discredit the collectivisation idea at one stroke. In determining the speed and methods of collective-farm development, careful consideration must be given to the diversity of conditions in the various regions of the U.S.S.R.

Our grain-growing areas are ahead of all others in the collective-farm movement. Why is this?

Firstly, because in these areas we have the largest number of already firmly-established state farms and collective farms, thanks to which the peasants have had the opportunity to convince themselves of the power and importance of the new technical equipment, of the power and importance of the new, collective organisation of farming.

Secondly, because these areas have had two years’ schooling in the fight against the kulaks during the grain-procurement campaigns, and this could not but facilitate the development of the collective-farm movement.

Lastly, because these areas in recent years have been extensively supplied with the best cadres from the industrial centres.

Can it be said that these especially favourable conditions also exist in other areas, the consuming areas, for example, such as our northern regions, or in areas where there are still backward nationalities, such as Turkestan, say?

No, it cannot be said.

Clearly, the principle of taking into account the diversity of conditions in the various regions of the U.S.S.R. is, together with the voluntary principle, one of the most important prerequisites for a sound collective-farm movement.

But what actually happens sometimes? Can it be said that the voluntary principle and the principle of taking local peculiarities into account are not violated in a number of areas? No, that cannot be said, unfortunately. We know, for example, that in a number of the northern areas of the consuming zone, where the conditions for the immediate organisation of collective farms are comparatively less favourable than in the grain-growing areas, attempts are not infrequently made to *replace* preparatory work for the organisation of collective farms by bureaucratic decreeing of the collective-farm movement, paper resolutions on the growth of collective farms, organisation of collective farms on paper — collective farms which have as yet no reality, but whose “existence” is proclaimed in a heap of boastful resolutions.

Or take certain areas in Turkestan, where conditions for the immediate organisation of collective farms are even less favourable than in the northern regions of the consuming zone. We know that in a number of areas of Turkestan there have already been attempts to “overtake and outstrip” the advanced areas of the U.S.S.R. 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.

What can there be in common between this Sergeant Prishibeyev “policy” and the Party’s policy of relying on the voluntary principle and of taking local peculiarities into account in collective-farm development? Clearly, there is not and cannot be anything in common between them.

Who benefits by these distortions, this bureaucratic decreeing of the collective-farm movement, these unworthy threats against the peasants? Nobody, except our enemies!

What may these distortions lead to? To strengthening our enemies and to discrediting the idea of the collective-farm movement.

Is it not clear that the authors of these distortions who imagine themselves to be “Leftists,” are in reality bringing grist to the mill of Right opportunism?

2. One of the greatest merits of our Party’s political strategy is that it is able at any given moment to pick out the *main link* in the movement, by grasping which the Party draws the whole chain towards one common goal in order to achieve the solution of the problem. Can it be said that the Party has already picked out the main link of the collective-farm movement in the system of collective-farm development? Yes, this can and should be said.

What is this chief link?

Is it perhaps, *association for joint cultivation* of the land? No, it is not that. Associations for the joint cultivation of the land, in which the means of production are not yet socialised, are already a past stage of the collective farm movement.

Is it, perhaps the *agricultural commune*? No, it is not that, Communes are still of isolated occurrence in the collective-farm movement. The conditions are not yet ripe for agricultural communes — in which not only production, but also distribution is socialised — to be the *predominant* form

The main link of the collective-farm movement, its *predominate* form at the present moment, the link which has to be grasped now, is the *agricultural artel*

In the *agricultural artel*, the basic means of production, primarily for grain-farming — labour, use of the land, machines and other implements, draught animals and farm buildings — are socialised. In the artel, the household plots (small vegetable gardens, small orchards) the dwelling houses, a part of the dairy cattle, small livestock, poultry, etc., are *not socialised*.

The artel is the *main link of the collective-farm movement* because it is the form best adapted for solving the grain problem. And the grain problem is the *main link in the whole system of agriculture* because, if it is not solved, it will be impossible to solve either the problem of stock-breeding (small and large), or the problem of the industrial and special crops that provide the principal raw materials for industry. That is why the agricultural artel is the main link in the system of the collective-farm movement at the present moment.

That is the point of departure of the “Model Rules” for collective farms, the final text of which is published today.¹

And that should be the point of departure of our Party and Soviet workers, one of whose duties is to make a thorough study of these Rules and carry them out down to the last detail.

Such is the line of the Party at the present moment.

Can it be said that this line of the Party is being carried out without violation or distortion? No, it cannot, unfortunately. We know that in a number of areas of the U.S.S.R. , where the struggle for the existence of the collective farms is still far from over, and where artels are not yet consolidated, attempts are being made to skip the artel framework and to leap straight away into the agricultural commune. The artel is still not consolidated, but they are already “socialising” dwelling houses, small livestock and poultry; moreover, this “socialisation” is

degenerating into bureaucratic decreeing on paper, because the conditions which would make such socialisation necessary do not yet exist. One might think that the grain problem has already been solved in the collective farms, that it is already a past stage, that the principal task at the present moment is not solution of the grain problem, but solution of the problem of livestock and poultry-breeding. Who, we may ask, benefits from this blockheaded “work” of lumping together different forms of the collective-farm movement? Who benefits from this running too far ahead, which is stupid and harmful to our cause? Irritating the collective-farm peasant by “socialising” dwelling houses, all dairy cattle, all small livestock and poultry, when the grain problem is still *unsolved*, when the artel form of collective farming *is not yet consolidated* — is it not obvious that such a “policy” can be to the satisfaction and advantage only of our sworn enemies?

One such overzealous “socialiser” even goes so far as to issue an order to an artel containing the following instructions: “within three days, register all the poultry of every household,” establish posts of special “commanders” for registration and supervision; “occupy the key positions in the artel”, “command the socialist battle without quitting your posts” and — of course — get a tight grip on the whole life of the artel.

What is this — a policy of directing the collective farms, or a policy of *disrupting* and *discrediting* them?

I say nothing of those “revolutionaries” — save the mark! — who *begin* the work of organising artels by removing the bells from the churches. Just imaging removing the church bells — how r-r-revolutionary!

How could there have arisen in our midst such blockheaded exercises in “socialisation,” such ludicrous attempts to overleap oneself, attempts which aim at bypassing classes and the class struggle, and which in fact bring grist to the mill of our class enemies?

They could have arisen only in the atmosphere of our “easy” and “unexpected” successes on the front of collective-farm development.

They could have arisen only as a result of the blockheaded belief of a section of our Party: “We can achieve anything!”, “There’s nothing we can’ do!”

They could have arisen only because some of our comrades have become dizzy with success and for the moment have lost clearness of mind and sobriety of vision.

To correct the line of our work in the sphere of collective-farm development, *we must put an end to these sentiments.*

That is now one of the immediate tasks of the Party.

The art of leadership is a serious matter. One must not lag behind the movement, because to do so is to loose contact with the masses. But neither must one run too far ahead, because to run too far ahead is to loose the masses and to isolate oneself. He who wants to lead a movement and at the same time keep in touch with the vast masses must wage a fight on two fronts — against those who lag behind and against those who run too far ahead.

Our Party is strong and invincible because, when leading a movement, it is able to preserve and multiply its contacts with the vast masses of the workers and peasants.

J. Stalin

1. *Pravda*, March 2, 1930.