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**V. M. MOLOTOV**

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE U.S.S.R.

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# **THE CONSTITUTION OF SOCIALISM**

SPEECH  
DELIVERED AT THE  
EXTRAORDINARY EIGHTH  
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE U.S.S.R.



MOSCOW · 1937

CO-OPERATIVE PUBLISHING SOCIETY  
OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE U.S.S.R.

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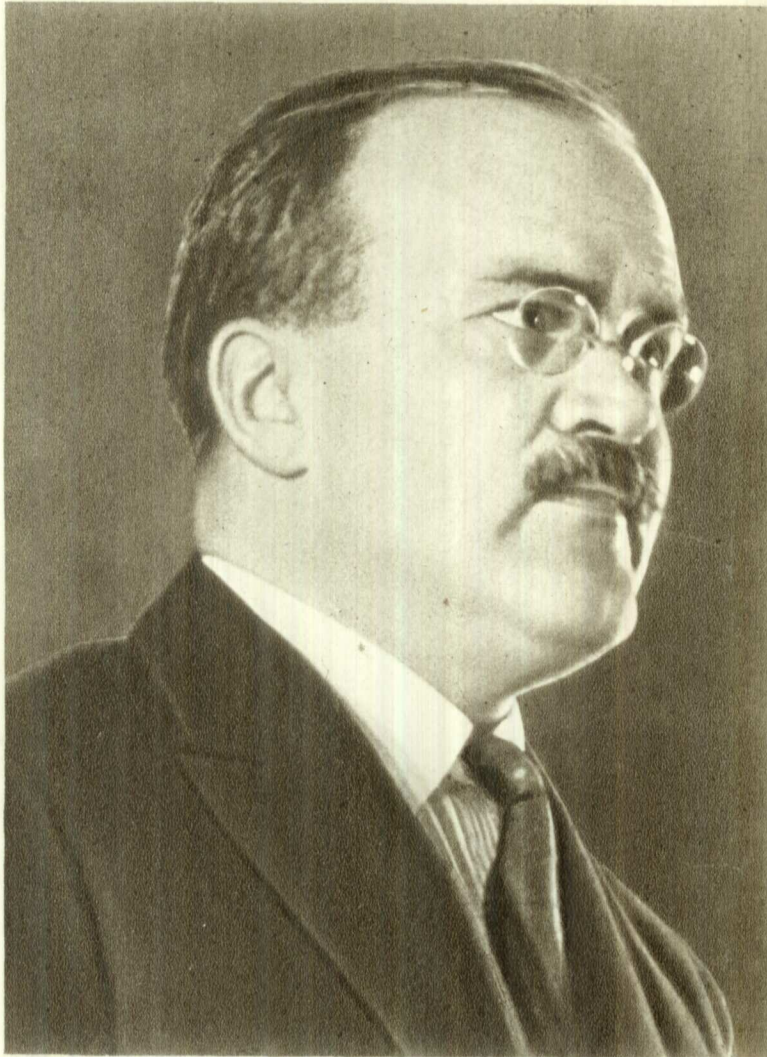
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*November 29, 1936*



MOSCOW 1937

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CO-OPERATIVE PUBLISHING SOCIETY  
OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN THE U.S.S.R.

*Translated by J. Fineberg*

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SPEECH BY COMRADE V. M. MOLOTOV  
AT THE EXTRAORDINARY EIGHTH CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS OF THE U.S.S.R.

DELIVERED ON NOVEMBER 29, 1936

*Comrade Molotov's appearance on the rostrum is greeted with loud cheers from all parts of the hall. All rise. Shouts: "Hurrah for Comrade Molotov!" "Long live Comrade Molotov—Comrade Stalin's closest comrade-in-arms!" Loud cheers and prolonged applause lasting for several minutes.*

I

SOCIALISM—THE FOUNDATION  
OF THE CONSTITUTION

AFTER a nation-wide discussion of the new Constitution unprecedented in its scope, and after hearing Comrade Stalin's historic report at this Congress, the toilers of our country can say with good reason: "We know very well what the new Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, what our Stalin Constitution, signifies." [*Applause.*]

It is the Constitution of victorious socialism. This defines its content.

The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. in operation up till now was adopted in 1924.

At that time we could not yet speak of the victory of socialism in our country. The question: "Who will win?" had not yet been decided. Socialist economy was on the upgrade and signs of its gaining preponderance were already observed; but the capitalist elements, too, were still growing, and in the countryside small proprietor economy—the biggest survival of shattered capitalism—prevailed. Hence, the Constitution in operation up to the present Congress reflected a situation which differed in many ways from the present situation.

The new Constitution of the Soviet Union is being created under different conditions.

The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means of production fully prevail in our country, the exploiting classes have been liquidated, the exploitation of man by man has been abolished and the well-being, culture and socialist consciousness of the masses is rising rapidly. And it is this that is reflected in the new Constitution.

For the first time the Constitution of the country defines the foundation of the socialist society created by the toilers and the organization of its state. Such is the "Stalin Constitution."

In order to be able to build the new society in our country, a society without the exploitation of man by man, the workers, in alliance with the peasantry, had to overthrow the capitalists and landlords by means of revolution and establish their own power—the power of the Soviets, the proletarian dictatorship. History provided no other way of emancipation from capitalism, and, as you know, it provides no other way now. But having overthrown the oppressors and having thwarted their numerous attempts to return to power, the toilers, as everyone can now see, took good advantage of the opportunity of creating for themselves a new and really happy life.

The Constitution is not a program, the Constitution must not be confused with a program, said Comrade Stalin in his speech here. And indeed, the new Constitution speaks of what has already been gained and achieved in our country. It raises no program questions. It formulates and legislatively consolidates the great gains of the socialist state of workers and peasants.

The Constitution proclaims socialism to be the foundation of our state. At the same time, it consolidates what has arisen in our state as a result of the victory of socialism and perfects certain forms of the state system.

But is it not a fact that the publication of the new Constitution, the Constitution of socialism, was accepted by the broad masses and by all of us as introducing something new, as something which opened up new prospects in the life of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.? The Constitution merely summed up the gains of the socialist revolution, merely registered what we actually possess, what is already in our hands. In

simple and concise words it merely combined into one whole what the peoples who built socialism in the U.S.S.R. possess, without making any declarations about the future, about the further aims of the U.S.S.R. But is not even this sufficient to enlarge our socialist horizon considerably and, as it were, to give wings to the imagination of millions and millions of simple people who have accepted the new Constitution as their banner in their further struggles for the cause of communism? *[Applause.]*

The Constitution summed up the work of reconstruction carried out in the economy of the country by saying that the economic foundation of the Soviet Union is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means of production, which in its turn ensures such a development of the productive forces of our country as will create a really happy life for the peoples of the U.S.S.R. The statement in the Constitution that small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen is permitted, without the right to exploit the labour of others, however, and the recognition of the citizens' right of personal ownership of the incomes from their work and of their personal property, far from being in contradiction to the fact that the socialist forms of economy and of socialist ownership predominate in our country, is an absolutely necessary supplement to it under present conditions.

On the other hand, the victory of socialist economy and of socialist forms of property is only emphasized by the fact that socialism has been victorious even in those regions of the Union which until recently were economically and culturally the most backward. Suffice it to say that even those economically important regions of the U.S.S.R. where only twenty years ago pre-capitalist relations prevailed, where even capitalism was developed only to a small extent—even those regions have now, in the main, adopted the path of socialist development. Does this not testify to the all-conquering power of socialism?

By consolidating the socialist foundation of our economy the Constitution facilitates further progress towards communism.

The socialist foundation of the Constitution is also expressed in the fact that the Constitution proceeds from such gains as the liquidation of all parasitic classes and of the exploitation of man by man, without which it would have been impossible to ensure a radical improvement in

the lives of the toilers of our country. It is expressed in the fact that it rests on the transformation of the material wealth and accumulations of the former rich and privileged groups into the property of the whole people; in the fact that it rests also on the abolition of the poverty of the masses and on the complete abolition of unemployment; in the fact that it ensures for all citizens the right to work—and, consequently, the right to receive guaranteed employment—and imposes on all able-bodied persons the duty to work, in conformity with the socialist principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

In conformity with this the Constitution consolidates the social and class basis of the socialist state as the state of workers and peasants; and it consolidates the leading role in the state of the working class, which is still confronted with enormous tasks in the work of completing the reconstruction of society and the final liquidation of classes—not to speak of the duty of defending the country against foreign enemies.

Thus the Constitution consolidates the socialist foundation of the economic and social organization of our state. In this respect it registers only what already exists in our country.

As for the organization of the state, the new Constitution introduces enormous improvements. These new elements in the organization of the state ensure the all-round development of socialist democracy and of genuine internationalism in the relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union. Resting entirely on the victory of socialism as the foundation of the U.S.S.R., these new forms of democracy and internationalism mark a new stage in the development of both.

## II

### OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEMOCRACY

THE SOVIET system is more impregnated with democracy than any other system. Through the medium of the Soviets the workers and peasants, or, in other words, the masses of the people, administer the state. The Soviets are the embodiment of the power of the toilers, the power of the people, whereas in all bourgeois states only the privileged minority, the ruling classes, wield power.

But the new Constitution democratizes the Soviet system still further. One might say that it consummates the democratization of the U.S.S.R. and, by broadening the base of the state and perfecting its forms, it strengthens in our country the dictatorship of the working class which, in the well-known words of Comrade Stalin, is "the core of Leninism."

The new Soviet Constitution discards what remained in the Soviet Constitution of the restrictions of the first period when the influence of the exploiting classes over the toilers, particularly in the rural districts, was still fairly extensive, and when the Soviets had not yet become strong. It establishes universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage in the election of all Toilers' Soviets, up to and including the supreme organs of the Soviet government. It settles the question of the disfranchised groups, for all citizens without exception receive the right to elect and be elected to the Soviets. It abolishes the privileges the workers hitherto enjoyed over the peasantry in the election of Soviets by introducing equal suffrage for all citizens of the U.S.S.R. For the hitherto existing indirect system of electing the intermediate and higher organs of the Soviet state it substitutes direct election by the citizens themselves. Instead of open election, secret election of the Soviets is introduced in order to

ensure greater freedom in voting. In addition to those nominated by the local Bolshevik Party organizations, candidates for Soviets will also be nominated by the numerous non-Party organizations we have in our country. The Constitution introduces a popular canvass (referendum) when deemed necessary by the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. or by any of the Union Republics.

These changes in the electoral system show that we are adopting and transferring to our country all that is best in the democratic systems of other states and are applying it to the conditions of the Soviet state. The only thing we reject is the right of legality for other political parties besides the party of communism. In our country, where there are no antagonistic classes, where the workers and peasants have rallied around the Communist Party, and where, as the whole of our experience shows, other political parties are merely the agents of the would-be restorers of capitalism, there can be no room for the legalization of such parties. [*Loud applause.*]

The changes in our electoral system which I have enumerated should still further increase the activity of the masses during elections of Toilers' Soviets. Interest in elections will undoubtedly increase. The new system will serve still further to enliven both the elections of the Soviets, and the whole work of the Soviets.

This system is bound to shake up the weak organizations which merely follow in the wake of events, and it is bound to strike at those who have become bureaucratic and have isolated themselves from the masses. On the other hand, this system will help to bring to the front new forces from the ranks of the advanced workers, peasants and intellectuals to take the place of backward elements or those who have become bureaucratic.

Under the new system of elections the possibility is not precluded that certain hostile elements may be elected if, here or there, our work of agitation and propaganda is badly organized. But, in the long run, even this danger should serve to benefit the cause inasmuch as it will act as a spur to those organizations and somnolent officials who need one.

Thus, by ensuring the complete development of democracy, the new electoral system should help us to improve the apparatus of the state, to broaden and renew the leading Soviet cadres and to raise the mass

work of the Party organizations themselves to a higher level. Hence, far from suffering by the introduction of the new system of electing the Soviets, our cause will gain very much by it.

Compare this with the situation prevailing in bourgeois countries which have constitutions.

There is not a bourgeois country, even those which are not fascist, where there are not a number, and sometimes a large number, of various restrictions of rights in the election of parliament and municipal bodies. Nobody can deny this.

In those countries there are, firstly, *social and property* restrictions, to the advantage, of course, of the propertied classes and to the disadvantage of the poor classes.

There is a "property qualification," for example, in Great Britain, the United States and Japan. In Great Britain, persons who live in one constituency and also occupy premises in another constituency even have the right to *two* votes.

There is a residential qualification in France, the United States and Japan. One must have lived in a constituency for 6, 12 and even 24 months before one is entitled to vote. Considering the large amount of unemployment in capitalist countries, the significance of these restrictions is clear.

Furthermore, there is the so-called "literacy test" in parts of the British Empire, in the United States and Hungary. And this test is also skilfully used by the rich against the poor.

Secondly, there are *national and race* restrictions on the suffrage in capitalist countries.

The anti-Semitic policy of the German fascists is well known. In Germany they have let themselves go to such an extent that their Black Hundred "Fundamental Law" contains nothing more nor less than the following: "A Jew cannot be a citizen of the German Empire. He is not entitled to vote on political questions. He cannot hold office."

In the United States restrictions are carried to the extreme against Negroes and Indians. In relation to the Negroes this is carried to such lengths that out of the 2,200,000 Negroes in five southern states, only 19,000 are permitted to vote.

Great Britain pursues the same line. In the Union of South Africa,



which is part of the British Empire, 2,500,000 whites enjoy the franchise, while 5,500,000 Negroes are disfranchised.

Thirdly, there are considerable restrictions on the rights of *women*. Suffice it to say that women are not entitled to vote for parliament in countries like France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Jugoslavia, Greece, Japan and Argentina.

I must also mention the restriction of the rights of members of the armed forces. In no country, except Great Britain, where the army is small, are members of the armed forces entitled to vote for parliament. In all bourgeois countries soldiers and officers are deprived of these elementary civic rights.

I will not quote any further examples of the restriction of the rights of the people with which bourgeois constitutions are replete. And yet there are quite a number of people in those countries who like to talk a lot about "democracy"!

The complete democratization of our electoral system is a very effective reply to all and sundry critics of Soviet democracy in the camp of the bourgeois democrats and Social-Democrats.

What a host of charges the "democrats" in the bourgeois camp hurled against the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R.! Notwithstanding the obvious support which the Soviet government enjoyed among the broad masses of the toilers, here and there the charge was made that the Soviet regime was not democratic enough. It was even claimed that the disfranchisement of two or three per cent of the population, *i.e.*, the former exploiters, while 97 to 98 per cent of the population enjoyed the franchise, was a great violation of democratic rights in the U.S.S.R. These tricks of the bourgeois critics of the Soviet system are well known.

A still more weighty reply to these attacks is provided by the Soviet Constitution, which is completing the democratization of the U.S.S.R.

The great Lenin taught us that "in the Soviet system democracy and dictatorship are not contradictory," that the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship signifies the growth of real democracy, democracy for the masses, democracy for the toilers. At every new stage in the development of the Soviet Republic we saw increasing confirmation of the words of our great teacher. Today, the whole

strength of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of socialist democracy which is based on the victory of the proletarian dictatorship, and the whole truth of the Marxist-Leninist critique of bourgeois democracy which, from its very birth, has been restricted to the narrow limits of democracy for the ruling bourgeois minority, stand out more strikingly than ever.

The adoption of the new Constitution testifies to the confidence which the toilers of the U.S.S.R. have in their strength.

Indeed, while within the country we have smashed the class enemy, and are strengthening our socialist positions more and more every day, we are as yet the only socialist state in the world and are living within a ring of imperialist powers which are irreconcilably hostile to socialism. It goes without saying that in adopting the Constitution we do not for a moment forget the danger that threatens us from outside, which is now the principal danger confronting the toilers of our country. Nevertheless, we are all quite confident that the further democratization of our state system will still further consolidate the socialist system of the U.S.S.R. despite all its enemies. [*Applause.*]

Can we imagine anything like this happening in any bourgeois state—even the strongest!—if it were surrounded by socialist states? Judge for yourselves; I doubt it. . . .

The strength of socialist democracy lies precisely in the fact that, having arisen as a result of the victory of the proletarian dictatorship, it is growing and expanding day by day, particularly with the growth of culture among the masses. And this reflects the mighty growth of our strength. After the complete victory of socialism in our country the democracy of the Soviet system is developing with greater force and on a wider scale than ever; and in its turn, it serves as a powerful lever for the further acceleration of the growth of the forces of socialism.

The development of democracy in our country reveals the superiority of socialist democracy over the democracy of bourgeois states.

But here I must make a slight digression and deal with a very peculiar form of "democracy," that of German fascism.

In order to free the hands of the ruling capitalist oligarchy, the German fascists are consistently imbuing the masses, and all the mem-

bers of the National-Socialist Party itself, with the following idea: "My leaders know what they want. And if they do not know, how can I know and decide?" In other words, this is "democracy" according to the principle: "Don't dare think for yourself, it will be the worse for you."

That is why all the Nuremburg congresses are so unlike real congresses. They are not congresses but something else.

These "congresses" meet only to listen to two or three speeches by "Führers." No discussion or debates are permitted at these "congresses." No decisions or resolutions are voted on. The masses are permitted to do only one thing and that is—to put up with the consequences of such congresses. . . .

A comparison between Soviet democracy and the democracy of bourgeois countries, even in its best forms, reveals the radical difference between them and the superiority in principle of the former over the latter. One thing is clear, and that is that socialist democracy alone is democracy for the toilers, democracy for the real masses of the people who have emancipated themselves from the rule of the exploiters.

Whoever wants to convince himself of the democratic character of our system must not forget the main thing. And the main thing in the Soviet system, as you know, is what is set forth in Article 6 of the Constitution.

This is Article 6:

"The land and all that is beneath it, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport, banks, means of communication, large state-organized agricultural enterprises, such as state farms (*soukhos*), machine and tractor stations and the like, as well as the principal dwelling fund in the cities and industrial localities, are state property, that is, the property of the whole people." [*Applause.*]

Today all this belongs to the *WHOLE PEOPLE*. What more consistent democracy can anyone desire?

Let any other state introduce such measures. If it does we shall admit that the democracy of that state is genuine, *UNIVERSAL DEMOCRACY*, such as the democracy in the U.S.S.R. [*Applause.*]

The new Constitution now gives *all* citizens of the U.S.S.R. *equal* rights. It may even be said that the former property-owners have returned—although in a special way—to the administration of property. But today, in taking part in this work through the medium of the Toilers' Soviets, they have become immeasurably richer, for they are now taking part in the administration not of private property but of the property of the whole people. [*Applause.*]

Of course, there is a deep thought at the back of the minds of the toilers of our country on this matter. They say: "The 'former rich' are receiving rights, that's not bad; but we expect them to work honestly!"

Comrade Stalin, in his report, emphasized the democratic character of our system by yet another remarkable fact. He said:

"The Soviet government liquidated the landlord class and transferred to the peasants more than 150,000,000 hectares of former landlord, government and monasterial land; and this was over and above the lands that were already in the possession of the peasants."

We would like to see any bourgeois state transferring to the peasants without compensation, not 150,000,000 hectares, perhaps, but only 15,000,000 hectares [*applause*] of landlord and other land. We would then be prepared to admit that such a state was beginning to make a serious approach to the position of real democracy [*applause*], democracy for the toilers.

And yet, somehow, we do not hear that the landlords, the nobility and the monastic hierarchy consider, from their class point of view, this transfer of land to the peasants to be "democratic." It must be admitted that revolutionary democracy is alien to them.

In 1917, socialists such as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were in power in our country. Everybody knows that they did not use their power for the purpose of transferring the land to the peasants, but for the purpose of procrastination in this matter.

Here, too, they proved to be the direct allies of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. And yet, how they boasted about their devotion to "democracy"! Hence, in our times, Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary "democracy" plays into the hands of the capitalists, landlords, kulaks, nobility and the priests. [*Applause.*] Hence, "democracy" as

conceived by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries has nothing in common with genuine democracy, which the people need so much.

One other example of Soviet democracy.

The celebrated author, A. N. Tolstoy, spoke here just before me. Who does not know that this is ex-*Count* Tolstoy? And now? One of the best and most popular authors in the Land of Soviets is *Comrade* Alexei Nikolayevich Tolstoy. [*Applause.*]

History is to blame for this. But the change was in the right direction. On this, all of us, including A. N. Tolstoy himself, are agreed.

The new Constitution will consolidate our profoundly democratic system more than ever. And by the fact that, side by side with the distinct reference to the definite duties of the citizens of the U.S.S.R., it firmly guarantees such rights as the right to work, the right to rest and leisure, the right to material security in old age, the right to education, complete equality of rights for men and women, complete equality of rights for the nations and races in the U.S.S.R., etc., we loudly proclaim how socialist democracy should be interpreted.

Even the most perfect forms of democracy in bourgeois states are in reality very restricted and tightly compressed within the limits of what is actually the rule of the bourgeois minority over the people. No form of democracy under the capitalist regime extends, nor can extend, beyond the limits of the rule of the privileged minority of the bourgeois classes; it fits the rights and liberties of the people to the hard bed of Procrustes.

With the aid of its ideologists and its press the bourgeoisie succeeded in acquiring for wretched capitalist democracy, the democracy of the bourgeois states, fame as democracy in general, as the "above-class" form of democracy, and even as the "human" form of democracy. In this respect the dexterity of the bourgeois and Social-Democratic politicians and "theoreticians" has been brought to the perfection of that of a juggler.

In actual fact, however, not a single bourgeois state grants, or has ever granted the toilers even a fraction of the genuine democratic rights and liberties which are enjoyed by the toilers of the U.S.S.R., and which they will enjoy to an even greater degree under the new Constitution. [*Loud applause.*]

In the guise of "people's democracy," bourgeois democracy eulogizes what at best are the extremely restricted and extremely curtailed rights of the toilers under the bourgeois system, under which the press, the printshops, printing paper, premises, all the capital and all power, and hence, actually all rights, belong to the ruling classes. The toilers merely get the crumbs from the rich man's table.

Nevertheless, the workers and the other working strata of the population have learned to use even these curtailed bourgeois liberties, even these restricted democratic rights, in their own interests for the political enlightenment of the masses, and for the preparation of the forces necessary for the impending battles. One can understand, therefore, why the workers and all democratic elements in capitalist countries are waging such a determined struggle to preserve, and to enlarge, even minor bourgeois-democratic rights and liberties.

On the other hand, it is precisely for this reason that in those countries where they have already lost confidence in the possibility of influencing the masses the ruling bourgeois classes are adopting the fascist methods of open bourgeois-terrorist dictatorship. It may be said, of course, that one cannot hold on for long by means of terrorism and by committing endless acts of violence against the masses. But evidently the fascist bourgeoisie reasons as follows: "Even if it's only a day, it's mine."

Is it surprising, therefore, that not only the workers and peasants but all honest democratic elements among the petty bourgeoisie and even among the middle bourgeoisie are more and more openly refusing to support fascism and the fascist-inclined groups?

The rapidity with which the pillars of fascism are being undermined is evident from a number of facts. Not only do the fascists today refuse to tolerate any survivals of democracy in *their own* countries, where, as it is, the people are "silent, for they prosper," but it is characteristic that they regard the very existence of democracy, even democracy in *other* countries, as a danger to themselves.

Therefore, utterly disregarding state frontiers, and violating all international laws and customs, the fascists of countries well known to all are interfering with sword in hand, and with German "Heinkels" and Italian "Savoias" in the air, in the internal affairs of another country, the people of which refuse to tolerate such gentlemen. It is not

without reason that certain good folk, seeing all this going on, say compassionately about the fascists: "Poor fellows, they seem to be in a desperate hurry. Pray god they don't break their necks."...

Our attitude towards democracy as one of the most precious boons to the toilers is well known. The successes of democracy in any country are near and dear to us. We rejoice when democratic rights are won, no matter where the masses of the people are marching forward along this road.

We can have no common language with fascism, the danger of which we do not intend either to belittle or to exaggerate. But we are heart and soul, and what is more, in actual practice, with those who are fighting the fascist reactionaries. We are entirely on the side of those who have at heart the interests of "the whole of advanced and progressive humanity." [Stalin.]

The adoption of the new Constitution will further enhance the significance of the U.S.S.R. as the bulwark and beacon of democracy.

The adoption of the new Constitution, with its all-round democratization of the state, which increases the possibility of achieving further and still greater success in improving the life of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., will render invaluable assistance to international socialism, and will give an impetus to the struggle of the workers, peasants and all the oppressed for their rights, for their complete emancipation from fascism, and from capitalism, which engenders and fosters fascist regimes.

The more deeply the Stalin Constitution permeates our lives, the more widespread will be its influence as the Constitution of socialism and of consistent democracy, not only in the U.S.S.R. but far beyond its frontiers—and the wider will its revolutionary influence spread among the masses of the toilers who are fighting for their emancipation from fascism, imperialism and colonial oppression.

### III

#### THE U.S.S.R. AND PEACE AMONG THE PEOPLES

THE new Constitution expresses the further development of socialist internationalism in the relations between the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

All that has been said at this Congress confirms the fact that by adopting this Constitution we are taking another step towards cementing the great friendship that exists among the peoples of the Soviet Union. Here, too, we are advancing what was initiated by the October Socialist Revolution.

The solution of the national problem in the Soviet Union is one of the most instructive facts of modern times. It reveals the strength of the principles of the Lenin-Stalin national policy and the Soviet government's loyalty to consistent democracy.

We found a correct solution for the national problem by reinforcing the friendship between peoples who differ very widely in their economic systems and social life, their history, and their national culture. We achieved this in spite of the fact that the numerous nationalities who were formerly oppressed by old tsarist Russia could not but harbour a profound feeling of distrust towards the Russians as representatives, in the past, of the oppressing nation.

Not a single bourgeois country, even if it has existed for centuries, has been able to find a correct solution of its own national problem any more than this was possible for old bourgeois-landlord Russia. The solution was possible in our country, thanks to the victory of socialism, which ensured the possibility of introducing consistent democracy, genuine equality of rights for the nationalities, and enabled the state to display special solicitude for the weaker and formerly particularly oppressed national minorities.

Nothing like the friendship between the peoples which has grown up and is becoming cemented in our country can be conceived of under the bourgeois regime, where it is always the ruling classes of the ruling nation which are supreme. Sometimes the upper strata of the ruling classes of the different nations come to an agreement and find a more or less common language—the language of oppressors of the masses of the people of the respective nationalities. But even when that occurs the toilers of the oppressed nationalities, particularly in the colonies and semi-colonies, remain under a double yoke, the yoke of “their own” exploiters, and, in addition, the particularly heavy yoke of the ruling nation.

In the Soviet Union we see the regeneration of numerous nationalities; we see the growth of the economic forces and the national culture of all the peoples. At the same time the multi-national Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is becoming more and more closely welded into a single whole.

The Soviet government would not have existed today had it not in fact displayed the greatest solicitude for the needs of all the peoples of the country, for their economic development, for the improvement of the material well-being of the toilers, and for the growth of their national culture. Moreover, the U.S.S.R. is pursuing a policy of rendering increased assistance to the more backward nationalities who were most oppressed under capitalism, and in this way it is helping to raise them to the common level more quickly.

In what was formerly “single and indivisible” Russia there have arisen over 50 republics, autonomous regions and national areas. If separate national state units had not been established in the U.S.S.R. there could have been no thought of free national development, let alone of removing the distrust of the formerly oppressed nations towards the Great Russians, say. Far from shaking our state, the creation of numerous national republics and regions has served to reinforce it. [*Applause.*]

The new Constitution marks a further step towards cementing the friendship between the peoples of the U.S.S.R., towards developing socialist internationalism in our country. This can be illustrated by a number of important examples.

The Constitution increases the number of Union Republics, *i.e.*, republics which have the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R., from seven to eleven. This once again emphasizes, not only the freedom of national development in our country, but also the voluntary character of the federation of nationalities which created our Union.

In the new Constitution a stricter line of demarcation is drawn between the functions of the Union and those of the Union Republics which enter into it. Moreover, in addition to creating several new People's Commissariats of the U.S.S.R., a number of new industrial People's Commissariats are being formed in the Union Republics, and many enterprises at present under U.S.S.R. management are being placed under the management of the Republics.

You heard Comrade Stalin's proposal to have the same number of members in both chambers of the Supreme Soviet and to introduce direct elections not only for members of the Soviet of the Union but also for members of the Soviet of Nationalities. The adoption of this proposal will ensure a further increase in the representation of all, and particularly the weaker, republics in the Supreme Soviet, and will enhance the prestige of the Soviet of Nationalities. It must be admitted that the adoption of this proposal will serve still further to cement the friendship between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and that it fully harmonizes with the interests of socialism. [*Applause.*]

This is how the principal phases in the development of the forms of socialist internationalism are reflected in our new Constitution.

From the very outset the Soviet government set itself the aim of ensuring inter-national peace in our multi-national country. It regarded this as one of the fundamental conditions for ensuring the success of socialism.

Always subordinating the forms of state structure to the fundamental interests of socialism and to the task of strengthening the proletarian dictatorship, our Party at every stage found specific forms in which to apply the Lenin-Stalin national policy, the policy of cementing friendship between the peoples. In our multi-national state we have succeeded in actually ensuring the rapid development of national culture in all its variegated forms, and at the same time in actually ensuring peace and friendship between all the peoples of the Union.



What hopes our enemies placed on the outbreak of inter-national strife in the U.S.S.R.! How many nationalist parties, fed, not only by the national bourgeoisie, but also by the foreign bourgeoisie, came to grief over this matter!

In our country, where the toilers of all nationalities by their joint efforts threw off their "own" and foreign exploiters, where complete equality of rights as between all peoples is actually ensured, where the regeneration of national culture is proceeding with unprecedented rapidity, and where all the peoples are ensured a part in settling the common affairs of the Union on the basis of consistent democracy—in such a country there is no soil for inter-national friction.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should serve as an example of peace and friendship among peoples on an even wider, an international scale. [*Applause.*]

Our class enemies should be convinced by now, I think, that all their hopes of profiting at the expense of our country are built on sand. Nevertheless, the more impatient of them even now, in their aggressive designs in Asia and in Europe, refuse, apparently, to desist from their efforts to draw up plans for foreign intervention in our internal affairs.

Public interest has been roused recently by the reports of the conclusion in Berlin of a German-Japanese pact alleged to be "against communism." But all over the world it is understood that the pact which has been made public is merely a screen to conceal the secret plans of conquest, and in particular, the anti-Soviet plans, of the German and Japanese imperialists.

Hence we cannot shut our eyes to these very suspicious *pact-makers*, or *plotters*.

To begin with, let us take the German side.

Evidently, the German fascists believe that they have already sufficiently adjusted their internal affairs to be able to embark upon foreign adventures and to select allies worthy of this object. Many people will readily agree, probably, that German fascism has already showed sufficient benefits on its people.

Whatever the situation in other countries may be, under the rule of these fascists, apparently, everybody is happy and provided for, well-

fed and cheerful, calm and contented to the last degree. And as for the increase in queues outside provision stores in German towns, the fascists say reassuringly: The people have less bread and butter, but the fascists have more guns and shells; Krupp's works are running at full capacity to meet their needs.

The sad plight of culture and cultured people in Germany is zealously concealed by pompous parades and by the tedious rattle of speeches. In spite of this, however, to prove the "tranquillity" of their country, the German fascists might point to the stability of the convict regime of their concentration camps and prisons in which increasing numbers of advanced workers and intellectuals are being incarcerated simply because they have the interests of culture at heart.

Most easily of all fascism "solved" the national problem in Germany by crushing the Jews without discrimination: old and young, those guilty of hostility to fascism and those innocent of that crime. One cannot help recalling just now the withering words Comrade Stalin uttered about anti-Semites in the reply he gave on January 12, 1931, to an enquiry made by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of America.

In that reply Comrade Stalin wrote:

"Replying to your enquiry. National and race chauvinism is a survival of the man-hating ethics characteristic of the period of cannibalism. Anti-Semitism, as an extreme form of race chauvinism, is the most dangerous survival of cannibalism. Anti-Semitism benefits the exploiters for it serves as a lightning conductor to divert from capitalism the blows of the toilers. Anti-Semitism is dangerous for the toilers, for it is a false track which diverts them from the proper road and leads them into the jungle. Hence, Communists, as consistent internationalists, cannot but be irreconcilable and bitter enemies of anti-Semitism. In the U.S.S.R. anti-Semitism is strictly prosecuted as a phenomenon profoundly hostile to the Soviet system. According to the laws of the U.S.S.R. active anti-Semites are punished with death.

J. STALIN." [*Applause.*]

The German fascists have truly deserved the Herostratus fame of modern cannibals. [*Laughter, applause.*]

They have a multitude of people who are eager to classify peoples and races according to categories. But we Soviet people are also entitled to express an opinion on this matter.

We are moved by no other sentiments towards the great German people than those of friendship and sincere esteem. [*Loud applause.*] As for Messieurs the fascists, they could best be placed in the category of a "nation" of a "higher" order bearing the name of "nation" of modern cannibals. [*Applause.*]

And our attitude towards the Jewish people follows logically from the principles of our Lenin-Stalin national policy and from the oppression which Jews suffer in many lands.

Needless to say, we regard the capitalists and counter-revolutionaries among the Jewish nation as exploiters and enemies of our cause. [*Applause.*]

But no matter what the modern cannibals, the fascist anti-Semites, may say, our feelings of fraternity towards the Jewish people are determined by the fact that it produced that brilliant creator of the idea of the communist emancipation of mankind, the man who scientifically mastered the highest achievements of German culture and the culture of other nations—Karl Marx. [*Applause.*] They are determined by the fact that the Jewish people, like the most developed nations, has produced a large number of the greatest representatives of science, technology and art, has produced many glorious heroes of the revolutionary struggle against the oppressors of the toilers, and in our country has brought to the front, and is bringing to the front today, larger and larger numbers of remarkable and gifted leaders and organizers in all branches of construction and in the defence of the cause of socialism. [*Prolonged applause.*] All this determines our attitude towards the anti-Semites and towards anti-Semitic outrages no matter where they may be perpetrated.

It is clear to us that in solving its internal problems on the lines of its anti-Semitic cannibal policy, German fascism is by its own hand signing a crushing verdict against the whole of its internal policy.

These gentlemen, of course, believe that they are managing their internal problems not at all badly. Did not the burning of the Reichstag

help them to come into power and to sweep away the remnants of democracy in their country?

But what now? What is to be done next? What other "unsolved" internal problems have remained for German fascism to solve? They cannot again burn down the already burnt down Reichstag! [*Laughter, applause.*]

What some of their allies in preparing for foreign, and in particular, anti-Soviet adventures, are worth, we know.

Evidently there are quite a number of people in Japan who think they are free from serious internal cares, since they want to convert the Japanese forces into an ally of German fascism in carrying out its adventurist plans regarding colonies and other conquests.

And indeed no little time has elapsed, one would think, since the well-known events of February 1936. The small clique of fascist officers who ran amuck in Tokyo at that time "pushed aside," so to speak, the central government in the capital of the state only for a little while. The ministers who got lost for a few days have surely been found again. . . . [*Laughter, applause.*]

But after all, it is not our business to judge of Japanese internal affairs and of the internal cares of the Japanese authorities.

However, reverting to the German-Japanese pact—which to the outside world looks like a pact against "communism," but which in reality resembles an ordinary alliance of imperialists in pursuit of annexationist aims—we must say quite openly that we do not shut our eyes to its real character. We appreciate the anxiety for the cause of peace which this "pact" has caused in all countries.

After all, it is not an accident that the two powers concerned are the powers which, in advance, one after the other, withdrew from the League of Nations. And as everybody understood even at the time, they withdrew in order to leave their hands quite free for aggressive, military adventures.

If it were really a matter of combating the "communist menace" which bourgeois states usually engage in, there would have been no need for Germany and Japan to have withdrawn from the League of Nations. Everybody knows that the League of Nations is not an obstacle to this.

Nor are facts like the following accidental. Everybody knows that fascist Germany dared not sign the well-known pact, the object of which is to ensure peace in Eastern Europe, and that she is striving to wreck it. Nor must it be forgotten that for several years now the Japanese government has evaded our offer to conclude a pact of non-aggression.

That is why many people so quickly saw through the real meaning of the recent German-Japanese pact, the authors of which have betrayed readiness to engage, not only in their own affairs, but also in those of other countries.

It is interesting to note that nobody in the world believes what the authors of this pact say about it and what they have written for publication.

Even the bourgeois press everywhere states that it is not a pact against "communism" that is in question, but predatory plans concerning China and Europe, and also the U.S.S.R. Consequently, on the pretext of "combating communism" an imperialist plot is being hatched against peace, a warmongers' plot.

In a certain sense, a plot against the cause of peace may also be described as "combating communism." But in that case one must be consistent and say what the real position is: under present conditions fascism and its allies stand for a *program of war*; communism and the U.S.S.R. stand for a *program of peace*. [*Applause.*]

Many facts go to show that at the present time there are quite a number of people who are eager to disrupt peace and kindle the flames of war. We get reminders of this now and again from our frontiers. Certain militarists in neighbouring states cannot behave decorously but positively behave like pestiferous autumn flies. [*Laughter, applause.*]

This causes some people to reason in the following manner: Perhaps the fascists and their allies can no longer count on the stability of their internal position and must therefore hurry up and start a war? Of course, they are the best judges of the situation. But it is not for us to pity the fascists and the other imperialist adventurers.

Our business is to stand on guard in defence of peace and to be prepared for any plot or attack from without. [*Applause.*]

We are wholly absorbed in our internal affairs. We are undeviat-

ingly pursuing a policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. We are proud of the fact that in our country inter-national peace and friendship has been established among the peoples, and the only thing we desire is that a stable peace be ensured between all nations. [*Applause.*]

While Messieurs the fascists and semi-fascists withdrew from the League of Nations because the latter does not encourage military adventures, we, on the contrary, desire that the League of Nations shall more successfully than hitherto champion the cause of peace among the peoples, and much more actively counteract all warmongers.

But to speak quite frankly, as far as protecting the interests of peace and the peaceful labours of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is concerned, we put our real trust solely in our own forces. [*Applause.*]

And we know that these forces will grow all the more rapidly the more strongly we cement the great friendship between the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and the more unitedly and consciously we all work on the basis of our new Stalin Constitution of the U.S.S.R. [*Applause.*]

#### IV

### FORWARD TO COMMUNISM!

OUR CONSTITUTION will give legislative formulation to socialist society. It is a summary of our gains during a period of nearly twenty years. At the same time, it will give a mighty impetus to the whole of our cause.

We have achieved only the first, the lower phase, of communism. Even this first phase of communism, socialism, is far from being completed, it is built only in the rough.

In our country the parasitic classes, *i.e.*, all and sundry capitalists and little capitalists, have been liquidated. Thanks to this, the exploitation of man by man has been abolished. This is not only a gigantic step forward in the lives of the peoples of our country, but also a gigantic step forward along the road of emancipation of the whole of mankind.

We, however, have not fully carried out the task of abolishing classes, although the working class of the U.S.S.R. which is in power is no longer a proletariat in the strict sense of the word, and the peasantry, the great bulk of which has joined the collective farms, is no longer the old peasantry.

Both the two classes which exist in the U.S.S.R. are building socialism and come within the system of socialist economy. But although both are in the same system of socialist economy, the working class in its work is bound up with state socialist property (the property of the whole people), while the collective farm peasantry is bound up with cooperative and collective farm property which belongs to individual collective farms and to collective-farm and cooperative associations. This connection with different forms of socialist property primarily deter-

mines the different positions of these classes. This also determines the somewhat different paths of further development of each of them.

What is common in the development of these two classes is that both are developing in the direction of communism. [*Applause.*] As this proceeds the difference in their class positions will be gradually obliterated until here too the last remnants of class distinctions finally disappear.

We cannot but realize that this is a long road. Nor can we fail to realize that the accomplishment of this task will be determined by the degree to which we succeed in carrying out what Comrade Stalin called "the guidance of society by the state (dictatorship)" which "belongs to the working class as the most advanced class in society."

In this connection reference must be made to the point in the new Constitution which deals with the leading role of the Communist Party in the U.S.S.R. Here, too, the Constitution only speaks of what actually exists in our country, and of what is recognized by the masses of the toilers in our country.

It was the leadership of the Communist Party alone that ensured the victory of the proletarian revolution and the building up of the socialist state of workers and peasants. By means of the new Constitution, which definitely points to the leading position the Communist Party occupies in the state and social organizations of the U.S.S.R., the toilers express their solidarity with the Bolshevik policy of our Party and with its aim of bringing about complete communism, communism in the strict sense of the word. [*Applause.*]

Our Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, enjoys the boundless confidence of the toilers. Certainly, it has fully deserved this confidence and love of the workers, peasants and working intelligentsia of the U.S.S.R. Its prestige is also very high even beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

This does not mean that it has no enemies.

Its enemies are the same as those of the working class, of the collective farm peasants and of the working Soviet intelligentsia. In other words, the enemies of our Party are the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the socialist state of workers and peasants. The present enemies of the Party of Lenin and Stalin are those who want the restoration of capi-

talism and the return to power of the bourgeoisie, and who, for that reason, so fervently hate the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. which shows people the road to a happy life, to communism.

In the wolf pack of enemies of communism by no means a minor place is now occupied by Messieurs the Trotskyists, whose aims are the same as those of the bourgeoisie. As you know, these people, at the behest and on the orders of bourgeois states, sank so low as to perpetrate the most sordid and most despicable counter-revolutionary deeds.

We can understand the rage and lack of principles of these unscrupulous bourgeois degenerates who hate our Party and all honest builders of socialism with a passion worthy of the renegades they are. It is known that they have supporters and abettors also among the renegades of the Right.

Well, we know how to deal with the refuse of the revolution.

Evidently we must more strongly combat the careless and accommodating spirit of certain leaders in our state apparatus. We must raise revolutionary vigilance in the ranks of the toilers to a higher level. We must, not in words but in fact, keep the class enemy in mind and raise the communist consciousness of the masses to a higher level. To clear the enemies from the path means releasing the forces of the masses in the struggle for the complete victory of communism. *[Applause.]*

No matter what our class enemies both here and beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union may do, our forces are rapidly growing.

Millions of men and women who are becoming masters of the technique of their jobs, thorough masters of their branches of production, masters of a genuine new culture, are rising to the surface. Neither the subterranean work of secret spies and double-dealers nor shells from heavy guns can shake or break the ranks of this vast army of millions. *[Loud applause.]*

With unprecedented rapidity new heroes of labour, shock brigade workers of socialist construction armed with the most up-to-date technical equipment, our glorious Stakhanovites, men and women, are rising to the surface. *[Applause.]* New names of working men and working women, of men and women collective farmers, men and women of culture, technique, science and art are becoming famous in

our country in increasing number, and every new name serves as a signal for the appearance of other new names.

Our heroes of the air, the sea and the Arctic, our heroes of the struggle against the elements, whose ranks are growing with astonishing rapidity, are prototypes of the heroes who will fight in the struggle against any enemy that attacks the U.S.S.R. *[Loud applause.]*

We must be properly equipped with everything that is needed so that the enemy may know that it is dangerous to play with us.

And to the glorious arsenal of our equipment is now added the "Stalin Constitution" of socialism. *[Applause.]*

Under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, under the banner of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, under the banner of the Stalin Constitution—forward to communism! *[Loud applause, loud cheers. Cries of greeting to Comrade Molotov. Shouts of: "Long live the Stalin Constitution!" Loud and prolonged cheers.]*