Trotskyism:

Counter-Revolution in Disguise

Moissaye J. Olgin

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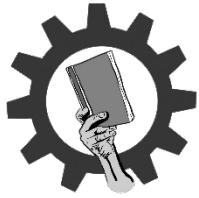

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DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to all cadre who believe with their hearts, minds, and actions in a true Bolshevik Revolution!

For one to be a true Bolshevik, one must desire wholeheartedly, without reservation, to free themselves and their fellow workers from the bonds of class antagonisms. A true Bolshevik is one who understands the foundations of Marxist-Leninist teachings; one who understands that their sole purpose in life is to crush capitalism.

We dedicate this collection of works to you in the hopes that the truths expounded in this book and others will inspire you, the reader, to work to help build Communism.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY

A great leader died, On December 1, 1934, Sergei Kirov, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was waylaid in Leningrad and shot dead. On December 21, the Soviet Government announced that the assassin, Nikolaiev, was a member of the so called "Leningrad Center" of counter-revolutionists, a terrorist group bent on assassinating the highest officials of the Soviet.

Said the official communique:

> "The investigation has established that the motive for the killing of Kirov was a plan of this underground anti-Soviet group to disorganize the leadership of the Soviet Government by means of terrorist acts directed against its chief leaders and thereby effect a change in policy along the lines of the so-called Zinoviev-Trotsky platform... There was an additional motive for the killing of Kirov because Kirov had smashed the Leningrad group of former Zinoviev oppositionists both ideologically and politically."

A few days later, Zinoviev, Kamenev and 17 members of another counter-revolutionary group, the so-called "Moscow Center," were arrested and brought to trial. At the hearings, Zinoviev, apparently realizing the hopelessness of his situation, declared:

> "This outrageous murder threw such an ominous light upon the whole previous anti-Party struggle, that I recognize the Party is absolutely right in speaking of the political responsibility of the former anti-Party Zinoviev group for the murder committed."

Members of the Moscow Center, in their confessions, explained the nature of the degeneration that led to the murder. Said Yevdokimov:

> "We were separated from the actual life of the country, and we stewed in our own juice. Our counter-revolutionary connections were strengthened in us. Blinded by the wrath towards the leadership of the Party, we did not see what was occurring in the towns and villages. We did not see the colossal successes of Socialist construction. The tremendous historical processes of our country, influencing the international working-class movement, went by us. We appraised the difficulties arising in the process of growth in the countries as enemies, maliciously rejoicing at failures, and accusing the Party leadership of these failures.
>
> "We did not see what every rank-and-file member saw. We did not notice the growth in the consciousness of strength, of the unity of the Party. We addressed Stalin with malicious counter-revolutionary insinuations. We accused the Party leadership that it did not accept measures to activize the international working-class movement. We slanderously asserted that the Central Committee handicapped the development of this movement."

Another member of the group, Bashkirov, declared: "Nikolaiev's shot resulted from the fact that he received his education in counter-revolution in the Trotsky-Zinoviev organization."

Once more the name of Trotsky cropped up in connection with an attack on the Bolshevik Revolution. Once more Zinoviev (and his old associate, Kamenev) appeared as collaborating with Trotsky. This time it was no mere word barrage. A great hero was destroyed. New Russia was robbed of a talented, courageous, and universally beloved working-class builder of the Socialist system. The blow was aimed at the very heart of the Revolution.

"The dregs of the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition."... This is how the Soviet masses termed the band of plotters. And once more a gigantic surge of hatred rose among the millions of friends of the Soviet Union the world over for this man, Trotsky.

Who is he? What is Trotskyism? What are its social roots? What is the international role of the Trotsky group'?

The following is to be a brief answer to these questions:

TROTSKY'S CAREER

Trotsky calls himself "the true Bolshevik-Leninist." So did the Social-Democratic hangmen of the German revolution, Noske, Scheidemann, Severing, call themselves "true Marxists." Trotsky loves to pose as the last of the great revolutionary figures that carries forward the tradition of Lenin. There are people, especially among the younger generation, who think of him as an "old Bolshevik." For wasn't he leader of the Revolution in 1917? Wasn't he at the head of the Red Army between 1918 and 1921?

These are the facts:

Trotsky started his political career around the turn of the century. In 1903, when the great division between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks took definite form, Trotsky allied himself with the Mensheviks. In one way or another he fought Bolshevism until late in the summer of 1917. Time and again he agreed with this or that point of the Bolshevik program, but soon he would join the Mensheviks to fight the Bolsheviks—and Lenin. He renewed his open hostility to Bolshevism in 1923 and has been fighting it ever since.

How did he become a revolutionary figure? He never was in the thick of the workers' life as builder of their organizations. He never succeeded in winning to his particular side any considerable numbers of workers. He always was, and always remained, a writer and speaker only, enjoying great popularity among the petty-bourgeois

intellectuals. When the revolutionary labor movement in Russia was young, a man with a sharp pen and an oratorical talent such as Trotsky could easily become noted. It is for these qualities that he became a member of the First Soviet of Workers' Deputies organized during the Revolution in 1905. The Soviet of that time, according to Lenin, was a "broad fighting union of Socialists and revolutionary democrats lacking definite form. The first chairman of the Soviet, Chrustalev-Nosar, was "not even a Socialist. After the latter's arrest Trotsky became chairman. Of his role during those crucial days of the 1905 Revolution we have the testimony of a great scholar, the historian Pokrovsky:

> "During the whole period of its activity, the Petersburg Soviet had at its head a very intelligent and clever Menshevik, an adept in the art of combining Menshevik substance with revolutionary phrases. The name of that Menshevik was Trotsky. He was a genuine, full-blown Menshevik who had no desire whatever for armed insurrection and was altogether averse to bringing the revolution to its completion, *i.e.,* to the overthrow of Tsarism."[1]

After 1906 he forms a little center in Vienna, Austria, where he publishes a non-periodical paper of his own. In this paper he fights Bolshevism, although in varying degrees. In 1912 he joins an anti-Bolshevist coalition known as the August Bloc. His attacks on Bolshevism become more vehement and unscrupulous. With the outbreak of the World War, he occupies a Centrist position. In words he

[1] Pokrovsky, M. N., *Brief History of Russia,* Vol. II; International Publishers: New York, 1933, p. 320.

opposes the Social-Democrats who joined their capitalist governments to help one group of imperialist robbers, as Lenin called them, against the other. In fact, he does not break with them and in his arguments he often defends them. He is against the war, but he is also against Lenin. The Leninist program called for work to defeat "our own" government during the war; it called for transforming—in each country—the imperialist war into civil war, *i.e.,* a revolution against the bourgeoisie; it called for the formation of a new international organization of all really revolutionary Socialists. Trotsky is against these slogans. When Lenin says: it is good for the revolution that "our own" government should be defeated in war, Trotsky calls this "a concession to the political methods of social-patriotism." When the revolutionary Socialists gathered in 1915 in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, to organize for the struggle against the imperialist war, Trotsky belonged, not to the Leninist left wing, but to the center.

So much were his ideas at variance with those of Lenin that even after the February revolution of 1917, Lenin did not consider Trotsky a Bolshevik. In a letter to Kollontai, dated March 17, 1917, Lenin writes:

> "In my opinion, our main task is to guard against getting entangled in foolish attempts at 'unity' with the social-patriots (or, what is still more dangerous, with the wavering ones, like… Trotsky and Co.) and to continue the work of our own party in a consistently *internationalist* spirit."[2]

[2] Lenin, V.I., *The Revolution of 1917,* Vol. I; International Publishers: New York, 1929, p. 21.

In the middle of May 1917, in preparing for a conference, Lenin writes a synopsis for a report, in which he points out the necessity of "*Be as firm as a rock in maintaining the proletarian line against petty-bourgeois waverings*," and adds the following significant line:

"Waverings of the petty-bourgeois: Trotsky…"[3]

Trotsky, on arriving from abroad after the February revolution, joined the Social-Democratic group in Petrograd known as "interboroughites." This group held a Centrist position and for many years fought the Bolshevik organization in Petrograd. Even after the February revolution they favored the unification of all the groupings of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, including the social-patriots. Gradually, however, they abandoned the idea of unity with the social-patriots, leaning more and more toward acceptance of the Bolshevik policies.

Late in the summer of 1917 the "interborough" group joined the Bolshevik Party, on the eve of the Sixth Congress of the Party held in the beginning of August. They were represented in the Congress delegation, and the new Central Committee elected by the Congress included among its 22 members three former "interboroughites," Trotsky, Uritsky, and Yoffe.

Having declared his acceptance of the Bolshevik policies, Trotsky was given full opportunity by the Central Committee to work in the interests of the Party and the working class. An effective orator, and former chairman of

[3] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 36, Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, p. 450.

the first Soviet in 1905, Trotsky, late in 1917, became chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. He held this position in the decisive days of October, working under the direct guidance of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party.

During the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in November 1917, Trotsky played an important role as a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee. But it would be absurd to say that he was *the leader* of the uprising.

> "I am far from denying the undoubtedly important role of Comrade Trotsky in the uprising. But I must state that Comrade Trotsky did not and could not have played any special role in the October uprising; that, being the president of the Petrograd Soviet, he only carried into effect the will of the respective Party authorities, which guided every step of Comrade Trotsky."[4]

Among the five members appointed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party on October 16 to serve as a center in charge of organizing the uprising, *Trotsky's name does not appear.*

> "Thus [says Stalin] something 'terrible' took place at this meeting of the Central Committee, *i.e.,* 'in some mysterious way' the 'inspirer,' the 'principal figure,' the 'only leader' of the uprising, Comrade Trotsky, did not get on the practical center, which was called upon to lead the uprising. How can this be reconciled with the current notion about Comrade Trotsky's special role?"[5]

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[4] Stalin, J.V., *The October Revolution;* Cooperative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR: Moscow, 1934, p. 71.
[5] *Ibid.,* pp. 71-72.

He who knows the ways of the Bolshevik Party will easily understand why Trotsky was not among the leaders appointed by the Central Committee to direct the uprising. He was a new man. He had never helped build the Bolshevik Party. He had been in disagreement with the Bolsheviks up to a very short time before. In reality he was not of the Bolshevik mold. He was a man of influence recognized in Russia, but his influence extended primarily to the petty bourgeoisie. He was something like a connecting link between the Bolshevik Party and the petty-bourgeois masses which the Party wished to lead.

Trotsky's disagreement with Lenin sprang up immediately after the seizure of power. It was necessary to sign the Brest-Litovsk treaty with Germany in order that the proletarian revolution might have a breathing spell to consolidate itself. Trotsky, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs, refused to sign the treaty. Lenin's stupendous will power, Lenin's lashing castigation, were required to force Trotsky to abandon his untenable pose, and to acquiesce in a step that spelled the saving of the revolution.

Time passed. Trotsky worked with the Bolsheviks. To all appearances he became one of them. But he was a stranger in the Bolshevik Party. The civil war came, and Trotsky was given a high post. He was, so to speak, propagandist-in-chief of the Red Army. He was Military Commissar, but he was not a military man. He knew nothing about the organization of an army, he had wrong ideas about revolutionary war strategy. The work of organizing the Red Army was done by the entire country, by millions of the proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The actual fighting was done under the supervision of military experts controlled by the Central Committee under the watchful leadership of Lenin. Trotsky traveled up and down the front, issuing crisp orders that can be quoted as examples of military style; he went into the trenches to talk to the Red Army men; he made great public orations—but he never led the civil war. He may have been deluded into believing that he was the whole moving spirit of that tremendous historic combat. He may believe so to the present day. The actual facts are just the reverse.[6] The facts are that *Stalin* and *Voroshilov* were the great fighters on the various battle fronts—leaders with clear revolutionary vision and strategists of the first order.

Before the thunder of the last battles of the civil war had died down Trotsky developed an open, violent opposition to the policy of Lenin in respect to the tasks of the trade unions. He wanted the unions to be, not organizations representing the workers in the factories and the shops, in the industries, but administrative units appended to the State and

[6] As a matter of fact, his ideas about the strategy of the civil war were so wrong that, had they been carried out, the enemies would have triumphed. Suffice it to recall that in the summer of 1919, at the very crucial moment of the fight against the White General Kolchak, Trotsky proposed to move part of the Red forces from the Eastern front to the South, leaving the Ural region with its factories and railways in the hands of Kolchak. The Central Committee of the Communist Party decided against Trotsky. It ordered an advance against Kolchak to drive him out of the Ural. That was the beginning of the end of Kolchak. But that was also the end of Trotsky's playing any role on the Eastern front. Soon he ceased playing any role also on the Southern front against the White General Denikin. He does not tell this in his history of the revolution. Trotsky's veracity...

carrying out governmental functions. He organized, in opposition to Lenin, a small faction that threatened to disrupt the activities of the Communist Party at a time when unity was a question of life and death. Lenin branded this factionalism as a disruptive act. He said:

> "Even if the 'new tasks and methods' had been pointed out by Trotsky just as highly correctly as in reality they have been pointed out incorrectly throughout, ... by such an approach alone Trotsky would have caused injury both to himself, to the Party, to the union movement, to the education of millions of members of the labor unions, and to the Republic."[7]

Trotsky was defeated. Had his "plan" succeeded, that would have wrecked the entire Soviet system.

In 1923 he again resumes his opposition to the Bolshevik Party. This time it is no more a single question. It is the whole Communist Party, its structure, its activities, its entire line that irk him. At first he was alone among the outstanding leaders. In 1926 he was joined by Zinoviev and Kamenev who, in November 1917, had distinguished themselves by being opposed to the uprising and to the seizure of power by the Bolshevik Party and were branded by Lenin as "strikebreakers." They had ideas differing from Trotsky's in many respects, but they accepted his leadership and the fundamentals of his opposition.

A legend is peddled around to the effect that Trotsky and his associates were "not given a chance" to present their

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[7] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 32; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1973, p. 74.

viewpoint to the rank-and-file Party membership. As a matter of fact, the debate between the opposition and the Party leadership was continued from 1924 till 1927. In numerous sessions of the central bodies, in numberless meetings of the lower bodies of the Party, the program of the opposition was threshed out. Scores of books, hundreds of pamphlets dealing with these questions were published and widely distributed. The opposition received a hearing even to the point of exhausting the patience of the Party members.

When the discussion was over these leaders with their group of associates were thoroughly discredited, despised by the masses of the Party and of the proletariat and exposed as plotters.

We are perfectly aware of the gravity of such an accusation. But how else can you term the activities of seemingly responsible Party members who, because the overwhelming majority of the membership disagrees with them and demands their submission, organize a little clique within the Party, with its own clique discipline and clique centers, make an alliance with non-Party petty-bourgeois elements to carry out anti-Party plans, start printing underhanded literature against the Party leadership and broadcasting it among the masses and thus take the initial steps toward disrupting and breaking the very backbone of the Revolution, the Communist Party?

This is exactly what Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenev did in 1927. The Party was forced to expel the clique. Some of them later recanted, as they did even before 1927, only to resume their destructive activities. Trotsky did not recant. He was ordered to leave the capital and was transferred to the city

of Alma-Ata in Central Asia. Later he was expelled from the country. Since then, he keeps on supplying the world bourgeoisie with ammunition against the Soviet Union. His powder is wet. His cannon roar without actually hurting. But the bourgeoisie pretends to see in him a real source of genuine information. He conducts his counter-revolutionary activity on the score of having been a leader in the Revolution. In his innumerable writings he makes the unwary believe that it was he and not Lenin who led the Revolution.

Such is, briefly, the career of the man. Was he ever a Bolshevik? Out of a period of thirty-three years he was connected with the Bolsheviks for only six years. Even during that time, he had a great number of violent disagreements with them. In fact, there was hardly a Leninist policy to which he wholeheartedly agreed. He never became an integral part of the Bolshevik organization. He seems to have been an alien body within the organism of the Bolshevik Party, even when he was a member of its Political Bureau.

Bolsheviks need not mention the non-Bolshevik past of a man who has sincerely and genuinely merged himself with their Party. If we mention Trotsky's past it is because, as we shall see more clearly anon, it never became his past. It still is his present. He is now just as violently opposed to the Bolshevik Party under Stalin as he was opposed twenty years ago to the Bolshevik Party under Lenin; he slanders Stalin just as viciously as he slandered Lenin—and for the same reasons.

> "How could it happen [says Stalin] that Comrade Trotsky, who was carrying such an unpleasant burden [of hatred for the Bolsheviks] on his back, nonetheless turned up

in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? This happened because Comrade Trotsky threw off (actually threw off) his burden at that time, concealed it in his cupboard. But for this 'operation' no serious collaboration with Comrade Trotsky would have been possible…

"Could Comrade Trotsky, in such a state of affairs [when the impracticability of his theory was proven by actual experience] do anything else but conceal his burden in his cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, he who did not have any more or less serious group behind him, who came to the Bolsheviks as a one-man political organization bereft of its army? Of course, he could not.

" …The fact is that the old burden of Trotskyism, concealed in the cupboard in the days of the October movement, is now once more hauled into the light of day in the hope of finding a market for it."[8]

When Trotsky concealed his "unpleasant burden" in his cupboard he was a one-man organization. When he took it out again he believed he had a tremendous army back of him. He was mistaken. The rank-and-file membership of the Communist Party and every honest worker in the Soviet Union refused to follow the man with the unpleasant burden. Now he is trying to form such an army on a world scale. Quite unsuccessfully.

[8] Stalin, *Op. Cit.*, 1934, pp. 89-90.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF TROTSKYISM

We have related in some detail the history of Trotsky's political life, but Trotskyism is not a one-man affair. It is not a peculiarity of an individual. Trotskyism is a social phenomenon. The fact that Trotsky happened to be in the revolution adds a certain prestige to his utterances in the eyes of the unwary. In this, as in many other instances, the personal element cannot be ignored. But even if Trotsky did not exist, the brand of opposition to the revolution which he represents would find its expression. Trotskyism is being reborn on every stage of the revolutionary movement because it is the expression of the attitude of a certain class, namely, the petty bourgeoisie.

Of this class Karl Marx once said that it is "a transitional class in which the interests of two classes are simultaneously blunted". The petty bourgeoisie finds itself between the proletariat and the largescale bourgeoisie. It strives to rise to the position of the largescale bourgeoisie, but the latter, using the power of concentrated and centralized capital, continuously drives it down to the position of the proletariat. The petty bourgeois, subjectively, wishes to become rich, to attain to the heights of capitalist economic power; objectively, however, his interests lie with the struggle against

capitalism because capitalism removes the ground from under his feet and because only under a Socialist system will the petty bourgeois of today become a free member of society, unafraid of the future, since under Socialism he will he transformed into one engaged in useful productive labor. The petty bourgeoisie as a class, therefore, is wavering. The interests of two classes, said Marx, are "simultaneously blunted" in it. That means that the petty bourgeoisie cannot be as consistently counter-revolutionary as the big bourgeoisie, but it cannot be as consistently with the revolution, as is the proletariat. The petty bourgeoisie is afraid of the big bourgeoisie but it is also afraid of the revolution. Some sections of the petty bourgeoisie are attracted to the revolution which represents their *future* interests, but they shrink before the sharp line of the revolutionary struggle. Fundamentally they would like to have class peace, because nothing is more dear to the heart of the petty bourgeoisie than social peace. However, they feel that social peace means their own doom. Therefore, when the proletariat develops a strong revolutionary movement, many petty-bourgeois elements are irresistibly drawn to the revolutionary camp, only in turn to denounce its "extremes," and to don "extreme Left" masks itself. They are finding fault with the existing capitalist system, but they are also finding fault with the Revolution and its leaders. Not being truly revolutionary, being able only to be *led* by the Revolution, they often develop an immense conceit. They think of themselves as the *only* and *real* revolutionists. They denounce the real revolutionist as "dogmatic" and "narrow."

Trotsky's approach to the revolution is that of the petty bourgeoisie.

The fact that he is neither a shopkeeper nor a petty artisan must not deter those unfamiliar with the Marxian interpretation of social movements. It must not be supposed, says Marx, that those who represent the petty bourgeoisie "are all shopkeepers, or enthusiastic champions of the small-shopkeeper class."

> "Culturally and by individual status they may be the polar opposites of members of the shopkeeping class. What has made them become the political representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is this. Intellectually they have failed to transcend the limitations which are, materially, imposed upon the petty bourgeois by the conditions of petty-bourgeois existence. Consequently, they are, in the theoretical field, impelled towards the same aspirations and solutions as those towards which, in practical life, the petty bourgeois are impelled by material interests and by their social position. Speaking generally, such is always the relationship between the political and literary representatives of a class and the class they represent."[9]

What has been the influence of the petty bourgeoisie in the Russian Revolution?

As early as 1908, Lenin, speaking about the revisionism of Marxism, explained its danger in the following way:

> "Because in every capitalist country, side by side with the proletariat, there are always broad strata of the petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors... It is quite natural that this

[9] Marx, Karl, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte;* International Publishers: New York, 1926, pp. 58-59.

> should be so and always will be so, right up to the changes of fortune that will take place in the proletarian revolution. For it would be a profound mistake to think that the "complete" proletarianization of the majority of the population is essential for bringing about such a revolution. What we now frequently experience only in the domain of ideology, namely, disputes over theoretical amendments to Marx; what now crops up in practice only over individual side issues of the labor movement, as tactical differences with the revisionists and splits on this basis—is bound to be experienced by the working class on an incomparably larger scale when the proletarian revolution will sharpen all disputed issues, will focus all differences on points which are of the most immediate importance in determining the conduct of the masses, and will make it necessary in the heat of the fight to distinguish enemies from friends, and to cast out bad allies in order to deal decisive blows at the enemy."[10]

With the clear-sightedness of a genius, Lenin foresaw the coming struggle of the proletarian revolution with its "bad allies" hailing from the petty bourgeoisie.

What is the role of such bad allies? Twenty years later Stalin explained this:

> "Since our proletariat does not live in a vacuum, but in the midst of the most actual and real life with all its variety of forms, the bourgeois elements arising on the basis of small production 'encircle the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat and causes constant relapses

[10] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 15; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, p. 39.

among the proletariat into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternate moods of exaltation and dejection.'[11] thereby introducing into the ranks of the proletariat and of its Party a certain amount of vacillation, a certain amount of wavering.

"There you have the root and the basis of all sorts of vacillations and deviations from the Leninist line in the ranks of our Party."[12]

More specifically, Stalin explains this in his *Foundations of Leninism.*

"All these petty-bourgeois groups penetrate into the Party and introduce into it the spirit of hesitancy and opportunism, the spirit of demoralization and uncertainty. It is they, principally, that constitute the source of factionalism and disintegration, the source of disorganization and disruption of the Party from within. To fight imperialism with such 'allies' in one's rear means to expose oneself to the danger of being caught between two fires, from the front and from the rear. Therefore, ruthless struggle against such elements, their expulsion from the Party, is a prerequisite for the successful struggle against imperialism."[13]

The understanding of Trotskyism as representing the influence of the petty bourgeoisie on certain elements of the proletariat and of the Communist Party was repeatedly expressed in the resolutions of the Congresses of the

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[11] Lenin, V.I., *"Left Wing" Communism,* An Infantile Disorder; New Outlook Publishers: New York, 2022, p. 38.

[12] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 11; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1950, pp. 239-240.

[13] Stalin, J.V., *Foundations of Leninism;* International Publishers: New York, 1939, p. 122.

Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Thus, the Thirteenth Congress (1924) declared:

> "In the person of the present 'opposition' we face not only an attempt to revise Bolshevism, not only a direct moving away from Leninism, but also a dearly expressed petty-bourgeois deviation. There is not the slightest doubt that this 'opposition' objectively reflects the pressure of the petty-bourgeoisie on the positions of the Party of the proletariat and its policies."

Again in 1927, at the Fifteenth Congress, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union thus characterized the Trotsky Zinoviev-Kamenev opposition:

> "The denial of the possibility of a victorious building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and consequently the denial of the Socialist character of our revolution; the denial of the Socialist character of state industry; the denial of the Socialist roads of development in the village under conditions of the proletarian dictatorship and of the policy of union of the proletariat with the fundamental masses of the peasantry on the basis of Socialist construction; finally, the actual denial of the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R. ('Thermidor') and the attitude of capitulation and defeatism connected with it,—all this ideological orientation has transformed the Trotsky opposition into an instrument of petty-bourgeois democracy within the U.S.S.R. and into an auxiliary troop of international Social-Democracy outside of its frontiers."

Trotsky as an individual is only a representative of a certain social class. He is a petty-bourgeois intellectual. He started with opposition to the Revolution and the

Communist Party, and he has finished with heading the counter-revolution. True to type, he was drawn to the revolutionary movement of the working class, but he never believed in the ability of the revolutionary forces to carry through the Revolution to a successful conclusion and he always hated the very essence of a proletarian party. He hates the tedious day-by-day activities of building and perfecting a workers' organization. He hates discipline when applied to himself. But he loves discipline when he applies it to others. When he was War Commissar, he was ruthless towards subordinates. When he was outvoted a thousand to one in the Bolshevik Party, he refused to submit.

During the most revolutionary period of his life, he was always full of misgivings. Whenever the Revolution was confronted with a difficulty, he fell into a panic. When patience and endurance were required, he demanded spectacular action. When temporary retreat was the order of the day, he advocated senseless bravado which would have wrecked the Revolution. When the Revolution was gathering momentum for a new advance, he lamented the "collapse" of the Revolution. When a new victory was achieved, he decried it as a defeat.

In this, as in his unwillingness to admit errors, to apply self-criticism to himself, he only expressed his class.

What characterized his opposition when he still was a mere oppositionist was a lack of understanding of the moving forces of the Revolution and a purely rational approach to the solution of problems, an approach that had no relation whatever to the realities of life. What characterizes him now when he is leading the vanguard of counter-revolution

is his deliberate invention of ways and means to damage the Revolution, the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Communist movement throughout the world. This has become his sole aim, the only reason for his existence.

He had a dream once in his life. He believed himself to be able to take the place of Lenin in the Bolshevik Party. Lenin's Party could not have been led by a man who never was a Bolshevik and always fought Lenin. But he failed to understand this obvious truth. Because he had dramatized himself into believing that he was the driving force of the Revolution he did not deem it possible for him to take a minor post. Because he was a petty-bourgeois intellectual he could not place the interests of the Party above his own personal ambition. He therefore had to dramatize himself into the great *intransigent.* From this position he slid down to the hideous gutter in which he finds himself today.

The history of his last ten years is the history of continuous downfall. From a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party down to an opposition within the Communist Party, down to a damager expelled from the Communist Party, down to an enemy expelled from the Soviet Union, down to one supplying the world bourgeoisie with lies about the Soviet Union, down to one who organizes the forces of disruption against the Communist Party and the Communist International, down to one who becomes the inspirer of plots aiming at the assassination of the leaders of the Revolution—aiming at the very heart of the Revolution.

Verily, no man has ever fallen so low.

He had a dream once. He has a dream now. To see the Soviet Union wrecked, to see the Bolshevik Party destroyed, to see the leaders of Bolshevism assassinated, to see the world Communist movement crushed, to see the Communist International wiped off the earth—how that would gladden his heart! How he gloats over this vision! Of course, he does not say so outright. He cannot expose himself before the world. It is his accursed task to win recruits to counter-revolution by means of radical phrases. He is a master phrase counterfeiter. But it is to make his dream come true that he directs all his actions.

In this he is a brother-in-arms to Matthew Woll and Randolph Hearst, to Abramovich and Hamilton Fish. Birds of a feather.

Trotskyism Defined

What is Trotskyism?

More than ten years ago, when Trotsky still enjoyed the privilege of membership in the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., Stalin found in Trotskyism "three peculiarities which place it in irreconcilable contradiction to Leninism."

Before we proceed we must say a word about the method applied here in discussing Trotskyism. The question is treated from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism. It is assumed that Leninism has proved itself correct both as the theory and as the practice of the revolution. It is therefore taken for granted that opposition to Leninism is incorrect.

Now, we are fully aware of the fact that many a reader may disagree with the Leninist point of view. He may be opposed to the proletarian revolution, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the socialist system. Such a reader may find solace in Trotsky's attacks upon Leninism. But then he must admit that he seeks in Trotsky not a confirmation but a repudiation of the Leninist solution of the social problem. With a man of this kind, who draws from the muddy stream of Trotsky's denunciations convenient arguments against Sovietism and against the Communists of his country, we

have no argument on these pages. The only thing a person of this stripe is requested to do is to acknowledge that he uses the Trotsky ammunition *against* everything that Marx, Engels, and Lenin stood for and against everything Stalin, together with the Communist International, stand for today.

Quite different it is with those who profess to be in favor of the proletarian revolution, who admit the necessity of organizing the working class for the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a Soviet power, and who recognize in Lenin the master-builder of the Bolshevik Party and the world-historic leader of the proletarian revolution. The following argument aims to show that you cannot be for the proletarian revolution and for Trotskyism; that if you accept Trotsky's arguments you depart from Lenin; that Trotsky's professions of Leninism are only a smoke screen behind which his disbelief in the proletariat and his mistrust of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party and its methods of struggle are hidden; that Trotskyism is in reality a weapon against the proletarian revolution—but one that is painted red in order to delude workers with a radical trend.

We may assume that those who are in earnest about the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment—on the principles laid down by the Russian Revolution—of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the now capitalist countries, including the United States, agree to the following fundamental propositions:

(a) That a Bolshevik (Communist) Party is the first prerequisite for a successful revolution;

(b) That there can he only one Bolshevik Party and not many in every country, and that the unity of such a party, its cohesion and therefore its striking power are of surpassing importance;

(c) That the backbone of the socialist revolution is the urban proletariat;

(d) That the Communist Party can accomplish the proletarian revolution only when it leads the entire working class, or at least a majority of it, in an armed uprising against the capitalist State;

(e) That the success of the revolution depends to a large extent upon the ability of the Party and the proletariat to ally themselves with great masses of the other exploited and oppressed groups and classes of the population, in the first place the exploited farmers, the lower middle class of the cities, the oppressed intellectuals, etc.;

(f) That confidence between Party leadership and Party membership is one of the major conditions for success and that mistrust of Bolshevik leadership, when unfounded, is undermining the revolution.

(g) That there can be only one Communist International which leads the Communist Parties of the world.

(h) That one cannot be a real revolutionist and fight the Soviet Union, since the Soviet Union is the greatest achievement of the world proletariat and the example of building Socialism.

But to return to Stalin's definition. It must be remembered that Stalin made it at the time when Trotskyism was just beginning to raise its head. The tract, *Trotskyism or Leninism*, in which the definition is contained, was published in

November 1924. It is amazing how clearly Stalin saw both the meaning and the future development of Trotskyism at a time when Trotsky still loomed as one of the great heroes of the revolution.

The "peculiarities" of Trotskyism, according to Stalin, are:

First, Trotskyism is a theory of the so-called "permanent revolution," which is but another name for the theory that it is impossible to build socialism in the Soviet Union.

Second, Trotskyism means lack of confidence in the Bolshevik Party allegiance, in its unity, in its hostility towards opportunist elements, which leads to the theory of the "cohabitation of revolutionaries and opportunists, of their groups and grouplets within the fold of a single party."

Third, Trotskyism means distrust in the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt at discrediting them, at besmirching them.

With a prophetic understanding Stalin points out the dangers of Trotskyism:

> "Wherein lies the danger of the new Trotskyism? In that Trotskyism, according to its entire inner content, has every chance of becoming the center and the rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to weaken, to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat.
>
> "Trotskyism now comes forward in order to uncrown Bolshevism, to undermine its foundations."

Redefining Trotskyism six years later (June 1930), Stalin had only to elaborate on the "peculiarities" just mentioned. The activities of the Trotskyites fitted well Stalin's original

characterization. What he foresaw in 1924 as a possibility and a trend, had become an established practice.

"What is the essence of Trotskyism?" Stalin asks in 1930, and he finds it consisting in the following:

> "The essence of Trotskyism is, first of all, denial of the possibility of completely building socialism in the U.S.S.R. by the efforts of the working class and peasantry of our country. What does this mean? It means that if a victorious world revolution does not come to our aid in the near future, we shall have to surrender to the bourgeoisie and clear the way for a bourgeois-democratic republic. Consequently, we have here the bourgeois denial of the possibility of completely building socialism in our country, disguised by 'revolutionary' phrases about the victory of the world revolution…
>
> "The essence of Trotskyism is, secondly, denial of the possibility of drawing the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction in the countryside. What does this mean? It means that the working class is incapable of leading the peasantry in the work of transferring the individual peasant farms to collectivist lines, that if the victory of the world revolution does not come to the aid of the working class in the near future, the peasantry will restore the old bourgeois order. Consequently, we have here the bourgeois denial of the capacity or possibility of the proletarian dictatorship to lead the peasantry to socialism, disguised by a mask of 'revolutionary' phrases about the victory of the world revolution…
>
> "The essence of Trotskyism is, lastly, denial of the necessity for iron discipline in the Party, recognition of freedom for factional groupings in the Party, recognition of the need to form a Trotskyist party. According to Trotskyism, the

> C.P.S.U.(B.) must be not a single, united militant party, but a collection of groups and factions, each with its own center, its own discipline, its own press, and so forth. What does this mean? It means proclaiming freedom for political factions in the Party. It means that freedom for political groupings in the Party must be followed by freedom for political parties in the country, *i.e.,* bourgeois democracy. Consequently, we have here recognition of freedom for factional groupings in the Party right up to permitting political parties in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat, disguised by phrases about 'inner-party democracy,' about 'improving the regime' in the Party."[14]

The denial of the possibility of building Socialism in the U.S.S.R. can only discourage the Soviet workers, destroy their confidence, dampen their enthusiasm. The denial of the possibility of building Socialism in the countryside can only discourage the poor and middle peasants, weaken their struggle against the kulaks, undermine their confidence in the urban proletariat and its Party as leaders of the revolution and builders of Socialism. The denial of the necessity of iron discipline in the Party can only encourage breaches of discipline and thus weaken the strongest weapon of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is for this reason that Stalin branded it (in 1930) as "an anti-proletarian, anti-Soviet, counter-revolutionary group, which painstakingly informs the bourgeoisie of the affairs of our Party."[15]

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[14] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 12; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1954, pp. 364-367.

[15] *Ibid.,* p. 364.

Today Trotskyism no more confines itself to "informing" the bourgeoisie. Today, Trotskyism is the center and the rallying point for the enemies of the Soviet Union, of the proletarian revolution in capitalist countries, of the Communist International. Trotskyism is trying not only to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, but also to disintegrate the forces that make for the dictatorship of the proletariat the world over.

* * *

Our exposition will follow the "peculiarities" of Trotskyism in the order enumerated by Stalin. We shall have to add a number of chapters dealing with the recent exploits of the Trotskyites both in the United States and abroad.

SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

The denial of the possibility of Socialism in one country is the basis of all the ideas and policies of Trotskyism. This denial, in turn, is composed of two major premises.

1. The denial of the possibility of a victorious proletarian revolution in one country when there is no simultaneous revolution in one or several other countries;

2. The denial of the possibility of building Socialism in one country where a proletarian revolution has taken place—if there is no simultaneous revolution in other countries.

This is contrary to historical facts and contrary to the very essence of the Leninist understanding of the proletarian revolution.

Let us begin with the latter.

The Leninist conception of the proletarian revolution springs from the analysis of the present stage of capitalism as imperialism, the stage of the decay of capitalism, the "dying of capitalism." The major characteristics of the imperialist stage of capitalism, as viewed by Leninism, are: (1) The domination of finance capital in the advanced capitalist countries; export of capital to the backward countries which represent sources of raw material; an omnipotent

oppressive financial oligarchy; (2) Growth of *"spheres of influence"* of finance capital and its colonial possessions to the extent of the emergence of a "*world system of financial bondage* and of the colonial oppression of the vast majority of mankind by a handful of 'advanced' countries;" (3) The inevitability of bitter struggles between those countries that have already seized the territories of the globe and those that wish to get their "share"—a struggle for the redivision of the globe.

The first of the enumerated features of imperialism spells "an intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the capitalist countries and the growth of the elements of an explosion on the internal, proletarian front in the 'mother' countries." The second feature leads to "an intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the colonial countries and an accumulation of the elements of discontent with imperialism on the external front, the colonial front." The third characteristic includes the concept of "the inevitability of war under imperialism and the inevitability of a coalition between the proletarian revolution in Europe and the colonial revolution in the East, thus forming a united world front of the revolution as against the world front of imperialism." (See Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism;* Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism; Program of the Communist International.*)

What follows from this analysis is that there exists an *imperialist system of world economy* which represents an *integral unit;* that this unit is continually rent asunder and exploded by the contradictions inherent in it, and that the proletarian revolution which has ripened everywhere, even in

the comparatively backward countries, because the system as a whole is ripe for it, may break the chain of world imperialism in its weakest link.

This view of imperialism as an integrated system, and of the proletarian revolution as breaking through in that place where imperialism is weakest, gives the clue to the understanding of the proletarian revolution.

But this means that the proletarian revolution will, at first, inevitably take place in one single country only. Other countries may or may not follow, but the rule would be a revolution in one country where for one reason or another imperialism can no more withstand the onslaught of the revolutionary forces.

All this is ABC and should be known to everyone familiar with the fundamentals of Leninism. But just this is denied by Trotskyism.

Trotsky directed his struggle against the Leninist theory of the *"uneven development of capitalism."* It is in these words that Lenin summed up his teachings about the imperialist stage of capitalism, and it is the uneven development of capitalism that Trotsky specifically denies.

What is the uneven development of capitalism? Stalin, who, more than anybody after Lenin, concerned himself with developing the Leninist theory of imperialism and world revolution, explains it in the following way:

The uneven development of capitalism does *not* consist in the fact that some countries are economically more advanced than the others; uneven development in other words does not mean *different degrees* of development of the capitalist countries; moreover, these differences of degrees of

development have a tendency to *diminish* in the present epoch: there is going on a process of *leveling out* of the differences in the degree of economic progress in the various countries, the more backward ones fighting to reach the level of and exceed the advanced countries. Nor does the uneven development of capitalism consist in just this fact that some countries reach the level of others and overtake them in an evolutionary way. Such changes in the relative position of various countries are not a peculiar characteristic of imperialism: they are known to have occurred even in the era preceding imperialism.

What, then, is the law of the uneven development under imperialism?

> "The law of the uneven development in the period of imperialism [says Stalin] means the spasmodic development of some countries relative to others, the rapid ousting from the world market of some countries by others, periodic redivisions of the already divided world through military conflicts and catastrophic wars, the increasing profundity and acuteness of the conflicts in the imperialist camp, the weakening of the capitalist world front, the possibility of this front being breached by the proletariat of individual countries, and the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries."[16]

Two years before the Revolution of 1917 Lenin, arguing against the slogan of the "United States of Europe" as advanced by some Bolsheviks at the beginning of the war, rejected that slogan just because it implied the impossibility of

[16] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol 9.; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1948, p. 111.

socialism in one country. The United States of Europe under capitalism, said Lenin, is either impossible or reactionary because it is tantamount to an agreement to divide up the colonies. The United States of the World (not of Europe alone) is, according to Lenin, a State form of national federation and national freedom which Communists connect with socialism—until the complete victory of Communism brings about the total disappearance of the State.

> "As a separate slogan, however [says Lenin], the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with socialism; *second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of socialism in a single country is impossible,* [our emphasis—M.J.O.] and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others."

Lenin then states positively:

> "*Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.] Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organizing their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." For "A free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states."

Trotsky denies the uneven development of the capitalist countries under imperialism. He denies the entire Leninist analysis of imperialism as forming one integrated whole that must inevitably be broken through by the proletarian revolution in its weakest spot. He thinks that the internal and external contradictions of imperialism are not sharp enough to make a breaking of the imperialist front in a single country possible. He thinks that the forces of the proletarian revolution are not strong enough to be able to break the front of imperialism in a single country. True to his covering up defeatism with revolutionary phrases he puts forward the idea of a revolution in one country supported by revolutions in other countries, but this cannot eliminate the fact that he says to the workers of every country, "You cannot make a revolution alone; you are sure to be defeated; wait till other countries begin; if there is no revolution elsewhere, you are doomed,"—which is tantamount to denying the possibility of any revolution at all.

It was at the time when the first Russian revolution (1905-06) was not yet finished though it was obviously going down; when the Bolsheviks with Lenin were straining every effort to keep the organizations of the workers alive under the blows of growing reaction; when the Bolsheviks were doing their utmost to appreciate what was happening, to analyze the forces of the revolution, to understand the reasons for the defeat of the revolutionary forces and to prepare the masses for new revolutionary battles which were inevitable since the revolution had not accomplished its objectives—it was just at that juncture that Trotsky came out with the following estimate:

> "Without direct State support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia cannot maintain itself in power and transform its temporary rule into a durable Socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant."[17]

What does Trotsky say in this declaration? He says to the workers that even if through some coincidence of circumstances, they found themselves in possession of State power, they would not be able to retain that power. They would need, he asserts, the State support of the European proletariat, *i.e.,* the support of the European proletariat in possession of State power. In the absence of such a support, a successful revolution in Russia is impossible—and it is useless for the Russian workers to attempt the seizure of power. Trotsky agrees with the Mensheviks who, disregarding the *imperialist* character of present-day capitalism, still cling to the outworn idea that the proletarian revolutionary movement must be the strongest in the most advanced capitalist countries. Trotsky, together with the Mensheviks, disregards the uneven development of capitalism which explains why revolutionary movements can be the strongest where the chain of imperialism is the weakest—which is *not necessarily* in the most advanced capitalist countries.

The following is Trotsky's answer to Lenin's theory of the uneven development of capitalism. He wrote it in 1917 in his pamphlet, *Program of Peace.* He republished it in 1924 in his collected works, obviously finding it correct.

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[17] Trotsky, Leon, *Our Revolution,* Russian Edition, 1906, p. 278.

"The only more or less concrete historical consideration put forward against the slogan of the United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Social-Democrat* [Bolshevik organ—M.J.O.] in the sentence which follows: 'Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.' From this the Social-Democrat drew the conclusion that the victory of Socialism was possible in a single country, and that, therefore, there was no point in making the creation of a United States of Europe the condition for the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country. That capitalist development in different countries is uneven is an absolutely incontrovertible fact. But this very unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist level of England, Austria, Germany, or France is not identical. But in comparison with Africa or Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe,' which has grown ripe for the social revolution. That no single country should 'wait' for others in its own struggle is an elementary idea which it is useful and necessary to repeat, in order to avoid the substitution of the idea of expectant international inaction for the idea of simultaneous international action. Without waiting for others, we begin and continue our struggle on our national soil quite sure that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if that should not happen, then it would be hopeless, in the light of the experience of history and in the light of theoretical considerations, to think, for example, that a revolutionary Russia could hold its own in the face of conservative Europe or that a Socialist Germany could remain isolated in the capitalist world."[18]

[18] Trotsky, Leon, *The Program of Peace: The Socialist United States of Europe* in *Fourth International,* 1944, p. 285.

Note this reference to one single sentence. The only "more or less concrete historical consideration," says Trotsky, against the slogan of the United States of Europe and for the possibility of a successful proletarian revolution in a single country is found just in one sentence. Trotsky disregards the entire Leninist theory of imperialism as the stage of decaying capitalism, of dying capitalism. The entire Leninist theory of revolution does not exist for him. He sweeps away the reference to the uneven economic development by stating that the principal countries of Europe are all ripe for the social revolution. What he does not notice is the contradictions between England, Austria, Germany, or France on the one hand and the contradictions between these countries and their colonies and spheres of influence on the other hand. To him the revolution does not come as the result of these contradictions, of a breach in the imperialist front in one or the other country. To him the revolution comes simultaneously or nearly simultaneously in the most advanced countries—or it does not come at all. Since revolutions do not happen this way, it is quite obvious that Trotsky does not see the possibility of revolution. It must be kept in mind that this was published in 1924, seven years after October. It was hopeless, said Trotsky, to think that the revolution in Russia could "hold its own" in the face of conservative Europe.

This is, as Stalin put it, "sinning against reality." The fact that the proletariat of the Soviet Union had held power for seven years in face of capitalist Europe should have convinced anybody of the correctness of the Leninist theory about the victory of the socialist revolution in one country.

But what are historical facts to Trotsky? Even to the present day he clings to his exploded theory of the impossibility of socialism in one country.

When the Leninists speak about the socialist revolution in one country they do not deny the revolutionary aid and assistance coming from the masses of other countries. It is a well-known fact that without the aid of the masses in the capitalist countries the Soviet Union could not have maintained itself. This very assistance rendered the dictatorship of the proletariat by the masses of the capitalist countries is one of the contradictions of imperialism: the situation in the capitalist countries may not be ripe yet for a revolution, but the workers and the other exploited and oppressed are revolutionary enough to realize that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. is the greatest achievement of the world proletariat, and are determined enough to fight their home imperialists in defense of the workers' fatherland.

On the other hand, the Leninist theory does not deny the possibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat of a single country being crushed by concerted action of world imperialism—although the probability of such an attack is diminishing with the growth of the U.S.S.R. and of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist world, including the colonies. But, being revolutionists, the Leninists ask themselves: What shall the proletarian Party do in a revolutionary situation when there is the probability of a successful attack on the capitalist State, the probability of the seizure of power by the proletariat? The Leninists say it is the duty of the workers under such conditions to seize power. The Trotskyites say the workers have to ascertain first whether

there is the probability of a revolution in a few other countries; if there is not such a probability, the workers must not seize power. The Leninists are proletarian revolutionists. Trotskyism tends to disarm the proletariat, to prevent it from utilizing a revolutionary situation.

How could Trotsky overlook the existence of the Soviet Union? Did not the workers of Russia under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party seize power in October 1917, "in face of a conservative Europe?" Was this not a revolution in a single country? Did not the workers maintain themselves in power for so many years?

Trotsky cannot overlook this fact that stares him in the face. But in order to vindicate his original "theory" about the impossibility of a successful socialist revolution in a single country, he interprets away the fact. What exists in the Soviet Union, to him, is not a real socialist revolution; what is being done in the Soviet Union is not the building of socialism.

In a postscript to a new edition of his pamphlet, *Program of Peace,* he writes in 1922:

> "The assertion repeated several times in *A Program of Peace,* that the proletarian revolution cannot be carried through to a victorious conclusion within the boundaries of one country may appear to some readers to be refuted by almost five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would he groundless. The fact that the workers' State has maintained itself against the whole world in a single country, and in a backward country at that, bears witness to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other countries more advanced, more civilized, will be capable of performing real wonders. But, although

> we have held our ground in the political and military sense as a State, we have not yet set to work to create a Socialist society and have not even approached this stage. So long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries, we are compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to seek for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time one may say with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to cure some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but that genuine advance in the construction of Socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe."[19]

This is how Trotsky interprets away the successes of the proletarian revolution in Russia. He is wrong, but he heaps one fantastic assertion on the other to cover up his original error. The workers did maintain their power in Russia; the proletarian revolution did hold its own in the face of a hostile world, but Trotsky must always remain right. It is the revolution which, in his interpretation, is always wrong. Socialism in Russia cannot he built without the victory of the proletariat "in the most important countries of Europe." What is built in Russia, therefore, is not Socialism.

So, he wrote in 1922. So, he writes in 1935 when he declares that the Soviet Union is approaching "its general crisis."

> "The partial crises converge towards the general crisis which is creeping onward, and which expresses itself in the fact that despite the titanic expenditures of energy by the masses and the greatest technological successes, the

[19] *Ibid.,* p. 286.

> economic achievements keep lagging far behind, and the overwhelming majority of the population continues to lead a poverty-stricken existence."[20]

Here we have approached the very fountainhead of Trotsky's method. To prove that Socialism in one country is impossible, he attempts to prove that the achievements of the Soviet Union are the reverse of socialist construction. To reinforce his arguments, he heads the counter-revolution which attempts to damage Socialist construction and destroy the Soviet Union.

Trotsky remains true to himself throughout.

[20] Trotsky, Leon, *On The Kirov Assassination;* Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1935, p. 12.

THE REVOLUTION AND THE PEASANTRY

That ingenious theory about the impossibility of Socialism in a single country has been misnamed "the permanent revolution." The term is misleading, like many other quasi-Marxist terms used by Trotsky. It is the exact opposite of what Marxism understands under permanent revolution. Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is an attempt at explaining why a revolution in a single country must fail from within even if it is not crushed from without. The explanation is that the proletariat has no allies in a socialist revolution within the country where such a revolution takes place. In particular, Trotskyism tries to prove that the peasant masses do not represent a revolutionary reserve, and that therefore a revolution in a single country is bound to succumb to the counter-revolutionary forces, which also include the peasantry, unless aid comes from a victorious revolution in other countries. Trotsky's "permanent revolution" is thus an expression of the disbelief in the ability of the proletariat to carry with it in the revolution the broad masses of the other exploited and oppressed classes of the population.

The Marxian theory of revolution is based just on this conception of the proletariat being *the leader* of all the

exploited and oppressed in the revolution. *Hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution* is the foundation of the Marxian understanding of revolution. It found its classical expression as early as 1850 in a piece of writing by Marx and Engels entitled *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League.*

In that document, which was addressed to one of the first revolutionary working-class organizations in Europe, Marx and Engels pointed out the tasks of a revolutionary workers' party in a revolution such as took place in various countries of Europe in 1848, namely, in a revolution against the feudal system. The authors, having in mind the interests of the working class and being fully aware of the fact that a bourgeois-democratic revolution, *i.e.*, a revolution establishing a bourgeois democracy, can never satisfy the real demands of the workers, nevertheless did not see the workers as isolated from all the other forces in the revolution. They formulated the task of the workers in the following way: Together with the petty-bourgeois democrats against the old system; against the petty-bourgeois democrats, together with the village poor when the former wish to entrench themselves and become the ruling power in the State. The document continues:

> "While the democratic petty-bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and with the achievement, at most, of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not

> only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians in these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. *For us the issue cannot be the alteration of private property but only its annihilation, not the smoothing over of class antagonisms but the abolition of classes, not the improvement of the existing society but the foundation of a new one.*"[21] [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]

We have here, in a remarkably clear form, the meaning of a permanent revolution as understood by Marx and Engels. We, the Party of the proletariat, say Marx and Engels, are not interested in terminating the revolution, that is to say, the bourgeois-democratic revolution. We are interested in making it a permanent revolution, that is to say, in making it pass from one stage to the other, from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a socialist revolution, from a revolution that tries to improve existing society, to a revolution that founds a new society, from a revolution in which the bourgeoisie is the dominant power and holds the means of production to a revolution where the proletariat is in power and nationalizes all means of production, from a class society to a classless society. Marx and Engels also point out the desirability of a permanent revolution, from a class society to a classless society. But while the bourgeois-democratic revolution is in progress, the workers must not forget that they are the leaders of all the exploited.

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[21] Marx, Karl and Engels, Frederick, *Collected Works,* Vol. 10; Lawrence and Wishart: London, 2010, p. 281.

> "As in the first French Revolution, the petty bourgeois will give the feudal lands to the peasants as free property, that is to say, try to leave the rural proletariat in existence and form a petty-bourgeois peasant class… The workers must oppose this plan in the interest of the rural proletariat and in their own interest. They must demand that the confiscated feudal property remain state property and be converted into workers' colonies cultivated by the associated rural proletariat with all the advantages of largescale agriculture, through which the principle of common property immediately obtains a firm basis in the midst of the tottering bourgeois property relations. Just as the democrats combine with the peasants so must the workers combine with the rural proletariat."[22]

We have here the sketch of an alliance of the workers with the other exploited and the defense of the interests of the latter in the revolution.

The theory and practice of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution were developed and perfected in the Russian Revolution by the Bolsheviks with Lenin.

Absolutism reigned in Russia. The system was semi-feudal. Power was in the hands of the landed aristocracy and a powerful bureaucracy. The Tsar considered himself the foremost landowner. When capitalism developed in the last quarter of the 19th century, Tsarism reluctantly yielded a few governmental positions to the representatives of the wealthy manufacturers and bankers. A new industry with a modern proletariat had come into being, but strong remnants of feudalism reigned in the village. The peasants did

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 284-285.

not even possess the full right to choose their place of living. The landlords had privileges over the peasants reminiscent of those under serfdom. The broad masses of the population, workers, peasants, lower middle class of the cities, had almost no political rights. Time came when the revolution appeared inevitable. It was in the interests of the workers and of the other exploited masses that the working class should take the lead—the hegemony—in the revolution. This is what the Bolsheviks fought for.

What shall the working class demand of the coming revolution?, they asked. What is its task in the revolution? The Socialists of the Menshevik brand (social-reformists) believed that the only thing the revolution could accomplish was the establishment of a democracy after the English or French pattern. The Mensheviks said the workers should content themselves with constitutional liberties and participation in a bourgeois parliament. This they thought was the maximum anybody could wish under the given conditions. As to the introduction of socialism, they relegated this to the dim and distant future; if ever they thought of socialism, they saw it coming—by degrees, of course, and without violent upheavals—in perhaps a hundred or two hundred years after the bourgeois—democratic revolution. In fact, they never thought of socialism in connection with the revolution that was the order of the day.

Quite different was the attitude of the Bolsheviks with Lenin at their head. As early as 1894, in winding up his treatise, Who Are the "Friends of the People"? in which he defines the role of the proletariat and its party, Lenin says:

> "When its advanced representatives have mastered the ideas of scientific socialism, the idea of the historical role of the Russian worker, when these ideas become widespread, and when stable organizations are formed among the workers to transform the workers' present sporadic economic war into conscious class struggle—then the Russian *worker*, rising at the head of all the democratic elements, will overthrow absolutism and lead the *Russian proletariat* (side by side with the proletariat of *all countries*) along the straight road of open political struggle to the victorious communist revolution."[23]

We have here a complete outline of the theory of the permanent revolution. The proletariat is marching at the head of the other democratic elements towards a bourgeois-democratic revolution; together with these elements it overthrows absolutism and establishes a bourgeois democracy; it does not stop at that; however, but continues fighting until it overthrows the capitalist system and establishes Communism.

This is the Leninist formulation of the permanent revolution. It consists of two elements: First, the proletariat is leading the other elements of the exploited; the proletariat is "the only and the natural representative of the toiling and exploited population;" second, the revolution passes from the first to the second stage, from its bourgeois-democratic to its socialist stage.

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[23] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 1; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, p. 300.

This approach to the permanent revolution implied the idea *of a revolutionary alliance between the city workers and the peasants.*

Lenin's Bolshevik argument, as formulated more than once during 1905 and in subsequent years, runs as follows: The liberals, representing the bourgeoisie, are in favor of the revolution, but in an inconsistent, selfish, and cowardly manner. As soon as its narrow selfish interests are satisfied, the bourgeoisie as a mass will turn its back to the people, to the revolution, and will join hands against them with autocracy. Who then will remain? The proletariat and the peasantry. Even when we deal with a democratic revolution only, it is clear from the very outset that the proletariat alone is capable of bringing such a revolution to its logical conclusion, because the proletariat goes much further than that. The proletariat alone is the unwavering and unyielding element in the revolution. The peasantry is unstable because it contains semi-proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements. But the instability of the peasantry differs radically from the instability of the bourgeoisie. The peasantry is interested not so much in constitutional guarantees for private property as in taking away from the landowners the land, one of the mainstays of private property.

Lenin therefore taught that it was the task of the proletariat to unite with the peasantry in order as far as possible to drive forward the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This, he said, could he accomplished by uniting with the peasantry as a whole. As soon as the bourgeois democratic revolution is accomplished, the proletariat, in alliance with the semi-proletarian elements of the peasantry, *i.e.*, with the

poorest peasants: he said will be able to carry through the abolition of capitalism, thereby overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie and the richer peasants.

The plan was sound. It was in accordance with the social forces as they existed in Russia and in full harmony with the doctrine of Marx and Engels. .

In order that the transition from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a socialist revolution might be possible, Lenin said, power must not be allowed to pass into the hands. of the bourgeoisie at all. In other words, even in the bourgeois-democratic revolution the bourgeoisie must not be allowed to become the ruling class. Power must pass into the hands of the victorious workers and peasants who establish the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.* As soon as the proletariat is strong enough, as soon as conditions are favorable, it proceeds to the next stage, to a socialist revolution. It establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We thus have in Lenin's conception two stages of the revolution: (1) the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and, immediately following it, (2) the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Why the former? Because it is necessary to break the resistance of the landowners, the rich bourgeoisie and the Tsar's officialdom and for that you need an alliance with *all* the peasants. "Without the (revolutionary-democratic) dictatorship it is impossible to break this resistance, to repel the counter-revolutionary attempts."

> "But of course, it will be a Democratic, not a socialist dictatorship. It will not be able (without a series of

> intermediary stages of revolutionary development) to affect the foundations of capitalism. At best it may bring about a radical redistribution of landed property in favor of the peasantry, establish consistent and full democracy including the formation of a republic, eradicate all the oppressive features of Asiatic bondage, not only in village but also in factory life, lay the foundation for a thorough improvement in the position of the workers and for a rise in their standard of living, and last but not least carry the revolutionary conflagration into Europe. Such a victory will by no means as yet transform our bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution; the democratic revolution will not directly overstep the bounds of bourgeois social and economic relationships; nevertheless, the significance of such a victory for the future development of Russia and of the whole world will be immense. Nothing will raise the revolutionary energy of the world proletariat so much; nothing will shorten the path leading to its complete victory to such an extent, as this decisive victory of the revolution that has now started in Russia."[24]

Will there be a long interval between the first and the second stage of the revolution? Of course, delays are possible; defeats are sometimes unavoidable. At the time when the above lines were written (July 1905) the outcome of the then developing revolution was far from certain. Lenin himself stressed the fact that he was "not inclined to senseless optimism on this score," that he realized "the tremendous difficulty of this task." However, he said, "we must wish for victory and know how to show the real way to it." This way,

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[24] Lenin, V.I., *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution;* Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1952, pp. 79-80.

as pointed out by Lenin, was an immediate transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution.

> "From the democratic revolution we shall at once, and precisely in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. *We stand for uninterrupted revolution.* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.] Without falling into adventurism or going against our conscience in matters of science, without striving for cheap popularity we can and do assert *only one thing:* we shall bend every effort to help the entire peasantry achieve the democratic revolution, *in order thereby to make it easier* for us, the party of the proletariat, to pass on as quickly as possible to the new and higher task—the socialist revolution."[25]

Help the entire peasantry carry through the democratic revolution! The meaning and content of the democratic revolution for the Bolsheviks consists in abolishing, in relation to the peasantry, all remnants of feudalism. Once this is accomplished, once power is in the hands of the proletariat and the peasantry as a whole, once the resistance of the formerly ruling classes has been broken, once the proletariat has, in the process of the revolution, grown stronger and better organized, the road is open to the socialist revolution. The road will be travelled by the proletariat in alliance, not with the peasantry as a whole, because the rich peasants will naturally be against the socialist revolution, but in alliance with the semi-proletarian elements of the population.

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[25] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 9; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, pp. 236-237.

Here is Lenin's classic formula:

> *"The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyze the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyze the instability of the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie."*[26] [Lenin's emphasis]

We have dwelt at length on the Leninist theory of permanent revolution, because only on this basis is it possible to judge Trotsky's perversion of the theory of permanent revolution. The Trotsky thing is in substance a *negation of the proletarian revolution.* He clings to it, thinking that this is his own contribution to the science of revolution, but in reality it is a piece of Menshevism garbed in "revolutionary" phrases.

He stated his "theory" in the following way:

> "The Russian proletariat, finding itself in possession of power—even if this were only a consequence of a temporary combination of forces in our bourgeois revolution—will meet with organized hostility on the part of world reaction, and with readiness for organized support on the part of the world proletariat. *Left to its own forces, the working class of Russia will inevitably be crushed by the counter-revolution the moment the peasantry will turn away from it.* [Our italics—M.J.O.] Nothing will remain for it but to link up the fate of its political domination, and consequently the fate of the entire Russian revolution, with the fate of a socialist

[26] Lenin, *Op. Cit.,* 1952, pp. 156-157

> revolution in Europe. That colossal State political power which it gets from the temporary combination of forces in the Russian bourgeois revolution, the working class will thrust upon the scales of the class struggle of the entire capitalist world. With State power in its hands, with the counter-revolution behind its back, with the European reaction in front of it, it will issue to its brothers the world over the old battle-cry, which this time will be the battle-cry of the last attack, 'Workers of the world, unite!' "[27]

The style is dramatic, but the contents, defeatist. If one is to assume that the working class of Russia is *alone,* that it has *no allies,* then it cannot get into possession of State power at all. If one is to assume that by some miracle it has gained power, but that European reaction is in front of it and nine-tenths of the population behind its back are hostile, then of what avail can be the battle-cry? Revolutions, even when conditions are ripe, take time to develop. The battle-cry of the proletariat that is beset by enemies may not immediately arouse the workers of other countries. Moreover, *a similar class situation prevails in some other countries as well.* There, too, the peasantry forms a large part of the population. There, too, according to Trotsky, the workers must have the counter-revolution behind their backs and the world reaction in front of them. *A revolution, according to Trotsky, is an impossibility in a single country.*

To take an example nearer home. In the United States we have an industrial proletariat (in manufacturing, mining, and transportation) which forms a large section but by no means the majority of the population. There are tens of

[27] Trotsky, Leon, *Summing Up and Perspectives,* 1906.

millions of small and middle farmers, small traders, petty-bourgeois intellectuals—a huge part of the people. It follows from Trotsky's "original" idea that the workers could not have the support of these millions in a revolution against capitalism, that they would inevitably unite with the exploiters against the revolutionary proletariat. It follows that there could be no hope for a revolution under any circumstances.

The champion of what he calls "permanent revolution" champions permanent defeat...

The Bolsheviks knew that in Russia, as in any other capitalist country, the proletariat was the only consistently. revolutionary class, and they worked to secure its hegemony m the revolution. Yet they also knew that the peasants were an inexhaustible reserve of revolutionary energy. And their estimate proved true. Leading the land-hungry peasants—in uniforms as soldiers or without uniforms as semi-serfs—was it possible for the proletariat to accomplish the February 1917, revolution. Leading, not the peasantry as a whole, but the poorest peasants who were both against the capitalists of the cities and against the capitalists of the village, *i.e.*, the rich peasants (kulaks), and with the middle peasantry neutralized, was it possible for the proletariat, with the Bolshevik Party as its vanguard and "All power to the Soviets" as its slogan, to accomplish the October 1917, revolution which established the dictatorship of the proletariat. Leading the millions of the poorest peasants who willingly joined the Red Army to defend the conquests of the revolution, was it possible for the proletariat—with the Bolsheviks at its

head—to win the civil war and secure the final victory of the revolution.

History has eloquently refuted Trotsky's "permanent revolution." Yet he never relinquished this stupid concept, which, by the way, is not even his own invention: it was first advanced by a Social-Democrat by the name of Parvus, who later turned violent social-patriot during the World War. Its basic idea that the peasantry as a whole is counter-revolutionary is a Menshevik conception.

Years pass. Revolutions come and go. First the 1905 revolution, then the period of counter-revolution, then the period of upswing, then the February revolution, then the October revolution. Huge masses of peasants are drawn into the revolution and give it that mass character which is requisite for victory. Collectivization of agriculture is introduced, the *kulaks* are liquidated as a class, the difference between middle and poor peasant disappears due to common membership in the collective farm. But our pessimist still holds fast to "his" idea of the peasantry being ultimately hostile to the revolution.

He learns nothing.

In 1909 he foresees a situation where the workers in power, once undertaking to introduce a number of socialist measures, would inevitably come into conflict with the peasants. "The conflict," he says, "must end either by the workers being chastised by the peasant party or by the latter being removed from power."[28] It doesn't enter Trotsky's

[28] Trotsky, Leon, *Our Controversies* in *1905*; Random House: New York, 1971, p. 285

mind that the proletariat may introduce such measures as would elicit the support of the large masses of peasantry and thus ensure a united march toward socialism.

Again, in 1915, in the Paris paper, *Nashe Slovo,* he emphasizes the fact that one must not cherish "exaggerated hopes concerning its [the peasantry's] revolutionary role."[29]

Again, in 1922, after five years of dictatorship of the proletariat so replete with the experiences of peasant masses supporting the revolution, he writes a preface to a collection of his articles which is published under the general title, *1905,* in which he says:

> "It was during the interval between January 9 and the general strike of October 1905, that the views on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia, which came to be known as the theory of the 'permanent revolution,' gradually crystalized in the author's mind. This somewhat complicated term represented a rather simple idea... The revolution would not be able to solve its immediate bourgeois problems except by placing the proletariat in power. And the latter, upon assuming power, would not be able to limit itself to the bourgeois framework of the revolution. On the contrary, precisely in order to secure its victory, the proletarian vanguard would be forced in the very early stages of its rule to make deep inroads not only into feudal property but into capitalist property as well. In this the proletariat will come into hostile collision, not only with the bourgeois groupings which supported the proletariat during the first stages of revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasants who were

[29] *Ibid.,* p. 255.

> instrumental in bringing it into power. The contradictions in the situation of the workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelming majority of peasants can be solved only on an international scale, on the arena of the world proletarian revolution."[30]

Trotsky still clings to his "simple" idea to this very day. This idea has made Trotskyism the vanguard of counter-revolution. Need one argue against it? The lessons of history are clear enough. Not only would the conquest of power and the repulsion of the capitalists and landlords have been impossible for the proletariat of Russia without the aid of millions and millions of peasants, but the upholding of socialism would not have been possible either. Socialism, said Stalin, is not something peculiar to the towns alone. Socialism is an organization of economic life that can be established only by cooperation of industry and agriculture on the basis of socializing the means of production. Socialism is impossible without union between industry and agriculture. Agriculture means not only land and implements, but, in the first place, peasants, living millions of peasants.

When the proletariat under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party expropriated the manufacturers and bankers in the early stages of the socialist revolution in Russia, who was it that formed its armed force? The Red Army in which the peasants formed a large part. When the rebellions of the kulaks against the Soviet power on the Volga and in many other districts of Russia had to be quelled in 1918-1920, who did it? The same Red Army in which the poor and middle

[30] *Ibid.,* Preface.

peasants were numerically strong. When the proletariat began to "dekulakize" the rich peasants with the introduction of collectivization in the villages, who was its main support and who were its allies? Its main support were the poorest peasants in whose interests it was to carry out such expropriation. Its allies were the middle peasants. Suppose there were an attack upon the Soviet Union—who would be in the first ranks of defense? The Red Army, which consists of workers *and* collective *farmers*.

What is there to the Trotsky "peculiarity" of the permanent revolution? It is an exploded idea. It is counter-revolution of a "peculiar" kind. It is in contradiction to widely known and undisputed facts. It is in contradiction to Lenin's understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat [says Lenin] is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these strata, an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is the complete overthrow of capital, complete suppression of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie as well as of attempts at restoration on its part, an alliance for the final establishment and consolidation of socialism."[31]

Trotsky's theory sounds "revolutionary" only to the uninformed. It implies that the sharecroppers of the South in the U.S.A. will turn against the workers the moment they

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[31] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 29; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1974, p. 381.

begin, after the seizure of power, to take away the mines and mills from the capitalists of, say, Alabama; that the tenant farmers of the Middle West will join the armies of Morgan and Ford to fight the taking over by the workers of the automobile plants, railroads and banks; that the large mass of the small citizenry of New York will turn against the workers introducing socialist measures in this world metropolis. This is what the blind fail to notice in Trotsky's "variety of Menshevism," as it was called by Stalin.

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Trotsky does not stop at this "peculiarity," however. This is only his base, his starting point. He draws from it "peculiar" conclusions, each more fantastic than the other. What follows from a wrong premise is a number of counter-revolutionary conclusions which make up the main features of Trotskyism:

1. The basis is: The impossibility of socialism in one country;

2. Hence—the assertion that what is going on in the Soviet Union is not socialism;

3. Hence—the conclusion that what is being built in Russia is "national socialism;"

4. Hence—the conclusion that the "national-socialist" government of the Soviet Union is "Thermidorian," *i.e.*, counter-revolutionary, and stands in the way of the world revolution;

5. Hence—the assertion that the Communist International, which is dominated by the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union, which is the party of "national socialism," is blocking the way of the world revolution;

6. Hence—the conclusion that the crying need of the world proletariat is to build a "fourth international" to be led by the "great strategist" of the revolution, Leon Trotsky.

7. It follows from the above that support of intervention and the killing of Soviet leaders are revolutionary acts. As you see, there is logic in these ravings. They all follow with ironclad necessity from the fountainhead of the Trotskyite denial of socialism in a single country. That they do not happen to tally with historic facts is not the Trotskyites' fault.

THE SOVIET UNION

As late as 1931, in a pamphlet, The Permanent Revolution, Trotsky writes, black on white:

> "The socialist revolution begins on national grounds. But it cannot be completed on these grounds. The maintenance of the proletarian revolution within a national framework can only be a provisional state of affairs, even though, as the experience of the Soviet Union shows, one of long duration. *In an isolated proletarian dictatorship, the internal and external contradictions grow inevitably together with the growing successes. Remaining isolated, the proletarian state must finally become a victim of these contradictions."*[32] [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]

Now, it has never been asserted by the Bolsheviks that an attack of the capitalist governments on the U.S.S.R. is impossible. The Bolshevik leaders have been explicit in this respect. Lenin said:

> "While our Soviet Republic remains the isolated borderland of the capitalist world, it would be absolutely ridiculous, fantastic and utopian to hope… that all dangers will vanish. Of course, as long as the radical contrasts remain,

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[32] Trotsky, Leon, *Permanent Revolution;* Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1965, p. 9.

> the dangers will also remain, and there is no escaping them."[33]

With the growth of the Soviet power, with the progress of industrialization, with the development of socialist agriculture, with the strengthening of the defense forces of the country while the sympathies for the Soviet Union among the toilers of the capitalist countries grow apace, the means of resisting a military attack from without have increased. Still, the danger remains. And nobody knows it as well as the leaders of the Soviet.

But when Trotsky speaks about the inevitable growth of internal and external contradictions he does not mean this simple and clearly understood danger of a military imperialist attack. He means something else. He lays stress not so much on external contradictions, which are the contradictions between the capitalist sector and the socialist sector of the world, as on what he calls "internal contradictions." The Soviet Union, he says, *must* finally "become a victim" of these contradictions.

What are they? What contradictions remained in the U.S.S.R. by 1931? The landowning class was long extinct. The bourgeoisie was reduced to a small and utterly insignificant fraction of its former self. The kulaks had been tremendously weakened in consequence of rapid collectivization of the village. Class contradictions were diminishing by the day with the rapid liquidation of the remnants of the old classes. Differences between city and village were

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[33] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 31; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1974a, p. 493.

decreasing in consequence of the introduction of machinery and modern technique into the collectivized village. Growing successes of the Soviet Union meant further improvement in industrial production, further progress in collectivization, further elimination of the kulaks and remnants of the bourgeoisie, a further rise to heights of culture in a country where the existence of the masses is made secure. Why should these growing successes conceal "internal contradictions" which must "inevitably" grow?

Difficulties were there, to be sure. The remnants of the bourgeoisie did not wish to give up without fight, and they were damaging here and there—but the growth of socialist economy and the rapid mastery by the workers of the heights of knowledge doomed these attempts to failure. The very acquisition of modern technique, the overcoming of old habits of work, the conquests over nature were accompanied by certain discrepancies, certain maladjustments. But those were difficulties of growth. Each succeeding step of the revolution prepared solutions for such problems.

Whence, then, the inevitability of "becoming a victim" to some dire inner contradictions?

This is one of the many secrets of Trotsky's reasoning. It is no reasoning at all. Wish is here, obviously, father to the thought, wish that the Soviet Union may not succeed in order that his theory of the "permanent revolution," *i.e.*, of the inevitable clash between the proletariat and the peasantry, may prove correct.

Perhaps Trotsky wants to say that it is impossible to build socialism in the Soviet Union because the country has not the necessary prerequisites? At the risk of being tedious

we wish to remind once more that the Soviet Union has accomplished miracles by way of upbuilding the economic and cultural life of the country. Even before the civil war was ended even while foreign armies of intervention were still on Soviet soil, the Bolsheviks began to plan the work of socialist construction. It seemed a superhuman task at first. The country had been ruined by three years of imperialist war. It had been laid waste by the armies of the Russian White generals and of the foreign governments. It had been choked by nearly five years of economic blockade. It had gone through famine. Industrial production in 1921 was one-fifth that of 1913. Agriculture had been reduced to less than one-half. The transportation system was in a deplorable state. But the Bolsheviks saw the great assets of the dictatorship of the proletariat; inexhaustible energy and creative abilities of the liberated masses of toilers, with the proletariat at their head and the Bolshevik Party leading.

Lenin, who better than anybody else knew the shortcomings of that great country, saw also the possibilities of building socialism. At a time when Trotsky was publishing his 1905 to prove that socialism in one country was impossible, at a time when he was working out his opposition platform against Leninism, Lenin wrote (January 1923):

> "Indeed, the power of the state over all largescale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, *etc.*—is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of cooperatives, out of cooperatives alone, which we formerly

> ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? *Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society?* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.] It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it."[34]

Today, the foundation of socialist society has already been built, the Soviet Union is rapidly approaching a classless society. But behold Trotsky standing in the pose of a prophet and "warning" the world:

> "The impending crisis of Soviet economy will inevitably, and within the rather near future, crumble the sugary legend, [of the possibility of building socialism in one country] and, we have no reason to doubt, will scatter many dead... the Soviet crisis will catch the European workers, and chiefly the Communists, utterly unprepared... the contradictions of Soviet economy, the incompleteness and the precariousness of many of its conquests, the coarse errors of the leadership and the dangers that stand in the path of socialism... The nearest future will bring with it a new confirmation of our correctness."[35]

Having made up his mind that socialism in Russia simply cannot be realized, he develops a venomous hostility towards everything that happens in the U.S.S.R. He magnifies difficulties; he invents difficulties where there are none; he sees a "crisis" where there is only one of the many obstacles to be overcome; he sees a dwindling of forces where

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[34] Lenin, V.I. *Collected Works,* Vol. 33; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1973, p. 468.

[35] Trotsky, Leon, *Soviet Economy in Danger*; Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1933, pp. 4-5.

forces are increasing and gathering momentum; he denies successes; he interprets achievements as failures; he assumes the pose of an accuser pointing his finger at the Communist Party and at its Central Committee led by Stalin and says: "Here they are—the bureaucrats who are the ruin of the workers' revolution."

Back of it all is his intellectuals petty-bourgeois disbelief in the revolution and fear before the obstacles confronting the dictatorship of the proletariat in the midst of a hostile world.

What was it that upset him so terribly at the beginning of his oppositionist career? What was it that served as the basis for the unprincipled union of Trotsky with Zinoviev and Kamenev? It was the defeatist attitude toward the New Economic Policy of the U.S.S.R.

In 1921 the Bolsheviks, against the unsound judgment of some "Left" Communists, abandoned the so-called military Communism, and introduced the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.). The war Communism which prevailed from 1918 was a means to fight the civil war and to repel intervention. The government laid its hand on everything produced in the country, and it distributed everything according to a plan in order to be able to withstand the attack of the class enemy forces. During those years production did not increase; it decreased. Transportation was not improved; it deteriorated. The major portion of what was produced in the factories and plants went for the front. The government collected foodstuffs and raw materials from the peasants and was supposed to give in return manufactured goods. These, however, were not forthcoming due to the

collapse of the industrial system and the necessity to supply the front. As a result, the peasants were actually supporting the country in those crucial years, and the government, to use Lenin's expression, gave them promissory notes. It promised them a better fate in the future. When the war was finished, at least in its major aspects, when the Republic seemed to be secure, at least for a while it became obvious that the continuation of military Communism was an impossibility. It was necessary to strengthen the alliance with the middle peasants which had become strained under the pressure of military Communism. It was necessary to lay the foundations of socialist construction. In the first place, the country under the Soviets had to learn how to produce. The peasants had to be given the incentive to increase their crops, and this could he achieved only when they were allowed to sell their goods in the open market. This necessitated the legalization of the open market. In order to get out of the horrible economic stagnation it was necessary to encourage even private industrial production.

The New Economic Policy then consisted of the following features:

Natural resources and largescale industrial establishments in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

The entire credit system in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

The entire railroad and water transportation system in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

Foreign trade entirely in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

City lands and buildings in the hands of the local Soviets;

Agricultural land in the hands of the regional and local Soviets;

Private manufacturing and private trading allowed under the supervision of the proletarian State in accordance with proletarian laws;

Peasants allowed to sell the surplus of their produce in the open market after paying the tax.

It was a retreat from the position of military Communism—but it was necessary in order to make rapid headway. The *dictatorship of the proletariat* was as strong as ever. The *strategic positions* in the entire economic system were retained in the hands of the dictatorship of the proletariat; private industry and private trading were only to serve as a stimulus to socialist industry and socialist commerce to improve in quantity and quality so as to be able to compete with private businessmen. With the Soviet giving protection to its own industries and commerce in preference to private industry and commerce, it was not difficult to predict that the former would ultimately triumph over the latter.

Lenin, who had an abiding faith in the creative abilities of the toiling masses, introduced the New Economic Policy in order that the Soviet might be able to begin rapid economic progress towards socialism. Trotsky foresaw no such progress.

Here were the peasants. Trotsky, as we know, never had great faith in the peasants as a revolutionary force. With the introduction of the New Economic Policy there appeared again in the village the rich peasant, the kulak. True, he did

not look like his pre-revolutionary self. He was shorn of political power, and he was by no means as rich as some kulaks used to be under capitalism. Yet he was an unmistakable fact. By law he was not allowed to buy land. But illegally he held the land of a few poor peasants who did not have the implements and the manpower to work their own land, and who, most often, became his farm hands. The kulaks became the village exploiters. Sometimes they wormed their way even into the local Soviets where they exercised political influence. The government did its utmost to help the poor peasant. It freed him of taxes; it extended him credits; it sometimes supplied him with livestock and implements. On the other hand, it taxed away the lion's share of the rich peasant's income. Still, here it was—the class division in the village.

The Nepman in the city; the kulak in the village! Trotsky saw his chance. He was joined by Zinoviev and Kamenev in declaring that the revolution was in danger, that the capitalist elements were eating up the socialist elements in Soviet economy. Whether the oppositionists were genuinely frightened or pretended alarm for political ends is beside the point. What they did is to direct a vicious and unscrupulous attack on the leadership of the Communist Party.

One of the characteristic features of the Trotsky opposition is that it does not want to see the Soviet Union *in development;* it pretends to take no notice of social forces passing from one stage to another. In the N.E.P. it saw a system that had come to stay for decades, if not forever. From the difficulties inherent in such a policy they drew fresh animation. The Bolsheviks had a definite plan which was to change the

situation radically, and within a short time. But it is another characteristic feature of Trotskyism that it disregards the declarations of the Bolsheviks which run counter to its own pronunciamientoes.

How did the Bolshevik Party and Stalin visualize that change? They visualized, and worked for, a rapid victory of the socialist sector of national economy over the capitalist sector. They foresaw that in the nearest future the Soviet socialist factories would improve to such an extent that they would easily compete with the capitalist factories and drive them out of existence. They foresaw that very soon the cooperatives would have learned the art of trading so well that they would be able to drive out of business the private traders and force them into the ranks of employees. As to the small and middle peasants, the Party and Stalin knew perfectly well that private holdings and private husbandry were a passing phase, that very soon the peasants would join in producing cooperatives, *i.e.,* that, with the aid of the Party and the State, they would begin to build *collective farms,* which would mean the end of the kulak and the abolition of classes in the village.

They saw that some kulaks were getting rich. But they were far from frightened. They knew that the kulaks as a class would not last long. They had a policy that was bound to "remake" the poor and middle peasants, to induce them and teach them how to organize socialist agriculture under the leadership of the proletariat—and this, they knew, would make the existence of the kulaks impossible. They proceeded with all the dispatch possible under the circumstances to prepare the necessary equipment for the

collectivization of agriculture. This equipment had to consist of better implements, agricultural machinery, improved seeds, and of agricultural experts to guide the peasants in lifting agriculture to the level of socialist production.

It was a plan well worked out. It originated with Lenin. It was consistently and ably carried out by the Bolshevik Party under Stalin. It was the only way out. But this *revolution in the agricultural field* could be successful only when there was an alliance between the workers and the peasants.

Fight against the kulak by imposing a heavy tax on his income and by ridding the local Soviets of his influence. Aid the poor peasant with land, with agricultural implements, with credit, with freedom from taxation. Ally yourselves with the middle peasants to improve their economic status and to draw them closer to the tasks of the proletariat. "Raise the cultural and material standard of the peasant's life, place the feet of the peasant masses on the road leading towards socialism." (Stalin) This was the well-considered plan of the Bolsheviks. In contrast to this, there were developed two theories: the Right and the "Left." The Right underestimated the capitalist nature of the kulak; it saw in the kulak a middle peasant. The "Left" (Trotsky) overestimated the petty-bourgeois nature of the middle peasant; it saw in the middle peasant a kulak.

Trotsky suddenly discovered a peasantry consisting to a very large extent of "kulaks." The Communist Party fought both tendencies—*because they knew where they were headed.*

> "The main task at present is to link up with the main masses of the peasantry, [said Stalin May 9, 1925, in a report

> to the Party functionaries of Moscow] to raise their material and cultural level, and to move forward together with those main masses along the road to socialism. The main task is to build socialism together with the peasantry, without fail together with the peasantry, and without fail under the leadership of the working class; for the leadership of the working class is the basic guarantee that our work of construction will proceed along the path to socialism."[36]

Wherein would the socialist path consist in the village? Stalin answers to this:

> "But how is peasant economy to be included in the system of economic construction? Through the cooperatives. Through the credit cooperatives, agricultural cooperatives, consumers' cooperatives, and producers' cooperatives.
>
> "Such are the roads and paths by which peasant economy must be slowly but thoroughly drawn into the general system of socialist construction."[37]

Productive cooperatives is another name for collective farms.

Why was this to proceed slowly? Because the socialist factories and plants had to produce enough machinery and implements to serve as an inducement for the peasants to organize into cooperatives; because the Soviet mines had to produce enough coal and ore for the production of iron and steel to be used for agricultural machinery; because the workers had to be trained to be able to produce—and all this took a few years. Altogether it took no more than seven

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[36] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 7; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1954, p. 125.
[37] *Ibid.,* p. 127.

years—from 1922 to 1929, from the beginning of the N.E.P. to the great rush of collectivization. But what a noise the Trotskyites raised during those years! What a lot of mischief they did! What monkey wrenches they were throwing into the machinery of Soviet economy! How they were undermining Communist Party unity which was the first condition for the carrying out of the program of building socialist economy!

For three years, between 1924 and 1927, while they were still members of the Party, they kept on harping in a thousand ways about the growth of the kulak and the growth of the Nepman. Their practical proposals were dictated not by an understanding of Soviet economy, but by panic. They said: "Collectivize the peasants at once; if need be, use force"—which, if attempted, would have aroused the peasants against the workers and played havoc with the revolution. They demanded a quickening of the tempo of industrialization by the investment of another billion rubles in industry. This billion was to be raised by increasing commodity prices—a measure which would have increased rather than decreased difficulties since higher commodity prices would have hit hard the poor and middle peasants, the chief consumers of industrial commodities, and would have lowered their standards of living, which would only have served to strengthen the position of the kulaks. The Trotsky opposition was doing its utmost to force *a break* between the proletariat and the middle peasants.

They were still in the Party, but they fought it as enemies bent not on criticism, but on destruction. No exaggeration, to them was too wild, no insinuation too low, no

distortion too mean. They circulated literature full of vile denunciations of everything the Party did. They greeted the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution with the declaration that the Communist Party was a party of the bureaucrats, kulaks and Nepmen. This propaganda was accompanied by the formation of an underground faction, which printed leaflets and distributed them clandestinely. The Party had to call a halt. The opposition was expelled. But this did not stop the propaganda.

We had to relate this phase of the opposition activities at some length, because it gives the key to the understanding of what follows. Any reasonable human being, upon seeing that his fears and apprehensions were not justified, would admit he was mistaken. Not Trotsky. The rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union, the almost total disappearance of the Nepman, the collectivization of agriculture, the elimination of the kulak as a class, one would think, should have satisfied the Trotskyites, if they meant what they shouted from the housetops. But Trotsky's opposition becomes more venomous the more the ground slips from under his feet. It is the venom of those elements of the petty bourgeoisie who see the victory of socialism but do not wish to become *workers* earning an honest living under conditions where the proletariat is in possession of power.

Trotsky remains the damager throughout.

* * *

If there is any achievement in the Soviet Union that even the enemies have been forced to recognize, it is the phenomenal economic success both in industry and agriculture. The

facts are so widely known that it is almost unnecessary to mention them once more. From a backward country the U.S.S.R. has become one of the foremost industrial countries. From a country with twenty million individual peasant holdings, it became a country of largescale modern farming. From a country that had to depend on other countries for its industrial equipment, it has become a country which can produce for itself the most complicated and the most advanced industrial equipment. From a country that was overwhelmingly illiterate it has become a country in which almost everybody, especially the younger generation, has received education. The Soviet plants are among the best in the world. The Soviet engineers and workers are mastering the most advanced technique. Soviet industrial output has grown four hundred percent in five years. Soviet agriculture has overcome the initial difficulties and has made marked headway towards supplying the country with an abundance of foodstuffs and raw materials. The Soviet factories are turning out tractors and trucks and other agricultural machinery by the hundreds of thousands.

The successes of the Soviet Union, the improvement in the standards of living of the masses, the cultural life that is theirs—all this has aroused the admiration of millions of toilers the world over and has in proportion increased the ire of the exploiters.

Where is Trotsky? He is not with the toilers. He spits venom in accord with the exploiters. He gives them aid and comfort. Moreover, he initiates campaigns against the Soviet Union. He declares all these successes nonexistent.

What is wrong, in his opinion? Simply this, that "you cannot build socialism in one country." Why? Because:

> " …the general growth of economy, on the one hand, and the sprouting up of new demands and new disproportions, on the other, invariably increase the need of linking up with the world economy. The program of 'independence,' that is, of the self-sufficient character of Soviet economy, discloses more and more its reactionary and utopian character. Autarchy is the ideal of Hitler and not of Marx and Lenin."[38]

There is not a single sentence in this whole tirade that has any meaning. The gentleman chooses to "overlook" the difference between capitalist and socialist economy. In the capitalist economy, contradictions are inherent and cannot be overcome. Growth of mass production accompanied by lower wages, to take one instance, creates that kind of "disproportion" which capitalism is powerless to solve. In Soviet economy it is different. Those "disproportions" which Trotsky speaks of, such as the lagging behind in the production, say, of coal or rubber, are far from catastrophic. They create certain difficulties which are easily overcome. With the growth of Soviet economy, they tend to *decrease* rather than to increase. When there is an abundance of steel it does not matter very much if one or the other plant is lagging. When the railroad system has been improved, it does not matter whether one or the other road is slightly deficient. When agriculture has been placed on a modern scientific

[38] *Platform of the Left Opposition,* found here: http://www.socialistaction.net/1999/09/01/the-choices-for-russia-the-economic-programme-of-the-left-opposition-part-1/

basis, it does not even matter much whether climatic conditions are favorable. This year's crop was abundant in spite of a terrible drought. Disproportions and the accompanying difficulties, Mr. Trotsky, have a tendency to decrease rather than to increase in Soviet economy.

As to the program of independence—why is it reactionary and why is it utopian? Isn't it a fact that Soviet economy today is less dependent upon other countries than it was five years ago? Aren't the Soviet industrial giants in a position to supply the country with necessary equipment while five years ago the country had to depend on imports? Do not the enormous amount and variety of natural resources guarantee the Soviet Union a free economic development independent of the capitalist countries? What is utopian in a fact that exists?

And why is it reactionary? If economic development were retarded in consequence of a certain policy, that could be called "reactionary" from an economic point of view, provided it depended upon the Soviet leaders alone to alter the policy. If, however, economic development was immensely accelerated in consequence of the Bolshevik policy, if it went beyond anything any capitalist country could dream of even in times of its highest prosperity, where is the reaction?

That the ideal of a socialist economy is not autarchy but international exchange, and that only under an international Soviet system such an exchange will be put on a scientific basis, we need not learn exactly from Trotsky. This is one of the fundamental theses of Marxism. Autarchy is not the ideal of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union does not

wish, and does not work for, autarchy. But economic independence of the capitalist world market is a necessity due to the fact that the Soviet Union is surrounded by a hostile capitalist world.

The idea that the development of the Soviet Union demands an increase in "linking up with the world economy" is fundamentally wrong. It has been one of the pet ideas of Trotsky for many years that Soviet economy is part of world economy, that it stands and falls with the latter. What are the facts? Soviet economy is proceeding from one victory to another; capitalist economy is rotting, disintegrating, collapsing. Soviet economy forges ahead to new unparalleled achievements under a system where the country is ever more solidified under the Soviet rule. Capitalist economy is unable to overcome its crisis and the capitalist countries are headed towards the overthrow of the entire existing system. Even the blind can see these facts.

Since the appearance of Trotsky's *Soviet Economy in Danger,* over two years more have passed. Trotsky said then that the nearest future would bring a new confirmation of his correctness. During those years Soviet economy experienced a new phenomenal upswing. But Trotsky's barking at the victorious socialist construction continues in even louder tones. The structure of socialism is nearly completed—and he still keeps on repeating that "socialism in one country is impossible."

To the numberless "contradictions" that Trotsky discovers in the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, a brand new one was recently added: the contradiction between production and consumption. Even a Trotskyite can

no longer deny the colossal economic growth of the Soviet Union. Even the bitterest enemy must, to his sorrow, admit that collectivization of agriculture is a fact. But facts do not deter the Trotskyites. Facts can be misinterpreted. And the latest misinterpretation was given by Trotsky to the fact that, in spite of a tremendous increase in the production of consumers' goods and in spite of the tremendous increase in the consumption of the individual worker and peasant, goods are still greatly valued among the masses, and everyone wishes to have more to consume. Trotsky calls this "the stimulus for individual accumulation," and since he has heard that Marx "also" spoke of accumulation (primitive accumulation of *capital!*), he proceeds to the very profound conclusion that this "stimulus for individual accumulation" may lead to a revival of capitalism.

> "So long as the overwhelming majority of the population has not yet emerged from actual want, the urge for individual appropriation and for the accumulation of goods retains a mass character and comes into continual collision with the collectivist tendencies of the economic life... If the accumulation is permitted to exceed certain limits, it will transform itself into primitive capitalist accumulation, and can result in overthrowing the kolkhozes, and after them the trusts [combinations of State-owned Soviet factories—M. J. O.] as well. 'Abolition of classes' in a socialist sense, means the guaranteeing to all members of society such living conditions as will kill the stimulus for individual accumulation. We are still very far from that... The present transitional society is full of contradictions, which, in the sphere of consumption, the most immediate and vital sphere for everyone, bear a character of extreme tension, and always

> threaten to cause an explosion in the sphere of production... Potentially, as regards the possibilities and dangers latent in it, it is a class struggle... which is looming from out of the fierce competition between the interests involved in the sphere of consumption, on the basis of a still lagging and unharmonious economy."[39]

Trotsky still cloaks himself as a champion of socialism. Since socialism in the U.S.S.R. has not yet brought about a situation where there is no stimulus for the acquisition of consumers' goods, he sees an opening for an attack. The fact that the masses of the Soviet Union are still "goods hungry"—which is an incentive for more and better production—is transformed by Trotsky into a new class struggle. The urge for acquisition he—by a sleight-of-hand—turns into an urge for accumulation. The collective peasant bent on receiving more meters of cotton cloth or woolens for himself and his family will, according to Trotsky, "accumulate" so much cloth or woolens that in the long run he will become a capitalist and, who knows, he may still open a textile factory on the basis of private ownership. The textile worker who is anxious to receive more wheat flour and cabbage may hoard these products—"accumulate" them—in the meantime refusing to consume, and—oh "extreme tension in the sphere of consumption!"—may still transform himself into the owner of a grain elevator competing with the State elevators and causing "an explosion in the sphere of production." Or else the collective farmer who has been so eagerly and impatiently waiting to receive from the city his

[39] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.*, 1935, pp. 10-11.

radio set will not use it himself but sell it to his neighbor and with the money thus "accumulated" go into business and gradually develop the "class struggle" and become a menace to the kolkhozes and the trusts.

It is absurd, but there is system to all the Trotskyite absurdities. Trotsky hopes that because consumers' goods are not yet available in the U.S.S.R. in quantities sufficient to secure for everybody not only comforts but also luxuries, some peasants from the collective farms may still be deluded into putting their hopes in the kulaks—who are still to be found in collective farms disguised as loyal members—and, with the aid of the Trotskyites, cause a disruption of collective agriculture.

Alas for Trotsky! The masses of the collective farms learned their lesson in 1932 when, due to inexperience, some of them yielded in the North Caucasus and the Ukraine to the pressure of the kulaks. They know now that their hope lies in more and better collective production. The individual member of the collective may try to hoard part of his share of the common crop "against a rainy day," but this will not make a kulak of him, and with the growth of security and abundance in the village even this practice will soon be abandoned. As to the city workers, they never "accumulate" they hoard nothing, they gladly and eagerly spend all they earn because they are not afraid of losing their jobs and are expecting and achieving ever higher wages and a better standard of living. There is no danger of a renewed class struggle "in the sphere of consumption" in the U.S.S.R.

To be sure, there exists a contradiction in this sphere: that between the facts and Trotsky's wishes, between a

former revolutionist and a present counter-revolutionary. He would like to see accumulation of capital where there is a desire to produce and consume and where the masses know from their daily experiences that the more they produce the more will they consume. He knows that the masses have heard about the contradiction between mass production and a narrowing market in the capitalist countries, and he hastens to use similar expressions in regard to the U.S.S.R., hoping to delude the unwary into believing that the crisis of capitalism—poverty amidst plenty—and the relative goods shortage in the U.S.S.R.—where the production apparatus had to be built up first and where increasing production is rapidly eliminating the shortage—are one and the same thing.

Nowhere has Trotsky revealed himself more in his true colors as counter-revolutionary falsifier as in these fabrications.

What does he want? Has he any plan? Has he any program? Some time ago he advanced the very profound proposal that the Soviet Union slow up the tempo of industrialization and collectivization. That was all in the name of "Left" Communism "real" Communism. It was so much like Trotsky: revolutionary phrases and reactionary proposals. Now that the Soviet Union has been put on a granite foundation, when the workers and peasants are being supplied with ever greater masses of consumers' goods, when their knowledge and experience have increased a thousandfold, when they can, with ease and comfort increase the output of factory and field—what can he propose? Has he a program for today?

In vain will you seek for an answer among the multitudinous writing of Trotsky and his henchmen.

In reality they are not out to propose a program. They intend to confuse the workers in the capitalist countries who are not sufficiently familiar with socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. They aim at discouraging the workers of the capitalist countries, including the workers of the U.S.A., from choosing the Bolshevik way out of the crisis. They strive to sow pessimism regarding the greatest achievement of the world proletariat—the only great and lasting victory of the socialist revolution in the present era. They are intent on preparing the masses ideologically for war against the Soviet Union. They serve the capitalist ends perfectly.

* * *

From the Trotskyite peculiar version of "permanent revolution"—to the theory of the impossibility of building socialism in one country; from the theory of the impossibility of building socialism in one country—to counter-revolutionary attacks upon everything that is being done in the Soviet Union; from verbal attacks upon the strongholds of Communism—to practical aid and comfort to the class enemy. Is there any wonder that the extreme logical followers of Trotsky and Zinoviev resort to the revolver?

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

"We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire. We have combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighboring marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now some among us begin to cry out: Let us go into the marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: What backward people you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh, yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render you every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us, and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are 'free' to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh!"[40]

[40] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 5; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977d, p. 355.

In these beautiful words written in 1902 Lenin described the meaning of revolutionary proletarian discipline for the Bolshevik Party. The Party is a voluntary association of people who agree to pursue the same task and fight the same enemy. In order to be most effective, they must keep order within their ranks. They will tolerate differences of opinion, but they will insist on unity of action. The individual who disagrees with a decision is free to leave, but while he is a member, he may not pursue his own road in contradiction to that of the Party. Freedom of opinion exists as long as the Party has not formed its own collective opinion. Once this has happened then opinions contrary to the Party's must not be spread because that would be disruptive. The more unity and cohesion among the Party members the greater the chances of success.

This is now so evident that it hardly needs particular stressing. Not so, however, with Trotsky. From the early days of his career Trotsky develops a peculiar hatred for the Bolshevik Party organization, for Bolshevik discipline, for Bolshevik unity of thought and action. On this score he fought Lenin for fourteen years, on this score he has been fighting Stalin for twelve years, and on this score he is fighting the Communist International.

It was after the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, which forms the great divide between Bolshevism and Menshevism. The Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership advocated and carried through the decision to form a real Bolshevik Party where every member would be under the control of the organization and doing work according to a central plan. The Mensheviks, true to

their reformist self, advocated a loose organization in which everybody would be actually free to do as he pleases. Trotsky went with the Mensheviks. In a pamphlet published by the end of 1903 he said about the congress:

> "The dead dictated their will to the living. We have been offered for payment a usurer's bill for the debts of the recent past—and history, with the mercilessness of a Shylock, demanded flesh from the living party organism. Curse! We had to pay... Of course, we do not mean to deny hereby the personal responsibility of Comrade Lenin at the second congress of the R.S.D.L.P. This man, with the energy and talent which are natural in him, played the role of a party disorganizer."[41]

Here we have it in a nutshell. Trotsky curses the decision to form a real well-organized Bolshevik Party. Lenin to him is the disorganizer of the party because he insisted on a party organization in which petty-bourgeois riff-raff, individualistic intellectuals with their own fancy program and willful tactics, would have no place. Trotsky exorcises centralism. He thinks that centralism has a purely "formal meaning." In particular is he incensed against Lenin's statement that the proletariat is more inclined to discipline than the intellectuals with their anarchistic individualism.

In another pamphlet written about the same time he says:

> "What an indignation takes hold of you when you read those hideous wantonly demagogic lies [of Lenin] ! The

[41] Trotsky, Leon, *R.S.D.L.P. Second Congress, Report of the Siberian Delegation,* 1903, found here:
https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1903/xx/siberian.htm

> proletariat that same proletariat of which you were told only yesterday that it naturally drifts toward trade unionism, today already is called to give lessons of political discipline! And to whom? To that same intelligentsia, which, according to the scheme of yesterday, was supposed to play the role of bringing into the proletariat the class consciousness, the political consciousness! Yesterday the proletariat was still crawling in the dust, today it has been elevated to an unexpected height! Yesterday the intelligentsia was the bearer of socialist consciousness, today the gauntlet of factory discipline is being invoked against it! And this is Marxism! And this is Social-Democratic thinking! Verily, it is impossible to treat with greater cynicism the best ideological heritage of the proletariat than this is done by Lenin!"[42]

Trotsky fails to understand the very fundamentals of the Marxian approach to the proletariat and the intelligentsia. It is one of the basic ideas of Marxism that without a Communist Party the proletariat will drift towards mere trade unionism. The Communist Party represents the vanguard of the working class, its best elements, its most courageous and intelligent section. Here the knowledge of that part of the intelligentsia which has identified itself with the working class is of great importance. This kind of intelligentsia helps shape the ideology of the working class. There is no contradiction in the idea that while the bearer of the revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice is the vanguard of the working class, the revolutionary intellectuals also play in this vanguard an important part. And it is

[42] Trotsky, Leon, *Our Political Tasks,* 1904, found here: https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1904/tasks/

almost a truism that the proletariat is more inclined towards discipline, that it understands better the meaning of discipline than the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia which may sympathize with the labor movement, but which has not identified itself with the working class.

Note with what contempt Trotsky speaks about the proletariat giving lessons of political discipline to the intelligentsia. This was no accident. Trotsky takes under his protection the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. Over and over again he stresses the idea that the students and other intellectuals may be of greater importance to the revolution than the professional revolutionists—those who give themselves entirely to the revolution, as visualized by Lenin. Note also the hatred for Lenin.

> "Not an accident but a deep 'omen' is the fact that *the leader of the reactionary wing of our party* [our emphasis—M.J.O.] Comrade Lenin, who is defending the tactical methods of caricature Jacobinism, was psychologically forced to give such a definition of Social-Democracy which represents nothing but a theoretical attempt at destroying the class character of our Party. Yes, a theoretical attempt no less dangerous than the political ideas of a Bernstein [the leader of the extreme Right revisionist wing of Social-Democracy—M.J.O.]"[43]

Lenin, the leader of the reactionary wing of the Social. Democratic Party! These words should be branded with hot iron on the forehead of Trotsky.

[43] *Ibid:.* https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1904/tasks/

For thirty years thereafter he has been calling the Bolsheviks the reactionary wing, the bureaucrats, the dictators over the proletariat, the splitters. In 1904 he declared that Lenin was preparing "a philosophical justification for the split of the Party which he has conspired to accomplish in order to retain and consolidate the remnants of his army."

Here is his classic formula of Bolshevism to which he is clinging to the present day.

> "The barracks regime cannot he the regime of our Party just as the factory cannot be its example. These methods will bring about a situation that the party organization will replace the party, the Central Committee will replace the party organization, and finally the 'dictator' will replace the Central Committee… The committees will do all the 'directing' while 'the people remain silent.' "

This is how Trotsky understands the organization of a Bolshevik Party.

Years passed. Trotsky had been taken into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and had fought under the direction of Lenin. He had been elevated to high posts. He had seen the Communist Party in action as leader of the proletariat in a victorious revolution over one-sixth of the surface of the earth. He had seen the same party fighting the most glorious historic battles in the civil war for nearly three years. He had seen the Communist Party working hand in hand with and leading the masses of the peasantry and thus securing the victory of the revolution. He had seen the beginnings of the period of reconstruction when, out of an almost devastated country, the proletariat began to build a new industrial system which was to lay the foundations of

socialism. He had seen that which made victory possible—initiative from below, streams of creative energy opened by the dictatorship of the proletariat and directed in a planned way by the Communist Party.

This Party had been led all the time by the great master, Lenin, who devoted a major portion of his gigantic powers to the problem of building the Party. The Party in 1923-24 was just beginning to reorientate itself along the lines of economic reconstruction. It was turning to new tasks. It was changing its psychology from war time to relative peace time. The tasks of peace time were often even more difficult than those of the war. Readjustments, personal and organizational, were accomplished not without friction. The management of industrial affairs was not always efficient. The inner-Party organization did not—*could not*—always work smoothly. The Party had grown. It was a proletarian party heading the first dictatorship of the proletariat in the world. Imperfections in its organization, unevenness in its function were inevitable.

Did the Party possess enough inner democracy, enough self-criticism, enough flexibility, and courage to recognize these defects and to take measures to correct them?

We cannot give here the history of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. Suffice it to mention the Thirteenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) that met in January 1924. This conference discussed the inner-Party situation thoroughly. It criticized shortcomings. Sharply and manfully it pointed out such things as differences in the material situation of the members of the Party; connections of Party members with bourgeois elements and ideological

influence of the latter; departmentalism which is to be distinguished from necessary specialization and which has a tendency to weaken the connection between Communists engaged in different branches of work; danger of losing sight of the perspective of socialist construction as a whole and of world revolution; danger of N.E.P.—degeneration on the part of workers who came into closest contact with the bourgeois milieu; bureaucratization of the Party apparatus here and there and the menace of separation from the masses that followed therefrom.

The conference made a thorough survey of the situation. Was it alarmed? There was no cause for alarm. The shortcomings did not really endanger the existence of the Communist Party. The body of the Party was sound. Its ideology was correct. The sources of its vitality were inexhaustible. These sources were the proletarian masses of the Soviet Union. To these masses the conference directed the Party. The conference stated that "the confidence of the proletarian masses in the Party has grown." It declared as the "fundamental task" of the Party "to recruit new members from the workers at the bench."

"It is the task of the Party organization to devote particular attention precisely to this category of workers, to do everything possible not to tear them away from productive work, to help them raise their cultural level, and in every possible manner to make easier for them the possibility of actual participation in all the affairs of the Party. The work of increasing the proletarian core of the Party must in the coming few months form one of the most important tasks of all Party organizations."

Trotsky was present at this conference. He had every chance to present his criticism and to offer remedies. He had no objection against the resolution, which was adopted unanimously. But after all was over he published a pamphlet entitled *The New Course,* which is a broadside against the Bolshevik Party, against its old, tested leaders. His battle cry was—"degeneration." In this pamphlet he pretends to be the champion of the younger members as against those who had been in the underground before the revolution. He makes the curious statement that it is the students who are the "barometer" of the revolution (and not the workers or the workers—Communists)! In his good old manner, he declares that "the Party lives in two stories: in the upper they decide, in the lower they only learn about this decision" (p. 9). He speaks of "bureaucratic self-contentedness and ignoring of the moods, thoughts and requirements of the Party" (p. 9). He goes as far as to speak of an "opportunist degeneration" of the old Party members (p. 11). Again, he is afraid, as he was twenty years earlier, that the "apparatus," the Central Committee, is replacing the Party.

Did Trotsky advance a program different from that of the conference? Could he advance one? He had no program of his own except one point which has to be discussed in a little detail. He demanded *"freedom of groupings"* within the Communist Party. In reality what he demanded was freedom to split the Party into a number of sub-parties fighting each other and each one exercising discipline over its members. He never gave up the vision of a parliament in capitalist countries. That a party so split cannot lead a revolution, goes without saying.

Lenin was still alive when Trotsky started his opposition. But already at that time he launched an attack against Leninism. He spoke of the Communist Party as "transforming Leninism from a method, the application of which requires initiative, critical thought, ideological courage, into a dogma which requires only interpreters chosen once and for all time."

It was not the situation in the Party that dictated Trotsky's "new course." It was not the defects of the Party apparatus. It was the influence of the petty bourgeoisie outside the Party, it was its hostility to Bolshevism that found expression in Trotsky's broadside. It was counter-revolution. Had he really been concerned with the revolution, he would have stopped his criticism right after Lenin's death when within a few weeks *one quarter million* workers from the factories and plants poured into the Communist Party to replace, as they said, Lenin's leadership by collective leadership of the workers. Trotsky did not stop. He sharpened his attacks. He formed a faction within the Party. Through the propaganda of this faction, he was undermining the unity and the striking power of the Party.

The Thirteenth Conference of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. characterized his opposition as "not only a direct moving away from Leninism but also a clearly expressed petty-bourgeois trend downward."

Years pass. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is going from victory to victory. Its tasks grow. Its work assumes gigantic proportions. Its theoretical equipment deepens and broadens. Its unity becomes stronger. It is a monolith. The "catastrophe" which Trotsky predicted in 1924 did

not materialize. The accusation of being a party of Nepmen and kulaks was wiped off and made ridiculous by subsequent developments. And yet Trotsky maintains the same attitude toward the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union that he had towards it in 1904, in 1914, and in 1924. Only in place of Lenin he has now as a target of attack—Stalin.

He transfers his attack on Bolshevik party organization to the international field. Centralism, now as before, is so abhorrent to his Menshevik conceptions that he sees in it the destruction of the Party. The Communist International, and the Communist Parties that form its national Sections, are just as obnoxious to him in consequence of their Bolshevik organization, as was obnoxious the Bolshevik Party under Lenin. He uses the same invectives against the Communist International that became a habit with him in attacking the Bolshevik Party of pre-revolutionary Russia. And always he does it ostensibly in the name of "inner-Party democracy" and "freedom of criticism" which nobody is denied in the Communist International.

In one of his books Marx cites the German philosopher, Hegel, as saying that all great world-historic facts and persons occur, as it were, twice. Marx says that Hegel forgot to add that they happen once as a tragedy, the second time as a farce. Trotsky's rantings against the Bolshevik method of organization have never been a world-historic event. But if his first attack seemed to have the traits of tragedy and the second the traits of farce, then what are the third and the forth and the hundredth? You would say they are grotesque if it were not for their counter-revolutionary substance.

The following is as near a coherent explanation why the Bolshevik method of organization is wrong as can be found in his writings.

> "Bolshevism [he says] always distinguished itself by a historical concretization in elaborating organization forms, but not by naked schemes [the English is the translator's, not ours—M.J.O.]. The Bolsheviks changed their organizational structure radically at every transition from one stage to another. Now, on the contrary, one and the same principle of 'revolutionary organization' is applied to the powerful Party of the proletarian dictatorship as well as to the German Communist Party, which presents a serious political factor, to the young Chinese Party, which was immediately drawn into the vortex of revolutionary struggles, as well as, finally, to the Party of the U.S.A., which really constitutes but a small propaganda circle."[44]

Not one iota is true in all this "theory." Trotsky makes believe he is fighting for adequate organizational *forms* whereas in reality he is fighting against the fundamental Bolshevik organizational *principles*. He is against the *very essence* of Bolshevik organization which consists in having one undivided party, one party line, one policy, one leadership, while changing the forms of organizations and methods of work in accordance with changing conditions. He conveniently forgets that he always was opposed to Bolshevik organization which he now pretends to praise. He *always* remained the petty-bourgeois individualist, the inheritor of

[44] Trotsky, Leon, *Strategy of the World Revolution;* Militant Press: New York, 1930, p. 74.

the "lord of the manor's" (as Lenin called it) hatred for proletarian organization.

What is the principle of Bolshevik organization? It is *democratic centralism.*

> "Democratic centralism in the Communist Party organization must be a real synthesis, a fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy. This fusion can be achieved only on the basis of constant common *activity,* constant common struggle of the entire party organization. Centralization in the Communist Party organization does not mean a formal and mechanical centralization, but a *centralization of communist activity,* that is to say the formation of a strong *leadership,* ready for war and at the same time capable of adaptability.... Only the enemies of communism can assert that the Communist Party conducting the proletarian class struggles and centralizing this communist leadership is trying to rule over the revolutionary proletariat. Such an assertion is a lie."[45]

Democratic centralism allows for a maximum of flexibility, a maximum of unity, a maximum of striking power. The organizational principles of Bolshevism are not a dead dogma but a living and enlivening force.

> "The Party of revolutionary Marxism denies in principle the search for an absolutely correct form of party organization fit for all stages of the revolutionary process, or for such absolutely correct methods of its work. On the contrary, the form of organization and the methods of work are entirely determined by the peculiarities of a given concrete

[45] Third World Congress of the Communist International, *Theses and Resolutions;* The Contemporary Publishing Association: New York, 1921, 77.

> historical situation and by the tasks that directly arise out of this situation"[46]

These are the guiding principles of Bolshevik organization in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries. The Parties differ in strength, in experience, in the concrete tasks confronting each of them, but they are united in their aim and in the principles of their organization. Everywhere the Bolsheviks insist on complete ideological unity, which means agreement of all Party members on basic principles and tactics. In all stages of development, the Bolshevik Parties maintain strict discipline which is not mechanical but based on an understanding by every member of what is to be done and why. Bolshevik principles have proven sound and fruitful for the organization of the proletariat of the most advanced as well as of the comparatively backward countries. These are essentially principles of *battle formation* because the life of the Communist Party is never that of peace, since even in the times of comparative quiet it heads the class struggle which always, in one way or another, has the elements of civil war.

The *shop nucleus* and the *Party fraction*—these foundations of Bolshevik organization—are instruments of proletarian advance both before, during, and after the revolution. They allow for the greatest adaptation to conditions and for the greatest unity of action. If Trotsky fails to understand why these foundations of revolutionary organization are

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[46] *Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).*

applicable both to the Soviet Union and to Germany as well as to the Chinese Party, it is his misfortune. But that does not do away with the fact that they have been singularly successful under all conditions. If Trotsky refers to the Communist Party of the United States he only defeats himself. It is because the Communist International did *not* wish to allow the Communist Party of the U.S.A. to be a "small propaganda circle" that it insisted on basing the Party on shop nuclei and on developing fractions. A propaganda circle does not need a Bolshevik apparatus. But a party of *action,* a Bolshevik Party leading masses in the class struggle, must possess an apparatus which is rooted in the masses, and which can move them by virtue of the closest contact with them in the struggle for their everyday needs. The shop nucleus and the Party fraction are not canned organizations walled-in in their own circle and insulated from the other workers. They must be the livewire in every factory, mine, and workers' organization, defending the basic rights of the workers, occupying the forefront of every struggle, and thus becoming the leader of the masses. It is obvious that if such an organization is not well organized and well disciplined, it will not be able to fulfil its task.

"Lenin warned tirelessly against excesses regarding centralism," says Trotsky. Of course, Lenin warned against formal centralism which is not a synthesis of centralism and proletarian democracy. Of course, he warned against mechanical centralism and advocated a living connection between Party leadership and the rank-and-file Party members on the one hand, and between the Party and the broad proletarian masses outside the Party on the other. But as to

discipline, this is what he wrote in the Conditions of Admittance to the Comintern:

> "In this period of acute civil war, the Communist parties can perform their duty only if they are organized in a most centralized manner, are marked by an iron discipline bordering on military discipline and have strong and authoritative party centres invested with wide powers and enjoying the unanimous confidence of the membership."[47]

This is said about Party discipline where power has not yet been conquered by the proletariat. As to a party which, like that of the U.S.S.R., is heading a dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin said:

> "Whoever weakens ever so little the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during the time of *its* dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat."[48]

* * *

Trotsky helps the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

As to factions. In his advocacy of "freedom of groupings" within the Communist Party Trotsky actually defended the interests of hostile forces against the interests of the proletarian class struggle. He is the factionalist supreme. He never worked in a mass organization as its loyal member. He always managed to organize around himself a

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[47] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 31; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1974a, p. 210.

[48] Lenin, V.I., *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder;* New Outlook Publishers: New York, 2022, p. 39.

group, a clique, a retinue of admirers. He fought Lenin, he fought Stalin, he fights the Communist International. He organized a faction in 1920—but was smashed. He organized a faction when Lenin was alive in 1922. He maintained this faction for many years although he publicly foreswore it several times (what is Trotsky's word when he deals with the Bolshevik Party!) . He subscribed publicly to the decisions of the Fifteenth Conference of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. (October 1926) which prohibited factions—and he immediately broke his pledge.

"Without temporary ideological groupings, the ideological life of the Party is unthinkable," he writes in his *Strategy of the World Revolution.* "Without a real freedom of Party life, freedom of discussion and freedom of collective—and under that also of group—elaboration of their paths, these Parties [of the C.I.] will never become a revolutionary power."[49]

Why are groupings necessary? Suppose the Party discusses the question of the best methods of work in the labor unions. Suppose the majority agrees that the Communists must work in the reformist unions, must build them up to become a militant organization. Suppose a minority says that the revolutionary workers must leave the reformist unions and form separate revolutionary unions of their own. As long as the question is not decided yet, every member of the Party has the right and duty to advance his opinion when this problem is discussed. This is freedom of discussion. Groupings are not necessary for this purpose. But

[49] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.,* 1930, p. 75.

suppose the majority of the Party has decided in favor of working inside the reformist unions. Under such conditions the minority must stop agitation in favor of its line. What Trotsky proposes is that his minority be allowed to function as a group, that it be given freedom for "group elaboration" of its "path." What is that "path?" Obviously a fight against the majority of the Party.

Either "freedom of groupings" means nothing, then it is sheer nonsense, or it means freedom to form a party within a party—that freedom which Trotsky took for himself all his life.

Such "freedom" weakens the Party, undermines it, creates in the Party a state of siege, and demoralizes the forces of the revolution. When this happens, says Stalin, the Party is faced "with the danger of being transformed into a plaything in the hands of the agents of the bourgeoisie."

* * *

Trotsky calls himself "true Bolshevik-Leninist," but the more he rants the more does he stand exposed as an enemy of every principle advocated and fought for by Lenin. His article in the reactionary magazine, *Liberty*, of March 23, 1935, entitled "If America Should Go Communist," is extremely illuminating. Trotsky speaks to the bourgeoisie of America but of course he has in mind the workers. He tries to convince his readers that a revolution in America would be child's play. "The American Communistic Revolution will be insignificant compared to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia," he declares, disregarding the fact that the American bourgeoisie is vastly better organized, enlightened, and

equipped than was the Russian bourgeoisie. The obvious lesson for the workers from this Trotsky thesis is that there is no need of organizing a strong Communist Party of great masses. "Civil war... isn't fought by a handful of men at the top—the five or ten percent who owns nine-tenths of American wealth," declares Trotsky, disregarding the great influence of those "five or ten percent" on the middle class in the cities and on the rich farmers. (It is highly significant that the man who says socialism in one country is impossible because all the exploited classes will turn against the proletariat as soon as the latter seizes power, now reverses himself and says that everybody will be for socialism as soon as the capitalist government is defeated—anything to delude the workers.) "Everybody below this group [of five or ten percent] is already economically prepared for Communism," says Trotsky. Obviously, with such a great number of ready Communists, there is no need of forging the ranks of a real proletarian party in these United States.

"Without compulsion!"—this is the slogan advanced by Trotsky for America, for the American Soviets. In a country where violence and bloodshed mark every step of the ruling class in relation to the workers, Trotsky wishes to impress on the workers—in true Norman Thomas—clergyman fashion—that "the American Soviets would not need to resort to the drastic measures which circumstances have often imposed upon the Russians." Trotsky tries to kill two birds with one stone: on the one hand he aims to show that the Russian workers were wrong in using "too much" force and violence against the counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, on the other hand he attempts to "teach"

the American workers that their revolution will be a feast of amiable cooperation on the part of the property-owning class and that the Leninist approach to revolution and the Leninist method of organization and struggle do not apply on this side of the ocean. Not in vain is Trotsky the father of the Lovestoneite theory of American "exceptionalism."

It must be noted, though, that Trotsky does not see any reason why the property-owning classes, with the exception of the heads of the biggest trusts, should he alarmed by a Soviet Revolution. He proposes to have them continue their businesses on the basis of private ownership and private operation even after the revolution. The government, he says, must give them allotments of raw materials, credits, and quotas of orders until these businesses "were gradually and without compulsion sucked into the socialized business system." The man who once raved against the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union where it was an economic and political necessity, now advocates a wide semi-capitalist system in America for the period after the revolution where there is no necessity for it because the country is economically ready for socialism. Anything to corrupt the minds of the workers—up to and including the reformism of the Old Guard leaders of the Socialist Party in America (why not *purchase* the businesses from their owners at the price of governmental bonds, as proposed by some Socialists? This will be even more "without compulsion.")

Most eloquent, however, is Trotsky's plea for bourgeois democracy in the American Soviet. Here he completely exposes his naked political self—a worshipper at the shrine of the political system of capitalism.

He envisages the American Soviet not as the dictatorship of the proletariat but as a conglomeration of parties and groups fighting each other. "With us [meaning Russia]," he says in his Liberty article, "the Soviets have been bureaucratized as a result of the political monopoly of a single party." No such thing must ever happen in America. Not only must there be groups and grouplets within the Communist Party—more than that; the Party itself must have no "political monopoly." There must be several parties with equal rights, *i.e.,* with no special privileges for any. Whom will those parties represent? If the Communist Party represents the workers, then obviously the other parties must represent the rich farmers, the poor farmers, the middle bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, perhaps the intellectuals. How will those parties function? Naturally, by struggle. "A wide struggle between interests, groups, and ideas is not only conceivable—it is inevitable," says Trotsky. Splendid. A Soviet very much resembling a bourgeois parliament. Several parties represented in it *with equal rights.* Each party fighting the others. Several parties making a coalition to defeat the dangerous common rival. Why not a coalition of all the other parties against the party of the workers? This latter party, in Trotsky's conception, should be split into a number of legalized groups and factions with their own separate platforms. The population will have its choice of parties, groups, programs. No special discipline is needed for any party; no monolithic unity for the Communist Party. (It is characteristic that in his *Liberty* scheme Trotsky does not mention the Communist Party at all.) A majority of votes in the legislative chamber will decide the policy to follow.

Among the major questions thus to be fought out is also "the transformation of the farms," *i.e.,* the transition from capitalist to socialist agriculture. Should there be a majority of votes *against* collectivization, this will then be the "will of the people." Each party and group will have its own press, "for Soviet America will not imitate the monopoly of the press by the heads of Soviet Russia's bureaucracy." Each group and party will receive its share of the press "on the basis of proportional representation for the votes in each Soviet election," "the same principle being applied to the use of meeting halls, allotment of time on the air and so forth."

Underlying this idyllic picture is a conception of a Soviet in which private business flourishes and the State organization is copied after capitalist parliaments. The assumption is that there is no counter-revolution, no attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie to overthrow the new system, no necessity for the workers to defend the revolution against attacks from within and without, no necessity, therefore, to be organized in a powerful fighting political organization with discipline of an almost military strictness and with unity of will and action which insures quick and effective striking possibilities. What Trotsky pictures is not a proletariat organized in fighting formation and drawing to itself allies from other formerly oppressed classes while suppressing counter-revolution and abolishing classes but a heterogeneous mass of humanity divided, owing allegiance to various parties and Party splitters, and defending their "interests, groups and ideas." How unity can be achieved under those conditions, remains a secret of

Trotsky's. But then he does not worry much about unity because his slogan is, "Without compulsion!"

The petty bourgeois, afraid of a strong proletarian State, afraid of a strong proletarian party, unwilling to see the proletariat exercise revolutionary power—shows here his class nature more clearly than he has ever done this before.

What he pictures as the American Soviet has nothing to do with the dictatorship of the proletariat as taught and practiced by Lenin.

> "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow… The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent, and peaceful, military, and economic, educational, and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society."[50]

The reason for Trotsky's "criticisms" and "warnings" is very simple. Whatever does not fit his bourgeois parliamentary ideas he denounces as "bureaucracy." Whatever represents real dictatorship of the proletariat, real proletarian, revolutionary unity, the petty-bourgeois in Trotsky decries as paralyzing the revolution." A true Bolshevik Party molded along Leninist lines becomes a "Stalinist faction."

[50] Lenin, *Op. Cit.,* 2022, pp. 5-39.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN COMMITTEE

The Trotskyite attitude towards the problems of the world revolution is an outgrowth of Trotsky's basic error about the impossibility of Socialism in one country.

Out of numberless questions we select the following as typical:

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee;

The Chinese Revolution;

The question of the Third Period;

The question of social-fascism;

The German situation.

The crowning glory of all these policies appears in the shape of that marvelous new structure, the *Fourth International*.

* * *

The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was organized in 1926 for the purpose of bringing about common action of the workers against imperialism, against war, and for world trade union unity. It consisted of representatives of the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. and of the British trade unions. It was to bring to the British workers and to the workers of the world a better understanding of the situation and aims of the Soviet workers, to help revolutionize the British workers in their fights against British imperialism, and to increase

the influence of the Soviets among the workers of the capitalist countries.

Why did the leaders of the British trade unions agree to the formation of such a committee? Because the workers in Great Britain and other countries were becoming radicalized; because the influence of the Bolshevik revolution among the workers of all countries was growing; because the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. impressed the workers of other countries as sharing in the State power of the Workers' Republic, and because the Communists everywhere advocated the necessity of unity of the working masses on the economic field.

Why did the leaders of the Soviet trade unions agree to enter such a committee? They knew perfectly well the character of even the "Left" wing of the British trade union leaders: Purcell, Cook and others. But they saw in this committee an opening for contact with the broadest masses of Europe. The committee was a sounding board from which the voices of Bolshevism would be heard on a wider range among the workers of England and other countries. Above all things they saw in it *a weapon for the defense of the Soviet Union* at a time when the imperialists were perfecting their plans for an attack on the Soviets. The tradition of the proletarian *Action Committees* against British intervention in the Soviet Union in 1920 was still fresh.

Through the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee the question of *a united front* of struggle against capitalism and war was presented to large masses of toilers in the capitalist countries. Delegations of non-party workers to the Soviet Union are a common occurrence. Purcell and his comrades

were allowed to come to the U.S.S.R. and were accorded friendly receptions. In exchange, representatives of the Soviet Union were given a chance to appear before broad masses of the British workers to present their revolutionary views.

The opposition was "against."

In a pamphlet by the theoretician of Trotskyism in the United States, Max Shachtman, the assertion is made that the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was "a political bloc between the reformists of England and the Russian party bureaucracy."[51] As a matter of fact, it was not a bloc; it was not even an alliance; it was a committee for the propaganda of trade union unity. It was a committee that opened up before the Soviet unions the possibility of exposing even the "Left" leaders when the occasion arose. This came about after the collapse of the general strike in Great Britain in May 1926. The British leaders of the Anglo-Russian Committee then swung to the Right; they began to hide from the British workers their belonging to the unity committee; in fact, they were trying to wriggle out from under the obligations agreed upon by entering the committee. This gave an occasion for the Soviet trade unions to appear before the British workers and to explain to them the treacherous role of the "Left" union leaders. And it was just at this moment that the Trotskyites became most vociferous, demanding the breaking up of the committee.

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[51] Shachtman, Max, *Ten Years: History and Principles of the Left Opposition;* Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1933, p. 39.

An ingenious theory is presented by the abovementioned Trotsky disciple in the United States. He stresses "the falsity of the conception" that such leaders as Purcell, Cook, Hicks, Swales, and Citrine can become "the revolutionary organizers of the world's working class against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Republic." Oh, profound theoretician! Oh, penetrating tactician! The Communists had to wait until 1933 to learn this consummate wisdom about the reformist leaders remaining reformist leaders. Mr. Shachtman conveniently forgets that when the united front is built in which a reformist leader is *forced* to join, it is not the *leader* but the *masses* under his influence that are won for the defense of the Soviet Union and for other revolutionary tasks.

Mr. Shachtman clinches his deadly attack with this broadside: In the Anglo-Russian Committee he sees the hand of the "Stalinists" who are frantically in search for "anti-interventionists" and who attempt *"to convert the Communist Parties into Soviet border patrols."*[52]

Mr. Shachtman does not want the Communist Parties to be border patrols of the Soviet Union. Why should he if the Trotskyites do not think that socialism is being built in the Soviet Union? He says so quite plainly: "The Stalinist conception of the role and nature of the Anglo-Russian Committee flowed directly from the theory of socialism in one country. According to the latter, Russia could build up its own nationally isolated socialist economy, 'if' only foreign military intervention could be staved off." To the

[52] *Ibid.,* p. 39.

Trotskyites this is not so. The staving off of foreign military intervention therefore is for them not the prime task of the international proletariat.

One more thing should be noted in connection with the Anglo-Russian Committee. Just at the time when the situation became more difficult, when the betrayal of the British general strike raised greater obstacles in the way of the Soviet approach to the British workers, when it was necessary to use more patience and more flexible tactics in relation to these workers, the opposition shrank before the difficulties. In true petty-bourgeois fashion it fell into a panic. The expression of this panic was the demand of withdrawal. The demand sounded "ultra-revolutionary." It was—defeatism.

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The Chinese Revolution is, next to the Russian Revolution, the greatest achievement of the toiling masses of the world. For the first time in history, world imperialism was shaken in one of its strongholds—in a backward country which was ruthlessly robbed by British, French, Japanese and American capital. The Chinese Revolution is excellent proof of the correctness of Marxism-Leninism, which sees two fundamental forces of world revolution: the proletarian movement in the capitalist countries and the national-liberation movement in the colonies, and which insists that these two major forces be united in one common front against the common enemy, imperialism.

The theses on the colonial and national problem presented by Lenin to the Second Congress of the Communist International (1920) say:

> "One of the main sources from which European Capitalism draws its chief strength is to be found in the colonial possessions and dependencies. Without the control of the extensive markets and vast fields of exploitation in the colonies, the capitalist powers of Europe cannot maintain their existence even for a short time…
>
> "Super-profit gained in the colonies is the mainstay of modern capitalism, and so long as the latter is not deprived

> of this source of super-profit, it will not be easy for the European working class to overthrow the capitalist order…
>
> *"The breaking up of the colonial empire*[from their "motherlands"], *together with the proletarian revolution in the home country, will overthrow the capitalist system in Europe.* Consequently, the Communist International must widen the sphere of its activity. It must establish relations with those revolutionary forces that are working for the overthrow of imperialism in the countries subjected politically and economically. *These two forces must be coordinated if the final success of the world Revolution is to be guaranteed."*[53] [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]

The Chinese Revolution has been, in the last decade, the greatest force that was shaking capitalism in its colonial aspect—by attempting, and partly succeeding, in taking away from it the control over a vast semi-colonial market and a broad field of exploitation.

Witness the spectacle of the Chinese Soviets today. The Red Flag with the hammer and sickle is waving over a territory embracing a population of some ninety million—about one-fifth of the total population of China. There is a Central Region, all under Soviet rule, and there are outlying other regions in which scattered Soviet districts are located. The Soviets have a Central Government and local governments consisting of workers and peasants and led by the Communist Party of China, which early in 1935 counted over 400,000 members.

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[53] The Second Congress of the Communist International, *Proceedings;* Publishing Office of the Communist International: America, 1921, p. 119.

New life is stirring in this oasis of peasants' and workers' rule in the midst of an imperialism hound, impoverished, and downtrodden country! Free people, masters of their own destinies... Free toilers marching under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Communist International toward the socialist system. The system is not socialism yet. There can be no nationalization of the land until the major part of China is in the hands of the revolution and until the Soviet territories are fully consolidated; and there can be no confiscation of the factories and shops—which are not large in the Soviet area—until Soviet Power is spread towards the more industrialized sections of the country. What has been achieved under the Soviets, however, lays the foundation for the future socialist system, which will be the next stage of the Revolution. Power, State and local, is in the hands of the toilers and is controlled by the Communist Party. The armed forces of the State are in the hands of the toilers. The workers are occupying a leading place. They have the strongest representation in the Soviets. There is real revolutionary unity between workers and peasants.

The *Red Army* of the Chinese Soviets has become the wonder of the world. The Soviet armed forces count in the neighborhood of one million men, of whom at least 400,000 are in the regular Red Army while the others form irregular detachments. The Red Army is the real army of the people. In case of need, more and more workers and peasants join both the regular and the irregular forces, also the Red Guards who carry military duty in the rear. The Red Army of the Chinese Soviets, like that of the U.S.S.R., is not only a military but also a cultural force. Political education is

conducted in the ranks, and Chinese Soviet victories are explained not only by the superior organization of the armed forces but also in the main by the fact that the fighters are defending what is dear to them—their own Soviet fatherland.

A letter from a Chinese Soviet Republic, written in the spring of 1930, describes how a Soviet is organized:

> "At the present time Sovietized western Fukien is an entirely different world from the rest of the provinces where the Kuomintang is still in control. After the victorious revolt the peasants divided the land among themselves, and the wages of the workers were raised. The standard of living of the toiling masses has been changed drastically. Deeds on land, promissory notes, mortgages and the like all were burned. The slogan 'no rent to the landlord, no taxes to the Kuomintang authorities, no payments to the usurers,' now became realized. The old collecting agencies are gone, the tax collectors are shot. Now we are doing our best to help other countries to get rid of the reactionaries, and to start construction work; to increase production, to improve the irrigation system of the rice fields, to repair the roads, to open schools, etc.
>
> "In every county of western Fukien there are Soviets… Everybody of 16 years of age or over, of both sexes, can vote and be elected. Only those who belong to the exploiter class are disfranchised... At this moment all the deputies are from the poor peasants, workers, soldiers, revolutionary students, and tradesmen.
>
> "The Soviet government has started reclamation work. Every peasant now receives enough water for the irrigation of his fields... We have cooperative societies... credit associations where we, the peasants, can borrow money without

being robbed by the money lenders... Night courses for adults are organized... Among the delegates elected to the Soviets there are women; women have become equal with men in every respect. Their revolutionary zeal is not inferior either... you may see them even in the Red Army.

"We have no thieves, no beggars in our territory. Everybody can work... Those who are disabled are taken care of by the Soviets... we opened hospitals and pharmacies with no charge for their services; if previously the peasants had no place to turn to when ill, except to Pusa, the Buddhist god, now they come to the Soviet institutions... Every community has its own club, which serves not for recreation alone but for enlightenment as well."[54]

Six wars have been waged by the Nanking government against the Chinese Soviets in the last five years, and all of them have failed. The sixth war (they call it "Expedition" in China) started about September 1933 and lasted till the end of 1934. The plan of attack was elaborated by an old servant of the Kaiser, the German General Von Seeckt, now chief-of-staff of the Nanking armies. Chiang Kai-shek concentrated between 65 and 70 divisions against the Soviets, each division numbering 7,000 to 10,000 men. He had field artillery, tanks, and 300 airplanes, partly purchased in the U.S.A. on money borrowed under the guise of a "wheat and cotton loan." His plan was to surround the Soviet district from all sides and drive the Red Army out of its territory step by step.

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[54] Yakhontoff, Victor A., *The Chinese Soviets;* Coward-McCann: New York, 1934, pp. 88-90.

What was the outcome? He lost, in the central Soviet district alone, over 100,000 men, among them 40,000 to 45,000 killed, 12,000 to 15,000 prisoners and 40,000 to 45,000 wounded. All the troops of the Szechuan militarists, numbering about 30 to 35 divisions, were defeated and lost, about 70,000 killed. At the same time the Red Army kept on growing; in various districts its strength increased from 50 to 1,000 percent. The Fourth Red Army alone grew in one year from 15,000 to 140,000-150,000. During this campaign the Soviets lost some territory, but the Red Army occupied new territories in various districts twice the size of the one lost. This is nothing new in the history of the Chinese Soviets. They may be forced temporarily to evacuate one place—they occupy others. Even the enemy is forced to admit that they have come to stay.

Consider their strategic situation on the battle front between capitalism and Socialism. Here is the *Soviet Union,* stronghold of the world proletariat and of all the oppressed. Here is Japanese imperialism, which has swallowed Manchuria, has occupied Jehol province, is making attacks on the Mongolian People's Republic—all in preparation for the ultimate attack against the Soviet Union. Here is Chiang Kai-shek, the head of the Nanking government, a servant of Japanese imperialism, carrying out all the dictates of the Japanese warlords and allowing them to strengthen themselves at the expense of China in order to be able to advance against the U.S.S.R. Here are the imperialists of England, the United States, and others, who are jealous of Japanese imperialism and who would like to take a share of the loot of China but allow Japan to proceed because she is the

spearhead of world imperialism against the Soviet Union in the Far East. And here, in the very path of Japanese and world imperialism, in one of the most fertile and densely populated sections of China, occupying a large territory in the Southeast and stretching towards the central provinces, stands the Soviet Republic of China—a bulwark against world imperialism, and the reactionary government of the landlords and capitalists of China itself. Outside of the U.S.S.R., no greater role has ever been played by any country in the world in the great historical conflict between the dictatorship of capitalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a document presented by the Japanese government late in 1932 to the League of Nations Commission of Inquiry, the so-called Lytton Commission, we read:

> "The future of the Chinese Communist movement is a matter of serious concern and difficult to deal with. On the surface, the movement may appear like a casual phenomenon, begun in 1920 with the formation of the Chinese Communist Party and through Comintern machinations. But, as a matter of fact, its origin lies deep in the peculiar social, economic, and political conditions of China; and unless these are removed, the movement will not end but in all likelihood will expand. The Nanking government in its present state of impotency cannot be expected to accomplish the task of clearing China of Red Armies and Soviet areas. Fortunately, the latter are yet geographically separated from Russia. *In the event they should establish direct geographic contact along the borders of Siberia, Outer Mongolia, or Turkestan, a situation might arise that no Chinese government could ever cope with alone.* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]. The

> Sovietization of entire China is not an absolute impossibility. And what the combination of a Red China with 400,000,000 people and immeasurable natural resources and the Soviet Russia possessing one-sixth of the earth's surface might mean to the world—to say nothing of their neighbor states, such as Japan—is a question that should be borne in mind in following the trends of the Communist movement in China."

Assuming even that the Japanese government overstated somewhat, it must he said that the picture as a whole is correct. The strongest enemy of Communism in the Far East sees clearly the danger of the Chinese Soviets for Japanese imperialism and world imperialism.

The Chinese Soviets and the Red Army are the strongest anti-imperialist power in China offering resistance to the exploitation of China by foreign capital. They are a beacon light for the toiling masses of the other Chinese territories. They show how, when the Nanking regime is overthrown, the life of the masses immediately improves, and the agents of imperialism are destroyed. They rally the sympathies of every Chinese patriot who earnestly wishes to see the foreign yoke overthrown. This is why the Chinese Soviets are now in a position to win over to their side not only rank-and-file soldiers from the Nanking army but *whole armies,* including the lower commanding staffs. And this is why the Soviets of China are invincible and their territories are growing.

In an interview given to the correspondent of the Japanese monthly, *Chun Yan Gun Lien,* in June 1933, Chiang Kai-shek, commander-in-chief of the Nanking armies, gave the

following explanation of the mortal blow dealt his armed forces by the Red Army:

> "It is very difficult to find out who in the local population is a good and who a bad element. Besides the regular units of the Red Army there are also partisan detachments, that is, so-called peasant partisans... These partisans together with the masses wage partisan warfare as objective conditions may require, aiming to throw the rear of the expeditionary forces into confusion or to make surprise attacks on units which attend to the supply of the expeditionary forces.
>
> "They also do reconnoitering, stir up discontent among our troops and camouflage the places where the regular Red Army troops are situated. In short, they do everything in their power to frustrate our plans... When they are not fighting they work in the fields, but whenever they are needed they all arm themselves and come to the aid of the Communist army... Precisely because it is impossible to draw any line between a good citizen and a Red partisan, our troops cannot but feel that 'the enemy is lurking everywhere.' Even in districts where the population has not yet been contaminated by Communist activities, the troops also feel that there will be no rest until the whole population has been wiped out.
>
> "This difficulty gives rise to the hardships encountered by the expeditionary forces which I will summarize as follows: 1. It has proved absolutely impossible to get food supplies or any personal services performed for the troops; 2. The population of the districts bordering on or only near the bandit districts turn Red more and more frequently for

fear of being massacred without exception by the expeditionary forces."[55]

What is Trotsky's stand in relation to this great center of world revolution?

We will appreciate Trotsky when we recall that in 1929 and 1930, the period of the formation and extension of the Chinese Soviets, Trotsky called the Red Army "bandits" and that after the temporary retreat of the revolution at the end of 1927 and early 1928 he kept on shouting "defeat, defeat and defeat," "decline, decline and decline," declaring the attempts of the first leaders of the Red Army, Ho Lung and Yeh Tin, to be "adventures," proclaiming the Soviets to be a malicious Stalin invention, and continually harping about the "strangled revolution," about the Communist Party of China being "defunct," about Stalin having "disarmed the Chinese revolution" and "stabbed it in the back." At the time when Congresses of Soviets had already been organized in numerous districts of Kiangsi, Hupeh, Fukien, Hunan, Kwangtung, Kiangsu, Anhwei, Chekiang, Honan and plans were made for the first All-China Congress of Soviets, Trotsky kept on lamenting that Stalin,

" … subordinated the Chinese workers to the bourgeoisie, put the brakes on the agrarian movement, supported the reactionary generals, disarmed the workers, prevented

[55] Quoted in Ming, Wan, *Revolutionary China Today;* Worker's Library Publishers: New York, 1934, pp. 39-40.

the appearance of Soviets and liquidated those that did appear."[56]

* * *

Like many of Trotsky's "attitudes," this negation of the Chinese Revolution and this blaming on Stalin of imaginary evils which are just the reverse of historic facts, may seem crazy to the uninitiated. As a matter of fact, it has logic, counter-revolutionary logic. It springs from his basic Menshevik conceptions. It is in absolute harmony with his counter-revolutionary attitude toward revolution, the Soviet Union, and the Communist International.

The man denies the building of socialism in the Soviet Union—why should he not deny the existence of Soviets in China? The man asserts that Stalin has destroyed the Russian Revolution—why should he not say that Stalin has destroyed the Chinese Revolution? That the facts which are glaring in the face give the lie to all his assertions has never bothered him in the least.

In his attitude toward the Chinese Revolution, in his "advice," "recommendations," "theses," and "memoranda" dealing with the policy of the Comintern in China, his line of counter-revolution, always decorated with "ultra-revolutionary" phrases, reveals itself even more than in his attitude toward the Russian Revolution. Here we have Trotskyism in a concentrated form—so to speak, the quintessence of Trotskyism.

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[56] Trotsky, Leon, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution;* Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1932, pp. 307-308.

To begin with, he assumed a Menshevik position as regards the very nature of the Chinese Revolution. He failed to see that it was a revolution for national liberation in a semi-colonial country, where the basic driving force was the agrarian revolution against remnants of feudalism. To him there was no basic difference between China and any imperialist country.

One need not adduce much proof to the effect that China is a semi-colonial country on the one hand, a semi-feudal country on the other. By the beginning of the second Chinese Revolution in 1925 (the first took place in 1911 and liberated China from the monarchy), China was enslaved by foreign imperialists both economically and politically. About 80 percent of the Chinese railways and 78 percent of ocean and river navigation were in the hands of foreign capital. A network of foreign-controlled banks pumped the life blood out of the Chinese population. Foreign trade and customs revenues were in the hands of foreign imperialists headed by Great Britain. The imperialists established low tariffs on goods imported from their countries—to the detriment of local Chinese manufacture. The foreign capitalists had a monopoly of taxes on salt, wine, and tobacco which, in 1931, yielded 245,000,000 Chinese dollars. The best coal mines, oil wells, docks and machine shops, electric stations, chemical plants, flour mills, cotton, sugar, tobacco, paper, match mills were in the hands of foreign capitalists. Foreign capital did everything possible to thwart the independent development of the productive forces of China.

To secure absolute freedom for economic exploitation, the foreign imperialist governments secured for themselves

political privileges which robbed the country of sovereignty. They had the so-called *treaty ports* in China where they kept their own army detachments, police, and gendarmerie for the protection of their industrial and financial establishments. They secured for the foreigners *freedom from taxation* and freedom from local regulations. Foreign merchant vessels plied the rivers of China freely, without any control by local authorities. There are about fifty cities in China where foreign capitalists are the actual rulers. They possess *leased territories* where their privileges are still greater. They have so-called *concessions* and *settlements* which are like a state within a state in China. The International Settlement in Shanghai is governed by a foreign municipality. Besides this, all foreign residents enjoyed the privilege of *extra-territoriality*, which means that a foreigner in China can be tried only by a foreign court.

This is how a Chinese patriot described the situation:

> "First a man in black clothes (missionary) comes to me and says, 'Love me like thy brother, else I will send you to roast in a big furnace in the beyond.' Then a man in bright clothes comes to me with goods and says, 'Buy this trash for a high price, else I will complain to the man in white clothes with the big gun.' Finally, the man in white clothes comes and says, 'You do not want to love the man in black clothes as your brother, you do not want to buy the goods for a good price from the man in bright clothes. That being the case, get out and leave your house and your field to the man in black clothes and to the man in bright clothes, or else I'll kill you.' But before I succeed in opening my mouth he kills me anyway, and all three of them are lording it over me: the one sprinkles me with water, the other empties my

pockets the third throws my body to the dogs. Then they all take away my house, my land, my wife, my children, and the holy images of my ancestors."[57]

Foreign domination, which sapped China, and stunted. Its growth was one of the main sources of the Chinese Revolution.

Foreign domination was inextricably linked up with *warlord and landlord rule in China.* The warlord with his mercenary army was carrying out the will of the imperialists inside of China—as reward for their assistance rendered him in keeping the Chinese people under his iron heel. The warlord—several of them ruled over China, the most powerful being Chang Tso-lin, the dictator of the North—was something like a Tsar, i.e., a semi-feudal despot. His power was based on the power of the local landlords who combined, in true feudal fashion, economic, administrative, and judicial power over the peasants. The landlord lived on the sweat and blood of the peasants.

In the early 'twenties of this century statistics showed that 2,800,000 landlords held *over one-half* of the total tillable area of a typical section of China, whereas 31,000,000 peasants (the lower two groups) held together less than all the landlords. As a result, the peasants could not conduct an "economy" on their own small pieces of land and had to rent land from the landlords, paying for it between 60 and 90 percent of the crop. The tenant had to supply the landlord with a certain number of chickens and ducks and with a certain amount of wine free. Besides, he had to work a certain number of days for the landlord. Out of every hundred

[57] Mif, P., *The Chinese Revolution,* p. 21.

peasants in central and southern China, 40 were tenants, 28 semi-tenants, and only 32 owned their farms. All peasants paid exorbitant taxes. Besides the main tax, there existed a number of special taxes: for the army, the militia, the garrisons, the guards, etc.—all in all about 30 kinds. The peasants were often forced to pay their taxes in advance. Cases are known where a tax was collected from the peasants *for 90 years ahead.* All this went to the landlords and warlords.

Working with unbelievable assiduity unbelievably long hours on unbelievably tiny parcels of land, the Chinese peasants could not make a living, try as they might. Famines, pestilence, and floods were the usual lot of millions upon millions of the toilers of the land.

The peasant masses, hundreds of millions of them, were the chief source of the Chinese Revolution.

The workers (there were 2,000,000 workers in large scale city industry out of a total of 5,000,000 workers in all of China) were suffering the kind of exploitation that was known in Europe only at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A twelve-hour workday was the rule, with some workers forced to work sixteen and eighteen hours a day. No restrictions for child labor; children at the age of seven or eight working twelve hours a day. The usual wage of the skilled workers is around 20 cents a day. The lower wages are sometimes as low as 4 cents a day. Cases were known where boys between the ages of 9 and 15 worked in match factories in a poisoned atmosphere from 4 in the morning till 8:30 in the evening, with only one intermission for dinner, receiving; 3 to 6 cents a day. This barbarous exploitation made it possible for the capitalists to garner profits of 100

percent and more. The life of the workers was such that 40 percent were forced to live below even the standard of living of the Chinese coolie. Thus, the workers were suffering at the hands of the imperialists both as natives of an oppressed country and as workers.

The workers were one of the great forces of the Chinese Revolution. Being less numerous in comparison with the total population than the workers of Russia, they could not immediately assume in the Chinese Revolution the role played by the Russian workers; they could not immediately establish the dictatorship of the proletariat as was done in Russia in November 1917. But their role in the revolution was nevertheless that of a leading force. It is the general strike of May-June 1925, that is considered the beginning of the Great Chinese Revolution. Strikes in other cities followed. In all the revolutionary movements after 1925 the working class, headed by the Communist Party, occupied the front ranks. In the present Chinese Soviets, the workers are recognized as leaders. However, in substance the Chinese Revolution has been *an agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution,* and not a Socialist revolution.

This was recognized by the Communist International very early. In its instructions to the Third Congress of the Communist Party of China, in 1923, the Communist International said:

> "The national revolution in China and the creation of an anti-imperialist front will inevitably be accompanied by an agrarian revolution of the peasantry against the remnants of feudalism. Only then will the revolution be victorious

when it will succeed in drawing in the fundamental mass of the Chinese population, the small-parcel peasantry.

"Thus, the central question of the entire policy is the peasant question... That is why the Communist Party as the party of the working class must strive toward an alliance of the workers and the peasants. This can be achieved only through the incessant propaganda and the realization in practice of the slogans of the agrarian revolution, such as the confiscation of the landlords' lands, confiscation of the lands of the monasteries and churches and turning them over to the peasantry without compensation, abolition of the hunger rents, abolition of the present tax system, abolition of the leasing of taxes, abolition of customs duties between provinces, abolition of the mandarinate, creation of organs of peasant self-government into whose hands the confiscated land shall pass.

"Proceeding from these fundamental demands it is necessary to bring the entire mass of peasant poor to the realization of the necessity of struggle against foreign imperialism... Only when the agrarian foundation is placed under the slogans of the anti-imperialist front can we hope for a real success.

"It goes without saying that the leadership must belong to the party of the working class. The last events from the realm of the labor movement (tremendous strikes) have clearly shown all the importance of the labor movement in China.

"The Communist Party is obliged constantly to push the party of the Kuomintang toward the agrarian revolution"

The character of the Chinese Revolution as combining the anti-imperialist and the agrarian revolution, and the role of the workers and their party, the Communist Party, could

not be more adequately defined than was done in this document even before the real beginning of the revolution in 1925. The Communist International, then still headed by Lenin, never underestimated the role of the proletariat in the revolution. It saw, however, that the revolution was that of an oppressed country rising against the yoke of imperialism and that its main driving force was the bulk of the population consisting of peasants.

What about Trotsky? True to his disregard of the peasantry, he simply failed to see the millions of impoverished and oppressed peasants who were then beginning to form local committees to fight against the landlords. To him the peasantry did not exist. To him, therefore, the main force of the revolutionary struggles in this semi-feudaI country did not exist.

As late as 1928, *after* three years of heroic peasant fighting, he had the following to say about the peasantry and the revolution:

> "Numerically, the Chinese peasantry constitutes an even more overwhelming mass than the Russian peasants; but crushed in the vice of world contradictions upon the solution of which in one way or another its fate depends, the Chinese peasantry is even less capable than the Russian of playing a leading role. It is no longer at present a theoretical forecast; it is a fact tested through and through and from all sides."[58]

Note the expression: "vice of world contradictions." It appears that the contradiction between the interests of the

[58] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.*, 1932, p. 133.

millions of peasants and the interests of the landlords and warlords in China do not belong to the world contradictions; it appears that the contradiction between the interests of the peasants and the interests of the imperialist oppressors and exploiters also does not belong to the world contradictions. It appears that the peasants have to wait for some other forces to solve their problems.

Nor did Trotsky realize the anti-imperialist character of the Chinese Revolution. If his disregard of the peasantry as a revolutionary force was an old trait revealed in his attitude toward the Russian Revolution, here he revealed himself from a new angle. He failed to see that liberation from the yoke of foreign power was a question of life and death for the overwhelming majority of the population of China. What he saw in the revolution was not revolution at all: he conceived the whole movement to be an attempt by the Chinese manufacturers to do away with foreign control of the customs, to establish "customs autonomy."

With such an approach he could make only blunders, one more ludicrous than the other, and advance proposals which, if carried out, would have spelled disaster for the revolution.

The Kuomintang which is mentioned above in the instructions of the Communist International was, up to the middle of 1927, *a party of the national revolution.* Formed in 1912 by Sun Yat-sen, it gained great influence and power in the early 'twenties. By 1925 it held the City of Canton in the south of China and surrounding territory, it had an army of its own, and its influence grew. First a party of intellectuals and the petty bourgeoisie, it soon attracted great numbers

of peasants and workers. In the middle of 1926 its armies, led by Chiang Kai-shek, then still a revolutionist, began the famous *March to the North* (the Northern Expedition).

This was the greatest revolutionary sweep the world has ever seen outside of Russia. In a short time, the armies of the revolution conquered the most important provinces of China: Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi, Honan, Kiangsu, Chekiang, etc. The march proceeded from the less industrialized to the most industrialized and most developed sections of China. Wherever the armies arrived, a revolutionary government was set up, foreign rule was abolished, foreign privileges curtailed. The March to the North was accompanied by a tremendous upswing of the labor movement. Wherever the revolutionary government established itself, the working class came out from the underground into which it had been driven by the warlords and began to function in the open. It organized trade unions; it used the weapon of strikes to improve its conditions. It increased its Communist Party tremendously. It organized large working-class demonstrations with tens of thousands participating. More than that, the workers armed themselves here and there in the liberated provinces. At the same time there was a tremendous development of the peasant movement. Literally millions of peasants rose against their landlords, organizing committees of the poor, refusing to pay rent, establishing their own local governments in the villages, often attacking the landlords' estates, of ten taking over the land.

It was a broad revolutionary stream engulfing the major portions of China, driving out the warlords and the

imperialists, releasing the creative revolutionary energy of the workers and peasants.

What should have been the attitude of the Communist International and of the Communist Party of China towards this *national revolution?* In 1923 the Communist International advised the Communist Party of China to "push the Kuomintang Leftward." In November 1926, it declared, in the resolution of the Seventh Plenum of the Comintern:

> "If the proletariat will not advance an agrarian program it will not be able to draw the peasantry into a revolutionary struggle and will lose the hegemony in the national liberation movement."

The Comintern repeatedly insisted on developing the revolutionary labor movement against the capitalists and the agrarian movement against the landlords. The instructions of the Comintern to the Communist Party of China, issued December 1926, say:

> "The general policy of retreat in the city and of curtailing the struggle of the workers for the improvement of their conditions is incorrect. In the villages the struggle must be developed, but at the same time it is necessary to use the favorable moment to improve the material and legal position of the workers, striving in every way to give the struggle of the workers an organized character which excludes excesses and rash precipitancy. It is particularly necessary to strive that the struggle in the cities should be directed against the strata of the largescale bourgeoisie and first of all against the imperialists in order that the petty and middle Chinese bourgeoisie be retained as far as possible within the framework of the united front against the

common enemy... We deem it necessary to warn that decrees against the freedom of strikes, of workers' meetings, etc., are absolutely inadmissible."

Early in 1927 the Comintern in its instructions said:

"It is necessary to head toward *the arming of the workers and peasants,* toward transforming the peasant committees locally into *actual organs of power with* armed self-defense, etc.

"It is necessary that the Communist Party should everywhere appear as such; the policy of voluntary semi-legality is inadmissible; the Communist Party must not appear as a brake on the mass movement; the Communist Party must not conceal the traitorous and reactionary policy of the Right Kuomintangites; but their demasking must mobilize the masses around the Kuomintang and the Communist Party."

From this it is obvious that while the Communist International was striving to achieve the maximum possible development of the revolution against world imperialism, it was striving to achieve the maximum possible gains for the workers and peasants *within* that revolution and *through* the revolution.

A man like Trotsky, failing to understand both the anti-feudal peasant and the anti-imperialist national stream of the revolution, was bound to advance counter-revolutionary proposals.

He proposed that the Communist Party withdraw from the Kuomintang and form Soviets. He contended that the anti-imperialist bloc between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie during the March to the North was against Leninism. He

insisted that the immediate formation of the Soviets was the only Leninist way.

> "If, at the beginning of the northern campaign [says Trotsky] we had begun to organize Soviets in the 'liberated' districts (and the masses were instinctively fighting for that) we would have rallied to our side the agrarian uprisings, we would have built *our own* army; we would have undermined the opposing armies and—notwithstanding the youthfulness of the Communist Party of China—it would have been able, with a judicious Comintern guidance, to mature in these years of stress and to come to power, if not in the whole of China at once, then at least in a considerable part of it. And above all, we would have had a party"[59]

Let us not forget that Soviets are organs of power. Trotsky did not conceive them as organs of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. He wanted to skip the historically necessary stage of the revolution and proceed forthwith to Soviets as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What would have been the task of such organs? *They would have been a government directed against the national government.* They would have aroused the peasants against them because the peasants would have seen in the attempt to disrupt the revolutionary Kuomintang which they still trusted, an attempt to interfere with the agrarian revolution. They would not have been able to build a Soviet army because the overwhelming majority of the peasants and a large section of the workers believed in Chiang Kai-shek

[59] Trotsky, *Op Cit.,* 1932, p. 134.

who at that time was a revolutionary. They would not have been able to undermine Chiang Kai-shek's army because that army was engaged in a victorious revolution. They would not have strengthened the Communist Party because the Communist Party would have isolated itself from the revolutionary masses. As to the Communists coming into power in a considerable part of China, they succeeded in doing so just because they did *not* pose in the eyes of the masses as disrupters of the national revolution but showed to the masses from their own experiences that Chiang Kai-shek was a traitor.

The slogan of Soviets sounds revolutionary, but under given conditions its use when impossible to realize would have been an act of counter-revolution. It would have crippled the revolution.

Summing up the experiences of the Chinese Revolution, at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, Otto Willie Kuusinen, one of the leaders of the Comintern, said:

> "Well, comrades, is this just ultra-revolutionary high-voltage subjectivism of a petty-bourgeois gone wild—or what? I do not know what it is subjectively, but I know perfectly well what would have been the objective meaning of such action in practice. If such a thing were to be tried, it would have been the surest method of bringing about the immediate collapse of the revolution or at least of the... agrarian movement. On the present stage in China the advancing of such a slogan could only have the effect of a provocation."[60]

[60] *Minutes of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern,* German edition, Vol. III, p. 24.

The fact that in March 1927, Chiang Kai-shek betrayed the revolution and became a tool of world imperialism, is grasped by Trotsky to prove his own acumen. Didn't he know beforehand that one could not rely on the bourgeoisie? Didn't he propose Soviets? He pretends not to know that it is one thing when the *bourgeoisie* betrays the revolution and another thing when the *Communist Party* should attempt to disrupt the revolution. He "forgets"—that what he proposed would have amounted to a war of the workers against the peasants. He kept on repeating, *ad nauseum,* that the Communist Party could not be "an appendage to a bourgeois party." He misrepresented the Comintern as saying that "millions of workers and peasants can be set in motion and led if only the 'banner' of the Kuomintang is waved around in the air a little."[61] He just "forgot" to see one little thing—that those millions of peasants *were actually engaged in an actual agrarian revolution* simultaneously with the anti-imperialist united-front struggle. He never understood the various stages of the revolution and its passing from one to the other.

Was the Communist International aware of the fact that the revolution could not rely on the bourgeoisie for very long? All its instructions stressed the point that although there was a united front, a bloc of the masses with the bourgeoisie, the fate of the revolution depended upon the workers and peasants. The Comintern advised the workers and peasants to arm; if need be in defiance of the Kuomintang leaders. It advised them to form peasant committees, to

[61] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.,* 1932, p. 48.

fight the Right wing of the Kuomintang, to push the Kuomintang to the Left, to bring forward, boldly, the Communist Party. It warned the Communists that it was necessary to develop the mass movement which alone would save the revolution. "Otherwise," said the December 1926, instructions of the C.I., "the revolution is threatened with a tremendous danger."

The Communist Party of China, young, militant, ardent, but inexperienced, committed mistakes. There were some Communist leaders who failed to realize the necessity of an independent revolutionary movement of the workers. There were Communist leaders who said, "We must not embarrass the united anti-imperialist front by too much agrarian revolution." There were Communists who said, "We must not have too many strikes because that would alienate the bourgeoisie from the revolution." There were Communists who, for the same reason, shrank from arming the workers. Many such mistakes were made; some were inevitable due to the complexity and novelty of the situation. The Communist leadership at that time was, due to historic conditions, petty-bourgeois (from the cities) and intellectualist. It was not yet steeled in struggle. It had not yet absorbed fully the Leninist principles of Communist discipline. But that by no means signifies that the line of the Communist International or of Stalin was wrong.

At the Sixth Congress of the Communist International the errors of the Communist Party were characterized as follows:

> "The Communist Party of China suffered a series of great defeats which are connected in the past with a series

> of grave opportunist errors: the absence of independence and freedom of criticism in relation to the Kuomintang; the lack of understanding of the transition from one stage of the revolution to another and the necessity to prepare in time for resistance; finally, the hindering of the agrarian revolution."[62]

The line of the Comintern, however, was in accordance with the teachings of Lenin and with the interests of the revolution.

This is what Lenin said about supporting the national bourgeoisie in a revolution:

> "The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and should under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form."[63]

> "We, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organizing in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited."[64]

The Kuomintang movement of 1926 and up to March 1927 was really revolutionary and its representatives not only did not hinder the Communists from educating and

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[62] *Minutes of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern,* German Edition, Vol. IV, p. 40.
[63] Lenin, V.I., *Op. Cit.,* 1974a, p. 150.
[64] *Ibid.,* p. 242.

organizing the masses of peasants and workers in the revolutionary spirit, but they even paid lip service to Communism. Thus, at the *Seventh Plenum of the Comintern* (November 1926) a representative of Chiang Kai-shek declared: "What the Kuomintang strives for is that there should not be created a bourgeois domination after the nationalist revolution in China, as happened in the West and as we see it now in all the countries except the U.S.S.R. ... We are all convinced that under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Comintern the Kuomintang will fulfill its historic task."[65]

The Communist International never had any illusions about a lasting bloc of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie. What it insisted upon was to use the bourgeois revolutionists as far as possible in order to achieve the maximum results.

Chiang Kai-shek did betray. When the imperialists began to bombard Nanking in March 1927, Chiang Kai-shek joined hands with them against the revolution. Why? Because the bourgeoisie became frightened by the specter of the peasants and workers gaining too much power. Faced with the alternative of either suffering at the hands of foreign imperialists or being crushed by the rising wave of workers' and peasants' revolts, the bourgeoisie chose the former. Chiang Kai-shek did the bidding of his masters. He split away from the Kuomintang.

There begins the second stage of the revolution, the Wuhan stage. "The national bourgeoisie moved away from the

[65] *Minutes of the Seventh Plenum on the Comintern,* German Edition, p. 404.

revolution while the agrarian movement grew into a powerful revolution of tens of millions of the peasantry" (Stalin). The Left Wing of the Kuomintang formed the Wuhan Government. The Communists participated in it. Trotsky, who never understands the passing of the revolution from one stage to another, now makes a round-about-face and "advises" the Communists to participate in the Kuomintang. "We are in favor of the Communists working in the Kuomintang and patiently drawing the workers and peasants over to their side"[66] he declares in his tract, *The Chinese Revolution, and the Theses of Comrade Stalin.* Why now? The Wuhan forces were not different in principle from the Chiang Kai-shek forces prior to March 1927. But here we have one of the many gyrations which are so characteristic of Trotsky.

What was the Wuhan period? With surpassing clarity Stalin explained this in his speech before the Plenary Session of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the U.S.S.R., August 1, 1927:

> "While the distinguishing feature of the first stage was that the spearhead of the revolution was turned mainly against foreign imperialism, the characteristic feature of the second stage is that the spearhead of the revolution is now turned mainly against internal enemies, primarily against the feudal landlords, against the feudal regime.
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> "Did the first stage accomplish its task of overthrowing foreign imperialism? No, it did not. It bequeathed the accomplishment of this task to the second stage of the Chinese revolution. It merely gave the revolutionary masses the first

[66] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.,* 1932, p. 59.

shaking up that roused them against imperialism, only to run its course and hand on the task to the future.

"It must be presumed that the second stage of the revolution also will not succeed in fully accomplishing the task of expelling the imperialists. It will give the broad masses of the Chinese workers and peasants a further shaking up to rouse them against imperialism, but it will do so in order to hand on the completion of this task to the next stage of the Chinese revolution, to the Soviet stage."[67]

Stalin, the Leninist, understood and explained what is incomprehensible to Trotsky: the transition from one stage of the revolution to another. He foresaw that the next stage of the revolution would be *the Soviet stage.* He knew that the bloc with the bourgeoisie in the Wuhan government was not of long duration. However, he could not counsel the Communist Party to try and set itself against the Wuhan regime. That would have been harmful to the revolution which now had arrayed against it, in addition to the warlords and imperialists, also a large section of the bourgeoisie headed by Chiang Kai-shek—the so-called Nanking regime.

Why was it necessary for the Communists to stay within the Wuhan government? Their task, according to Stalin, was:

"The task was to utilize to the full the possibility of openly organizing the Party, the proletariat (trade unions), the peasantry (peasant associations), and the revolution generally.

[67] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 10; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1954, pp. 26-27.

"The task was to push the Wuhan Kuomintangites to the Left, towards the agrarian revolution.

"The task was to make the Wuhan Kuomintang the center of the fight against counter-revolution and the core of a future revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry."

In reply to the demand of the Trotskyites regarding the immediate formation of Soviets Stalin explained that that would have been "adventurism," an "adventurous skipping of stages" since it would have meant skipping over the Left Kuomintang phase of development. "The Kuomintang in Wuhan did not yet discredit and expose itself in the eyes of the broad masses of workers and peasants; it did not exhaust itself as a bourgeois revolutionary organization."

Revolutions move rapidly. The second stage of the revolution was succeeded by the third, at the end of 1927. The bourgeoisie *did* become thoroughly discredited in the eyes of the workers and peasants. Large sections of the territory conquered by the March to the North were now in the hands of the Nanking regime which rallied to its side also the bourgeoisie from the Wuhan regime. The Communist Party now alone headed the workers' and peasants' movement. Class differentiations took their place. The bourgeoisie ran back to the foreign imperialists to seek safety, albeit dearly paid for, against the Red wave of the agrarian and workers revolution. The next step of the revolution was, inevitably, Soviets. The bourgeois-democratic revolution passed into the phase of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The first Soviet was organized in Canton after the armed uprising of December 11, 1927. The Canton Commune lasted for only three days. It was drowned in the blood of the heroic fighters by the united forces of the Chinese bourgeoisie, landlords and international imperialists. But this was not the end of the Revolution. It was only one of its reverses. True, in the Nanking territory the Communist Party was forced into illegality. Great masses of workers and peasants were executed by the hangman, Chiang Kai-shek. But the Revolution kept marching on. Even before the defeat of the Canton Commune, Chinese Communists under Generals Yeh Tin, Ho Lung and Chu Teh carried out a successful revolt among the best army corps of the Kuomintang in Nanchang, Kiangsi province. They succeeded in winning over to the Communist Party an armed force of about 15,000 men, which served as the nucleus of the future Red Armies. For a while the Red Armies retreated into mountainous regions, but already in February 1928, we have a Soviet regime established in Yungtin, Fukien province. In May, there is a Congress of workers, peasants, and Red soldiers in eastern Kiangsi. In September-October, we have a Soviet regime established in Wunan, Kiangsi. From then on the Chinese Soviets kept on growing until they have reached their present stage of power and consolidation.

One cannot overestimate the importance of this development in the face of overwhelming difficulties. The Soviets were, and still are to a large extent, cut off from great centers with masses of modern proletariat. They have suffered intervention and blockade. Numerous drives were organized

against them, not only of a military but also of a propagandist nature. The new Soviet Republic had to create its own Red Army and to arm itself in a country which is not highly industrialized. Its arms were mainly taken from the Chiang Kai-shek armies in victorious battles. And yet—what marvelous progress!

What was the Canton Commune? The Communist International, in the theses of the Sixth Congress (1928), said:

> "The Canton uprising, being the heroic rearguard battle of the Chinese proletariat in the past period of the Chinese Revolution remains, notwithstanding gross errors of the leadership, the banner of the new Soviet phase of the revolution."

About the same time when the Communist International was framing the thesis about the Canton Soviet having formed the banner of the new phase of the Revolution, Trotsky declared:

> "The [Canton] Soviet, which was created in a hurry, only so as to observe the ritual, was merely a camouflage for an adventurist putsch. That is why we found out, after it was all over, that the Canton Soviet was just one of those old Chinese dragons—it was simply drawn on paper."[68]

Stalin, don't you see, simply staged a "ritual" to prove that he was a good revolutionist. He made a putsch to show that he was no worse than Trotsky! But Trotsky will not be deceived. "We were for the creation of Soviets in China in 1926. We were against carnival Soviets in Canton in

[68] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.*, 1932, p. 157.

December 1927."[69] He was for industrialization and collectivization in 1925 in Russia. He sees camouflage industrialization and "carnival" collectivization in 1935. "There are no contradictions there," he says. No, there are no contradictions. Trotsky's policy is always counter-revolutionary; either he advocates the splitting of revolutionary forces, or he represents a major revolutionary battle as a "carnival." That Canton "carnival Soviet," he is remembered, was one of the most heroic uprisings of the workers and peasants. Over 7,000 fighters were shot in Canton alone after the crushing of the uprising.

In the years following 1927 Trotsky refuses to recognize the spread of the revolution in China and the establishment of Soviets. What in reality is the transition to a higher stage of the revolution, to him is the end of it all—darkness and defeat. The wish is father to the thought. In this, his viciousness borders on the grotesque. "Ho Lung and Yeh Tin, even leaving aside their opportunist policy, could not fail to be an isolated adventure, a pseudo-Communist Machno feat [Machno was half bandit, half revolutionary during the civil war in Russia] ; it could not but clash against its own isolation, and it has clashed."[70] This is how he greeted the formation of the nucleus of the future Red Army. The report of the Communist Party of China to the Sixth Congress about the growth of the number of Party members, a report that showed that the revolution was not defeated, was greeted by Trotsky as "monstrous information" which deserved

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] *Ibid.,* pp. 149-150.

"indignant refutation."[71] He could not really refute the figures, but then he found another fault: The majority of the new Party members, he said, were peasants, and thus the Communist Party of China "ceases to be in conformity with its historical destination,"[72] *i.e.,* in conformity with Trotsky's contention that the peasants cannot play a revolutionary role. The revolution, in his opinion, is lost. "The revolution is at the present time laid over into an indefinite future. And moreover, the consequences of the defeat of the revolution have not yet been completely exhausted."[73]

The formation of Soviets during 1929 was treated by him as a joke. "Perhaps the Chinese Communists have risen in rebellion because they have received the latest comments of Molotov on the resolution on the 'Third Period'... Does this insurrection spring from the situation in China or rather from the instructions concerning the 'Third Period'?"[74]

While the workers and peasants of China under Communist leadership were fighting heroically and sacrificing their lives on the battlefields establishing Soviet rule, Trotsky, safe in Alma-Ata, gave vent to his venomous hatred against Stalin and the Communists. Oh, he finally discovered the secret of the Ho Lung and Yeh Tin and the Canton uprisings of 1927, also the sinister meaning of the formation of Soviets in 1929. "The adventurous campaigns of Ho Lung and Yeh Tin in 1927 and the Canton uprising [were] timed for the moment of the expulsion of the opposition from the

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[71] *Ibid.,* p. 160.
[72] *Ibid.,* p. 161.
[73] *Ibid.,* p. 177.
[74] *Ibid.,* p. 233.

Russian Communist Party,"[75]—they were organized, that is to say, to divert the attention of the workers; in themselves they were nothing. As to the formation of Soviets in certain sections of China in 1929—here is the secret, and its exposure makes Trotsky "alarmed," indeed:

> "Have the Chinese Communists risen in rebellion because of Chiang Kai-shek's seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway? Has this insurrection, wholly partisan in character, as its aim to cause Chiang Kai-shek uneasiness at his rear? If that is what it is, we ask who has given such counsel to the Chinese Communists? Who bears the political responsibility for their passing over to guerilla warfare?"[76]

Note the double malice: the disregard of one of the greatest achievements of the world revolution, and the disdain for the security of the Soviet Union. Trotsky is against the workers and peasants of China defending the security of the Soviet frontiers (wouldn't he rather be glad if Chiang Kai-shek's forces succeeded in dealing the Soviet Union a blow?). He declares:

> "The proletariat of the U.S.S.R., which has the power and the army in its hands, cannot demand that the vanguard of the Chinese proletariat begin a war at once against Chiang Kai-shek, that is, that it apply the means which the Soviet government itself does not find it possible, and correctly so, to apply."[77]

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[75] *Ibid.*, pp. 233-234.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 235.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 234.

This speaks volumes about the attitude of Trotsky toward the Soviet Union. Incidentally, the attack of the imperialists on the Chinese Eastern Railway was stopped by swift and decisive action of the Red Army of the U.S.S.R.,—the army of workers and peasants.

As usual, Trotsky predicts—and his predictions are stupid. Thus, he sees by the end of 1929 "the perspective of a terrific debacle and of an adventurist degeneration of the remnants of the Communist Party." That the reverse happened is no fault of Trotsky's.

Enough of this dastardliness of a counter-revolutionary gone mad. We could recite more and more samples to show that the man is a bitter enemy of the Chinese Revolution, that he fails to see in the Chinese Soviets a revolutionary achievement, that as late as August 1930, he declares that "the peasantry is incapable of creating its Soviet government independently," that the leadership of the Chinese Soviets, in his judgment, is not in the hands of the Communist Party but "is delivered to some other political party," etc. But the gems so far quoted will suffice to give a picture of this enemy of the world revolution.

One instance, however, must be cited to complete the picture. After 1928, Trotsky suddenly begins to predict the economic stabilization of China under the Nanking regime, the increase in its productive forces, a veritable "economic recovery" and, correspondingly, a "relative bourgeois (political) stabilization" which is "radically distinguished from a revolutionary situation." We need not dwell on the fact that China today is in a deeper crisis and that the revolutionary forces in the Nanking area are growing very fast.

What interests us is Trotsky's slogan: For a Constituent Assembly.

> "The Communist Party can and should formulate the slogan of the Constituent Assembly with full powers, elected by universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage."

No more revolution. No more Soviets. No more arming of the workers and peasants. The Communist Party should begin, says Trotsky, "from the beginning"—and that means to help the bourgeoisie consolidate its State power, to help the bourgeoisie unite all of China under one Constituent Assembly, to form an opposition, legal in its very nature, within the bourgeois parliament.

A defeated counter-revolutionist exposed by the course of the revolution and foaming at his mouth because of his weakness—this is what Trotsky has become in relation to the Chinese Revolution. To his hatred of the U.S.S.R. was added his acrid hatred for Soviet China. When he sees those two coming together, when he sees the Chinese Communists issuing the slogan of a national-revolutionary war against Japanese imperialism, he stirs to "warn" in the very same way as he "warned" against the defense of the Chinese-Eastern Railway.

He was trying to profit by the mistakes of the Chinese Communist Party, but he tries to hide its world historic successes. He carefully avoids mentioning one thing, however, that the Chinese Communist leader more than all others responsible for the opportunist errors of the Chinese Party was a man by the name of Chen Duxiu, who was later expelled and became the leader of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites in China.

THE THIRD PERIOD

The period between 1918 and the end of 1923 was a period of large mass movements and revolutions. Suffice it to recall the proletarian revolution in Hungary, the proletarian revolution in Bavaria, the seizure of factories by workers in Italy, the uprising in 1921 in Germany, the powerful revolutionary movement in Germany in the Autumn of 1923. This period ended with the defeat of the German revolution.

The following period is that of relative and partial stabilization of capitalism. Capitalist production increases but it cannot overcome the general crisis of capitalism. World economy is split into two sectors—the capitalist and the socialist one. Capitalism introduces higher technique, it resorts to mass production, but the new and mounting mass of goods needs a market while the markets are shrinking. The capitalists increase their exploitation of the workers in order to secure profits for capital. But this, in turn, diminishes the home market. In many countries, while there is "prosperity," the standards of living of the workers become lower, which means a decrease in their purchasing power. All this drives the imperialists to search frantically for new markets, for new investment spheres and sources of raw material. This is fraught with renewed clashes between the

imperialist powers. Every government is feverishly arming. New wars are in the offing. At the same time the exploitation of the masses, both workers and farmers, calls forth increased resistance. In the colonies there is a sharpened anti-imperialist movement often assuming the proportions of revolt.

Such was the situation by 1928 and this was the reason why, when the Sixth Congress of the Communist International convened in the Summer of 1928, it declared that the end of capitalist stabilization was at hand and that a new period had begun—*the third post-war period.* In that period, said the Comintern, the masses are becoming more radical. They are participating in struggles against capitalism in greater numbers. In consequence of the growing inner and outer contradictions of the capitalist countries, the revolutionary spirit of the workers, said the Comintern, will rise. In the not distant future, the Comintern foresaw a new round of wars and revolutions.

The man most instrumental in bringing about this understanding of the world situation was Stalin. It is he who possessed the keen sense of reality and the clear understanding of the road to be followed. It is he who fought unremittingly against both fronts: the opportunists from the Right who, like the Lovestoneites in the U.S.A., saw no impending crisis, no radicalization of the workers in capitalist countries, and no possibility of rapid advance towards socialism in the U.S.S.R.—and the opportunists from the "Left" who advocated unsound adventurous experiments out of sheer disbelief in the maturing revolutionary forces.

Subsequent events proved the correctness of his analysis. The worldwide economic crisis struck full blast at the very vitals of the entire capitalist system hardly one year after the Congress. The revolutionary movement in India, Arabia and a number of other colonies, the victories of the Chinese Soviets, the revolution in Cuba, the revolution in Spain, the revolutionary uprising in Austria, the growing revolutionary movement in France and the United States are a few of the many upheavals marking the third period.

We must confess, we never found in the Trotskyite writings anything resembling an explanation of why they disagreed with the "third period" analysis. They just scoffed. They did not see any new period. To them capitalism in 1928 and later was still stable. All these facts of revolutionary movements failed to impress them. Capitalism is still unshakable in their estimation.

THE GERMAN SITUATION AND THE QUESTION OF SOCIAL-FASCISM

The greatest factor in the stabilization of capitalism after the first round of wars and revolutions was Social-Democracy. In such countries as Germany and Austria the Social-Democratic leaders actually undertook to organize and maintain the capitalist State against the revolutionary onslaught of the workers. A German Social-Democrat, Noske, drowned in blood the workers' revolution in Germany in 1918 and 1919. Social-Democratic ministers suppressed strikes, fired at workers' demonstrations, declared martial law against the workers. A Socialist government in Great Britain sent armies to subdue the uprising of the colonial peoples. The Social-Democrats of France took the initiative in introducing the imperialist martial laws. In short, everywhere the leaders of Social-Democracy became part and parcel of the bourgeois State apparatus. They advanced the idea that where there is *a coalition government, i.e.,* a government of capitalist and Socialist ministers, there we have a transition from capitalism to socialism. The fact of the matter is that a coalition government remains a capitalist government since it does not shake the foundations of

capitalism, private property, and exploitation. On the contrary, it only serves to strengthen capitalism by deceiving the workers with the idea of peaceful transition to socialism.

In Germany and Austria Social-Democracy actually aided the growth of fascism. Fascist bands were being organized under the protection of Social-Democratic governments. Fascist demonstrations were unmolested by Social-Democratic police presidents while Communist demonstrations were being dispersed. Fascist bands were allowed to arm while the militant Red Front organization of the German workers was outlawed. Martial law and semi-martial law were repeatedly introduced to curb the movement of the workers who demanded an improvement of their intolerable conditions. In the very same way as Lenin, after the betrayal of the proletariat by Social-Democracy at the beginning of the War, called the Social-Democratic leaders social-patriots and social. chauvinists, so the Communist International, after the new betrayals of Social-Democracy, called its leaders social-fascists—in the sense of paving the way for fascism.

It was disastrous for the proletariat of Germany and of the whole world that the Social-Democratic leaders made common cause with capitalism. It was disastrous that so many millions of workers were deceived by the socialist phrases of the Social-Democratic leaders and believed them to be true fighters for the interests of the working class. It was unfortunate that the Communist Party of Germany could swing only around six million votes and did not have the majority of the working class behind it. It would have been better for the workers of Germany and for the world

revolution had the masses of German workers cherished fewer illusions about their Social-Democratic leaders. It would have been difficult for fascism to sweep into power in Germany had there been organized in Germany a powerful united front.

It cannot be denied that there were certain weaknesses in the work of the Communist Party of Germany, but opposition to the united front was not among them. The Communist Party did not succeed in bringing all its members into the reformist trade unions so as to have there a stronger revolutionary support. It did not work sufficiently in the reformist trade unions—and this was the most neglected sector of its activities, although it did build the red trade union opposition with a membership—prior to the advent of fascism—of over 300,000. It did not root itself sufficiently in the factories and plants. It was not flexible enough in approaching Social-Democratic rank-and-file workers. All these shortcomings were repeatedly pointed out by the Communist International, and the Party made strong efforts to improve its work. As a result, its influence grew tremendously.

> "During the last period before Hitler came to power, the Communist Party succeeded in penetrating the broad masses and even in obtaining influence among the social-democrats, the members of the reformist trade unions and also the members of the Republican Flag (Reichsbanner) organization, for the very reason that it was able to organize the struggle against this emergency decree. The authority of the Party was greatly enhanced, and members of reformist trade unions began to participate in the strikes led by the

> Red Trade Union Opposition and the Communists. Thus, besides Communists, members of reformist trade unions and even National-Socialists participated in the Berlin transport strike committee."[78]

The Communist Party of Germany was ready to fight fascism. As a matter of fact, the Communists did fight the fascist bands in the streets on numerous occasions, meeting their attacks and the attacks of the police which, in Prussia for instance, was under Social-Democratic command and everywhere protected the Brown Shirts.

That the Communists were working for a united front with the Social-Democratic workers, if need be through an agreement with the Social-Democratic leaders, may be seen from the following:

In 1925 the Communist Party proposed to the Social-Democratic Party a united struggle against the monarchist danger. Later in the year, seeing that the Communists and the Social-Democrats had a majority of members in the Berlin municipality, the Communists proposed to the Social-Democrats *a common program of action* for the interests of the workers. In 1926, the Communists called upon the Social-Democratic leaders to join in a plebiscite against returning the property to the former German royal family. In the Spring of 1928, the C.P. proposed *joint May Day demonstrations.* In October 1928, it proposed joint *anti-militarist action*—against the building of a battle cruiser. In 1929-1932 it repeatedly proposed *joint action against wage cuts.* In April

[78] Piatnitsky, Osip, *The Present Situation in Germany;* Workers Library Publishers: New York, 1933, p. 20.

1932, it proposed a joint struggle of all working class organizations against an impending wage cut.

All these proposals were turned down by Social-Democracy. Broad masses of workers responded to some of the Communist appeals for united action. Social-Democratic leaders preferred cooperation with the capitalist parties.

When Von Papen drove the Social-Democrats out of the Prussian government the Communist Party proposed *a joint general strike* for the repeal of the emergency decrees and for the disbanding of the Storm Troops. On January 30, 1933, when Hitler came into power, the Communist Party again proposed *a general strike to fight reaction.* Again, in March 1933, after the burning of the Reichstag, the Communist Party called upon the Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions to declare a general strike against the attack on the workers. All these proposals were rejected by the Social-Democrats who preferred to believe that they could function and maintain a modicum of power under any capitalist regime.

Who is to be blamed?

Trotsky says: the Communists are to blame. Why? Because they called the Social-Democrats social-fascists. Trotsky cannot deny the fact that the Communists were trying to organize the united front. They organized the Anti-Fascist Action which was to unite workers of various parties. They tried to organize the united front in the factories and unions. The Social-Democratic leaders sowed mistrust toward the Communists and toward the united front, and this hampered the Communist action. Trotsky did his bit.

Now he is dissatisfied.

Here is his chief trump:

> "Had the Comintern placed, from 1929, or even from 1930 or 1931, at the foundation of its policies the objective irreconcilability between Social-Democracy and fascism, or more exactly between fascism and Social-Democracy; if upon this it had built a systematic and persistent policy of the united front, Germany, within a few months, would have been covered with a network of mighty committees of proletarian defense, potential workers' Soviets, that is."[79]

But, my dear Mr. Trotsky, there was no irreconcilability between Social-Democracy and fascism, or more exactly: between the Social-Democratic leaders and fascism. *There was no irreconcilability as far as the Social-Democratic leaders were concerned.* They certainly had not anticipated that they would be so ruthlessly driven out. They had formed a substantial part of the State apparatus under all regimes prior to that of Hitler and they were convinced that even under Hitler would they retain a certain share of power. No matter how much the Communists would have painted before them the dire results they were to expect from the ascendancy of fascism—they simply would not have believed it. They would have said they knew better.

Witness the conduct of the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders who were supposed to be much more radical than their German brethren *and who had the experience of their German comrades.* Listen to the testimony of the "Left" Marxist, Otto Bauer, in his interview with the *New York Times*

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[79] Trotsky, Leon, *Are There Limits to the Fall?* in, *The Militant,* March 10, 1934.

correspondent, G. E. R. Gedye (published February 18, 1934) as to how the Social-Democrats of Austria were ready to cooperate with the fascist dictator Dollfuss at the expense of the Austrian constitution:

> "Since the date of the Hitler triumph in Germany (March 5) when the Reichstag 'elections' gave the German Nazis control, our party has made the very greatest efforts to come to an agreement with the government… In the first weeks of March our leaders were still in close personal contact with Dollfuss and frequently tried to get him to agree to a constitutional solution. At the end of March, he promised our leader, Dr. Dennenberg, personally that at the beginning of April he would open negotiations with us for the reform of the Constitution [for the limiting of bourgeois democracy to suit fascism—M.J.O.]. This promise he never fulfilled, for at the beginning of April he passed over definitely to the fascist camp... and refused to speak to any of the socialists. When he said that he could not see the existing leaders we offered to send him other negotiators. He refused sharply. As we could not see him again, we tried to negotiate through other people. Honestly, we left no stone unturned. We approached President Miklas… Then we tried the clerical politicians, whom we had known for a long time... But everything was shattered on the stubborn resistance of Dollfuss who simply refused to hear of the socialists again. A group of religious socialists got together with a group of Catholic democrats and tried to induce the Church to intervene. This also failed."[80]

Suppose you offered them at that time a united front with the Communists to fight Dollfuss? They did not think

[80] Interview in the *New York Times,* February 18, 1934.

of fighting fascism. They had no intention of defending bourgeois democracy. Listen to this precious admission by Bauer in the same interview:

> "We offered to make the greatest concessions that a democratic and socialistic party ever made. We let Dollfuss know that if he would only pass a bill through Parliament we would accept a measure authorizing the Government to govern by decree without Parliament for two years [our emphasis—M.J.O.], on two conditions, that a small parliamentary committee, in which the government had a majority, should be able to criticize decrees and that a constitutional court, the only protection against breaches of the Constitution, should be restored."[81]

They certainly were prepared to go far enough. The "Left" Social-Democrats were ready to agree to the abolition of Parliament provided the abolition is passed by Parliament (a procedure actually practiced in Germany under Hitler). They were ready, they say, to agree to a government without Parliament "for two years," but it is quite obvious that it would not have been overly difficult to induce them to accept an extension of the time. They were interested in maintaining their positions in the trade unions, in the municipalities, in the police power, in the judicial system—knowing very well that those positions would be curtailed under fascism. They clung to a shadow of power at the time when, according to their own testimony, "the dissatisfaction and agitation of the workers against the conservative policy of our Party committee grew as the government

[81] *Ibid.*

provocations increased... Excitement rose to a fever pitch during the last weeks."[82]

It is for not having induced such leaders to organize a united front that Trotsky blames the Communists.

Be it remembered that he does not blame the Communists for not approaching the workers because he knows very well that they did approach the workers and did make every effort to induce them to join the united front. His chief stock in trade is the accusation that the Communist leaders did not make peace with the Social-Democratic top leaders.

Trotsky's argument in support of the *possibility* of a united front with the Social-Democratic leaders holds no water.

> "Social-Democracy [he says] can neither live nor breathe... without leaning upon the political and trade union organizations of the working class. Concurrently it is precisely along this line that the irreconcilable contradiction between Social-Democracy and fascism takes place; precisely along this line does there open up the necessity and unbridgeable stage of the policies of the united front with the Social-Democracy."[83]

This argument is just as incorrect as the English translation of the sentences is rotten. Events have proven that the bourgeoisie resorts to fascism when it finds that Social-Democracy is no longer able to keep in check the revolutionary movement of the masses. For this reason, all the mass organizations of the working class, even if dominated by

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[82] *Ibid.*

[83] Trotsky in *The Militant, Op. Cit.,* March 10, 1934.

Social-Democratic leaders, are suppressed. *But prior to the advent of Hitler the Social-Democratic leaders did not believe this.*

They relied on capitalist democracy, on the Weimar Constitution, on the German respect for law and order and—last but not least—on their record in the service of the bourgeoisie. They invented the policy of supporting the "lesser evil" just to have an excuse for collaborating with the bourgeoisie. Their Berlin Chief of Police Zoergiebel opened machine gun fire on workers participating in a May-Day parade (1929) without a permit. The number of victims was over 30. Their leaders approved of semi-martial law introduced to quell the workers' revolts. Their leaders supported wage cuts and armaments. Social-Democracy supported the governments of Bruening, Von Papen and Schleicher. It was ready to support Hitler. Did it not give its recognition to the Hitler government after the elections of March 5, 1933, declaring that Hitler had been legally appointed by Hindenburg and given a clear mandate by a majority of the people? Was it not ready to cooperate with the Hitler government if offered a chance? Was it not assuming the role of a loyal opposition even after being kicked in the face by the Nazi boots? Did not the Social-Democratic parliamentary group, on May 17, 1933, vote unanimously in the Reichstag in favor of Hitler's policy? Did not Carl Severing remain a supporter of Hitler in spite of all? Did not the same veteran Social-Democratic leader appeal to the population of the Saar to vote for the Nazis? Did not the Social-Democratic union leaders make overtures to Hitler?

When their collapse came, when they were ignominiously driven out without resistance, then the process of

revaluation of values began not only among the Social-Democratic workers but also among some of the leaders. One section (Severing & Co.) are just waiting for an opportunity to be "taken in" by the fascists. The center is vacillating. The Left Wing is for a united front with the Communists. The united front is making headway, notably in France, in Spain and also in the United States—under the initiative and leadership of the Communists. But to expect that the leaders of German Social-Democracy would have agreed to the united front with the Communists before January 1933, is to be a Trotsky.

At the bottom of all this preachment is Trotsky's Menshevik attitude to Social-Democracy. The old Menshevik asserts himself in the leader of the "Left opposition." He does not believe that Social-Democracy is "as bad as that." He is sincere when he says that the Communists should not have called the Social-Democratic leaders social-fascists. He believes they are not. He believes they are *also* fighters, at least for bourgeois democracy and for the interests of the workers as far as they can he defended under bourgeois democracy. The Social-Democrats to him are "also" socialists. Now it is perfectly true that if the Communists had abandoned their Communist position and made peace with the German Social-Democratic leaders *on the terms of these leaders,* then there would have been a united front. The trouble is it wouldn't have been a united front against fascism.

The travesty of the whole barrage is evident from the experiences of France. When the united front *was* established in France, when huge mass movements against fascism began to develop on a united front basis, the Trotsky

group joined the Socialist Party, fused with it, and is fighting within the Socialist Party against the united front.

Here you have the Trotskyites in action.

But why did not the Communist Party attempt an armed uprising in Germany in the early part of 1933 *with its own forces?* This question is often asked by Trotskyites.

The answer is given by Lenin who explains "the fundamental law of revolution."

> "It is essential for revolution that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the *"lower classes" do not want the old way,* and when the *"upper classes" cannot carry on in the old way*—only then can revolution triumph. This truth may be expressed in other words: *revolution is impossible without a nationwide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters).* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.] It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand that revolution is necessary and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a governmental crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is a rapid, tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of members of the toiling and oppressed masses—hitherto apathetic—who are capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly."[84]

[84] Lenin, *Op. Cit.,* 2022, p. 98.

In discussing the German situation of the time when Hitler came to power, O. Piatnitsky, a leader of the Communist International, quotes the above Leninist definition of a revolutionary situation and draws the inevitable conclusion. He says:

> "Had all these conditions matured in Germany in January 1933? No. The entire bourgeoisie, in the face of the menace of a proletarian revolution, in spite of the existence of discords among them, stood united against the revolutionary proletariat. The overwhelming majority of the petty bourgeoisie followed the bourgeoisie as represented by Hitler, who promised them the return of the 'grand' old Germany in which the petty bourgeoisie had lived in more or less tolerable conditions. The proletariat was split by the Social-Democratic Party which was still followed by the majority of the workers. So, the exploiters were still able to live and administer, were still able to exploit the working class as of old, although by new, fascist methods."[85]

The Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, evaluating the German situation, came to the only conclusion which a responsible leadership could draw from the existing relationship of the social forces in Germany.

> "Under these circumstances [says the Presidium resolution] the proletariat was in a position in which it could not organize and in fact failed to organize an immediate and decisive blow against the state apparatus, which, for the purpose of fighting against the proletariat, absorbed the fighting organizations of the fascist bourgeoisie: the Storm Troops, the Steel Helmets and the Reichswehr. The

[85] Piatnitsky, *Op Cit.*, 1933, p. 27.

bourgeoisie was able without serious resistance to hand over the power of government in the country to the National-Socialists, who act against the working class by means of provocations, bloody terror, and political banditry.

"In analyzing the conditions for a victorious uprising of the proletariat, Lenin said that a decisive battle can be considered as fully mature,

" '... *if* all the class forces which were hostile to us have become *sufficiently* entangled, have *sufficiently* come to blows, have *sufficiently* weakened themselves by the struggle which is beyond their strength. *If* all the vacillating, hesitating, unstable, intermediate elements, *i.e.,* the petty bourgeoisie, petty-bourgeois democracy as distinguished from the bourgeoisie, have *sufficiently* exposed themselves to the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves by their practical bankruptcy. *If* among the proletariat mass sentiment has begun and is rising strongly in favor of supporting the most decisive, supremely bold, and revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie. Then the revolution has matured, and if we have properly taken into account all of the conditions mentioned above... and have properly selected the moment, our victory is assured.'

"The characteristic feature of the circumstances at the time of the Hitler coup was that these conditions for a victorious rising had not yet managed to mature at that moment. They only existed in an embryonic state.

"As for the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, not wishing to slip into adventurism, it, of course, could not compensate for this missing factor by its own actions."

Trotsky's criticism of the Comintern is the expression of the despair of a petty-bourgeois frightened by fascism and disbelieving in the revolutionary forces of the proletariat. Trotsky's proposed policies, therefore, are policies of a frightened petty-bourgeois reformist.

> "Democratic slogans and illusions [he says] cannot be abolished by decree. It is necessary that the masses go through them and outlive them in the experience of battle... It is necessary to find the dynamic elements in the present defensive position of the working class; we must make the masses draw conclusions from their democratic logic; we must widen and deepen the channels of the struggle."[86]

In these words, is contained a whole program. It presupposes a general political situation where black reaction is destined to reign supreme for a very long period and where there can be no thought of a determined proletarian fight for power. It presupposes a stable capitalist system. It assumes that the struggle of the workers for the improvement of their immediate conditions must necessarily proceed in parliamentary channels. It therefore advances the struggle for democratic reforms as the prime task of the workers.

Like all such Social-Democratic creations it is both reactionary and utopian.

It is reactionary because it gives up the proletarian struggle for power at a time when conditions are rapidly maturing for such a struggle. It is utopian because it is not possible for the workers at any time to confine themselves

[86] Trotsky, Leon, *Our Present Tasks* in *The Militant,* December 9, 1933.

to "democratic slogans" alone if they are to defend their right to live.

The workers are hungry. They are oppressed. They must fight for higher wages, social insurance, against police brutality, against lynch laws. Whenever they undertake a real fight they inevitably reach out beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy. They clash with the police. They defy the courts. They break injunctions. They forcibly annul evictions. They "riot." When capitalism is shaken and undermined as at present the seizure of power becomes a task for the near future. Every fight is a step nearer to *the seizure of power.* Every battle gives the working class new experience, teaches it the lessons of unity and concerted advance against the bourgeoisie. Only such an advance can yield immediate improvement of the workers' lives today, can secure for them elementary rights and better economic conditions.

It is the *class struggle* against capitalism that the Communists are inscribing on the banner of the working class—the class struggle which in its sharpest form is armed uprising, the final battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is *class collaboration* on which Trotsky is building the flimsy structure of his "fourth international" program.

Listen to a Trotskyite "Bolshevik" exhorting the world in the following piece of sonorous declamation:

"We, Bolsheviks, consider that the real salvation from fascism and war lies in the revolutionary conquest of power and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. [But our 'belief' is just a shadow, bloodless, lifeless.—M.J.O.] You, Socialist workers [Read: Social Democratic bureaucrats.—M.J.O.] do not agree to this road. You hope not only

to save what has been gained but also to move forward along the road of democracy. [In collaboration with Roosevelt, Richberg and Perkins.—M.J.O.] Good! As long as we have not convinced you and attracted you to our side we are ready to follow this road with you to the end. (It is easier to follow you than bother with rank-and-file workers who may not agree to submit to 'democratic' edicts of chiefs of police—M.J.O.] But we demand that you carry on the struggle for democracy not in words but in deeds [For instance, let Norman Thomas pay a new visit to the 'First Lady' of the land.—M.J .O.]... Make your Party open up a real struggle for a strong democratic movement. [Which is to be even more misleading than the Epic or LaFollette movements which contain economic planks in their programs.—M.J.O.] For this it is necessary first of all to sweep away all the remnants of the feudal state. It is necessary to give the suffrage to all men and women who reached their 18th birthday, also to the soldiers in the army [Forget about the hunger of the boys and girls. Give them the happiness of suffrage that will be a balm to their wound. Incidentally, It costs the bosses less than social insurance.—M.J.O.] Full concentration of legislative and executive power in the hands of one chamber! Let your Party open up a serious campaign under these slogans! Let it arouse millions of workers, let it conquer power through the drive of the masses. [Hurrah for a new Ebert-Noske-Scheidemann-Ramsay McDonald government.—M.J.O.] This at any rate would be a serious attempt of struggle against fascism and war. [In the same way as Severing, Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch fought against fascism and war.—M.J.O.] We, Bolsheviks, would retain the

right to explain to the workers the insufficiency of democratic slogans; we could not take upon ourselves the political responsibility for the Social-Democratic government; but we would honestly help you in the struggle for such a government [We would help you to deceive the masses.—M.J.O.] Together with you we would repel all attacks of bourgeois reaction. [And help shoot down workers and farmers who infringe on 'democratic' laws in their fight for bread.—M.J.O.] More than that, we would bind ourselves before you not to undertake any revolutionary actions which go beyond the limits of democracy (real democracy) so long as the majority of the workers has not consciously placed itself on the side of revolutionary dictatorship. [It will he our democratic duty to break 'unlawful' strikes and to disperse 'unlawful' assembly. How dare they go beyond the limits of real bourgeois democracy!—M.J.O.]"[87]

It must be made clear at the outset that when Trotsky addresses himself to the "Socialist workers," he means the *Socialist leaders*—those who prevent the Socialist workers from engaging in the real class struggle. It must be noted, secondly, that the program which he proposes is purely reformist. He would help Social-Democracy to become the government in a capitalist State ("honestly" help it) ; he would help Social-Democracy improve the machinery of the capitalist State, he would bind himself to undertake no actions that go beyond bourgeois democracy (when he says "real democracy" he ought to know that such democracy exists only as the dictatorship of the proletariat—and that

[87] *Ibid*.

every bourgeois democracy, no matter how embellished, is a sham democracy designed as a weapon of the exploiters against the exploited); in other words he undertakes to help fasten upon the workers the rule of the capitalists operating through the instrumentality of bourgeois fake democracy. It must he noted, third, that not in vain did Trotsky omit such vital demands as higher wages, a shorter labor day, unemployment insurance, the right of the oppressed nationalities. For, the moment the workers undertake the fight for *such* demands, bourgeois legality goes smash. The limits of bourgeois democracy are overstepped. Trotsky implicitly promises the Social-Democratic leaders not to undertake such actions, not to countenance them. Moreover, he knows well that when the Social-Democrats are in power they will use the State armed forces *against* the workers if they undertake such actions. When he appeals to the Social-Democrats to join with him, he is forced to confine himself to such innocuous demands as one chamber and the lowering of the voting age. It is only here that the Social-Democrats can meet him halfway. And it is on such a program that he is willing to bind up the fate of the Trotskyites with the fate of the Social-Democratic leaders.

Once more we have before us the petty-bourgeois who is panic-stricken. He has seen the advent of fascism. He believes that fascism has come to stay. He believes that the working class is crushed. He calumniates the Communist Party of Germany, saying that it is dead when in reality it lives and fights. He does not wish to see the forces making for a social revolution. He does not wish to understand that once the masses rise—and *wherever* they rise—they must

fight for their lives, against hunger, against annihilation at the hands of finance capital—and that means fight against the capitalist State whether in its fascist or in its democratic form. He does not wish to realize that the workers—the masses of the workers, the majority of the workers—will join the banner of struggle against the capitalists, which is always a struggle undermining the capitalist State. He wants to keep the masses of workers from engaging in the struggle against capitalism under Communist leadership. He appeals to the Social-Democratic leaders for a united front on *this* program. No wonder he is against the united front as built by the Communist Parties. Such united front is directed *against* capitalism. It does not build fortresses for capitalism. It comes to destroy them.

THE TROTSKYITES IN THE U.S.A.

By the end of 1928 a group of Trotskyites was expelled from the Communist Party of the U.S.A. This group, headed by Cannon and Shachtman, had formed a faction within the Communist Party and had begun to carry on an anti-Party campaign. The Party at that time was divided into two factions: the Fosterites and the Lovestoneites—and these factions led an almost open existence. At any rate, they were known both to the Party membership and to the Communist International to exist. The Trotskyites, true to the tradition of their chief, kept the existence of their faction a secret. They had never undertaken to discuss Trotskyism within the Party committees. They had never advanced any program different from the program of the existing factions. In fact, they pretended that they had no differences of opinion that would clash with the opinions of one or the other faction. Nevertheless, they handed together in a secret group hatching a conspiracy against the Party as a whole.

They were a group of a dozen or two intellectuals without a mass base. Their nominal leader, Cannon, a former lawyer, had no background of either ideological or organizational work. He had been a member of the Central Committee in the days when Party life was abnormal, but he

never had any contact with broad masses of workers. Shachtman, who became the "theoretician" of the Trotskyites, had been a minor functionary in the Party. They had no roots in the working class. Their "activities" in the U.S. consist in slandering the Soviet Union and the Comintern, and in vilifying the Communist Party of the U.S.A. At times they inject themselves into an economic struggle of the workers—only to help the reactionary union bureaucrats—and the bosses.

We shall confine ourselves to a few characteristic samples.

On June 23, 1931, Stalin delivered a speech at a conference of leaders of Soviet industry on "New Conditions, New Tasks." In this speech Stalin enumerated six points—six new conditions for the development of industry. The first three points dealt with the organization of work, the organization of wages and the improvement of the conditions of the workers, the fourth point dealt with the task of bringing forward and developing the best elements of the working class so that "the working class of the U.S.S.R. has its own industrial and technical intelligentsia."[88] "But we do not need just *any kind* of administrative, engineering, and technical forces. We need," Stalin said, "*such* administrative, engineering, and technical forces as are capable of understanding the policy of the working class of our country, capable of assimilating that policy and ready to carry it out conscientiously. And what does this mean? It means that our

[88] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 13; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1954, p. 71.

country has entered a phase of development in which the *working class must create its own industrial and technical intelligentsia*, one that is capable of upholding the interests of the working class in production as the interests of the ruling class."[89] Stalin then points out that the industrial and technical intelligentsia is to be recruited not only from people who have passed through higher schools of learning, "but also from practical workers in our factories, from the skilled workers, from the working class cultural forces in the mills, factories, and mines… *The task is to see that these 'rank-and-file' comrades who show initiative are not pushed aside, to promote them boldly to responsible positions, to give them the opportunity to display their organizing abilities and the opportunity to supplement their knowledge, to create suitable conditions for their work, not stinting money for this purpose."*[90] [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]

The fifth point dealt with the engineers and technicians of the old school. Stalin said the Soviet Union must make greater use of these technical forces. There is a new mental attitude on the part of the old bourgeois intelligentsia, says Stalin. Many of the old intellectuals who formerly sympathized with the wreckers have now turned toward the Soviet. "Whereas during the height of the wrecking activities," says Stalin, "our attitude towards the old technical intelligentsia was mainly expressed by the policy of routing them, now, when these intellectuals are turning to the side of the Soviet regime, our attitude towards them must be expressed mainly by the policy of enlisting them and showing

[89] *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.
[90] *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

solicitude for them. It would be wrong and undialectical to continue our former policy under the new, changed conditions. It would be stupid and unwise to regard practically every expert and engineer of the old school as an undetected criminal and wrecker."[91] The sixth point dealt with introducing more efficient business accounting and with the necessity "*to introduce and reinforce business accounting, to increase accumulation within industry*."[92]

The speech had the effect of a vitalizing force throughout the Soviet Union. Here was a number of practical suggestions which actually showed the way of improving work both in industry and agriculture. Here was a new vista opened, only confirming Stalin's previous statement that there were no fortresses the Bolsheviks could not take. A thrill of joy passed through the Soviet land because in this speech millions and millions of workers and engineers saw encouragement for their work and the deep conviction that the momentous task of the Five-Year Plan could be achieved.

But what did the American Trotskyites have to say about Stalin's speech? They saw in it—*a step backward.* "There is no doubt that the whole spirit of Stalin's 'new policy,' the formal and official adoption of which is naturally a foregone conclusion, marks a new step backward from the revolutionary policies of Lenin's time," says *The Militant* for July 11, 1931. Why this is a step backward, the Trotskyites cannot explain. Wherein it differs from the policies of Lenin,

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[91] *Ibid.,* p. 74.
[92] *Ibid.,* p. 78.

except that it deals with new problems on a new stage of development, is equally difficult to detect.

But lo, these Trotskyites have discovered a hook on which to hang their calumnies. "Socialism," says *The Militant*, "cannot be built up by bourgeois specialists. Not even the foundation for a socialist economy can be laid by them. They can be of great aid, but the main task requires the wholehearted enthusiastic, collective initiative, self-activity, and participation of the proletarian masses."

It would seem from the above that Stalin, the initiator of socialist competition, is *against* collective initiative and self-activity of the proletariat. The Trotskyite gentry assume that their readers did not read Stalin's speech.

This is about the size of all their attacks on the U.S.S.R. Action that was intended to hasten socialist construction, action that marked a decisive step forward in the completion of the Five-Year Plan is pictured as surrender to the bourgeoisie, as a step backward.

And so, it goes on to this very day…

Their attitude towards the Communist International is exemplified by their attitude towards the Soviet Union. When the world proletariat celebrated the new victory achieved by the dictatorship of the proletariat through the recognition of the Soviet government by the government of the United States, the Trotskyites joined with the Social-Democrats of all stripes and with the bourgeoisie in picturing the recognition as a surrender on the part of the Communist International. The terms of the agreement between Litvinov and Roosevelt, which followed exactly the line laid down by Lenin in 1919 for similar problems at that time,

were interpreted to mean that the Soviet government agrees to the abandonment of Communist activities in the United States. By this the Trotskyites, first, concurred in the bourgeois contention that the Soviet government and the Comintern are one and the same thing, secondly, they were trying to interpret a victory of the world proletariat as a defeat.

The roles were divided. Trotsky hypocritically assured the American bourgeoisie through the *New Republic* that it had nothing to fear of Soviet recognition, while the American Trotskyites dilated upon the "betrayal" of Communism by the Comintern.

Said Trotsky:

> "The more decisively the Soviet bureaucracy has entrenched itself in its position as to national socialism, the more the questions of international revolution, and with them the Comintern, have been relegated to the background… The present Soviet Government seeks, with might and main, to insure its internal security against risk connected not only with wars but revolutions. Its international policies have been transformed from International revolutionary policies into those which are conservative."[93]

Said The Militant of October 21, 1933:

> "The Comintern is dead for the revolution… The present Comintern is an expensive apparatus for the weakening of the proletarian vanguard. That is all! It is not capable of doing more... The Comintern, as the central apparatus, has become a brake on the revolutionary movement."

[93] Trotsky, Leon in *The New Republic,* November 1, 1933.

The Trotskyites give their support to the lie of the bourgeoisie that the Comintern is an agency of the Soviet government, that the Soviet Government is directly dictating the policies of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries. This is one of their many ways of helping reaction.

Their fulminations against the Comintern must not be understood as an expression of their displeasure with the slow progress of the world revolution. The fact is that the greater the achievements of the Soviet Union and the higher the rising wave of revolutionary movements the world over the louder the Trotskyites shout that the Soviet Union is in a state of collapse and the Comintern is "dead."

The attitude of the Trotskyites towards the Communist Party of the U.S.A. is naturally dictated by the same sentiments. Just at the time when the Communist Party of the U.S.A., having rid itself of the counter-revolutionary splitters, had begun to make headway, just at the time when it actually put itself at the head of large masses of unemployed, formulating their demands and leading them in numerous struggles for bread, for unemployment insurance, just at the time when it was increasingly connecting itself with mass strikes of workers in the basic industries, forming their most militant and class-conscious vanguard, just at the time when the Party was beginning to function as a real Communist Party which was inspiring even sections of the petty bourgeoisie with confidence and the ruling class with fear, the Trotskyites found the following to say about it:

> "The Communist Party of the United States has, in general, only stagnation or regression to record… The leadership imposed upon the Party behind its back at the Seventh

Convention has showed a tragic bankruptcy in all fields. [The Party leadership was duly elected at a convention of duly elected delegates after a two-months' discussion in the units of the Party in Section and District conferences on the problems of the day, the program, and tactics of the Communist Party—M.J.O.]. The crisis in the leadership of the Communist Party has assumed a permanent character, increasing in acuteness in direct proportion to the increasing possibilities of success. [Just at that time the leadership of the Party was gaining the confidence of the rank and file in a manner never known in its history. For the first time there was being established a real understanding and mutual confidence between leadership and the bulk of the Party. This expressed itself in a new spirit of hopefulness and enthusiasm among the Party members—a spirit which infected non-Party members—M.J.O.]. The Party members are ruled like political serfs the regime is increasingly mechanized; all live and free internal life, all initiative, all inquiry, and discussion of vital problems are strangled upon appearance. [This was the time when the wave of mass strikes in which the Party participated, and the movement of the unemployed, which the Party initiated, organized, and led, necessitated the broadest discussion of the new tasks confronting the Party, the new methods of work to be applied, and the initiative from below that had to be stimulated. It is just at that time that new life was poured into the lower units of the Party, and for the first time in many years there was a real, throbbing vitality permeating many sections of the Party—M.J.O.]. The membership is taught a reactionary contempt for theoretical considerations and is instilled instead with a vulgar 'practicalness.' It is told, in effect, to do the work it is commanded to do and not to do any thinking or discussing about it. [In the last

few years, especially since the unification of the Party in 1929, the sale of literature increased tenfold. Fundamental works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, were distributed among the Party members and the workers generally by the hundreds of thousands. Rich libraries of pamphlets dealing with every phase of American and international life were published. Party problems, in the first place the necessity of theoretical study, are being discussed not only in closed Party units, but also in open membership gatherings to which every worker is admitted. Never has the Party led such an intense ideological life as it does at present—M.J.O.] It is constantly taken by surprise with new 'turns,' in which the old policy is just as little explained away as the new policy is justified. [If the Party were not adapting itself to new conditions, the Trotskyites would say that it is stagnating; when it does adapt itself to changing conditions they call it 'sudden turns.'—M.J.O.]"[94]

The unwary reader, upon seeing the Trotskyites denounce what they call bureaucratism and "stagnation," would naturally conclude that those people are Bolsheviks who like nothing better than to advance the cause of the revolution. Nothing of the kind. They let the cat out of the bag in the following "demand" to the Party:

"The Party must discard its exaggerated analysis of the tempo of development of the working class and must adjust its course to the real relationship of forces in the class struggle and the pace of its development. The Party must finally

[94] *Thesis for Pre-Conference Discussion* in *The Militant*, July 25, 1931.

> rid itself of the ruinous baggage of remnants of the 'third period' and particularly of the theory of 'social fascism.' "[95]

Here we have it. The Party, don't you see, overestimates the tempo of the revolutionary development in the U.S.A. The Trotskyites do not believe there is such a development in existence. In 1931, two years after the beginning of the crisis, they deny the possibility of a revolutionary upsurge. They still persist that there is no such thing as the third period. There is no radicalization, in their opinion. Above all things they are worth at the fact that the Communists call the Waldmans, Solomons, Lees, Cahans, Pankens, and other reactionaries in the leadership of the Socialist Party social-fascists. Mr. Cannon does not think that they are social-fascists. He thinks they are good Socialists. The Party is doing them wrong.

Before elections the Trotskyites sanctimoniously "endorse" the Communist Party. They write in their *Militant:* "Vote Communist." In the article itself they explain that the vote is to show "how negatively have the wrong Stalinist policies and program repelled this Leftward shift." In other words, they appeal to the voters to show that the Communists are wrong. How can they show it? Naturally, by refraining from voting the Communist ticket.

They call this "strategy." The strategy of renegades.

The practical activities of the Trotskyites are limited mainly to interference of tiny grouplets with the undertakings of the workers under Communist leadership, be it

[95] *Ibid.*

strikes, the movements of the unemployed, demonstrations or hunger marches. Here is an example:

The Communist Party is organizing a national hunger march for the end of November 1932. The hunger march is a real united front movement. The delegates are elected at meetings of labor unions, unemployed councils, mass meetings, mass workers' conferences. The overwhelming majority of the delegates are non-Party workers. Many of them participate for the first time in mass action. The Trotskyites, who ostensibly clamor for the united front, are here to pour some of their venom in connection with the march. What do they have to say? Simply this—that the leadership of the march does not advocate unemployment insurance. "Immediate relief is to replace unemployment insurance as the main central slogan," so they interpret the movement. Their task is to show that the hunger march is not to be supported. They call it "a subordinated auxiliary Communist work"—thereby implying that as such it does not deserve actual support.[96]

Such are the tactics of the Trotskyites. That much is the value of their declamation about the united front.

It cannot be said that they were a factor in the strike movement of the last years. Only in isolated cases, by sufferance of the leaders of the A. F. of L., did individual Trotskyites inject themselves into a strike situation—there to carry out the policies of the reformists. In the Paterson textile strike of September-October 1933, which was betrayed by the Lovestoneites, Keller and Rubenstein, the

[96] *The Militant,* Nov. 5, 1932.

participation of the Trotskyites expressed itself mainly in collaboration with the union bureaucrats. The Communists were called splitters and traitors whereas Keller and Rubenstein were painted as the real fighters.

In one instance they did succeed in assuming part of the leadership of a strike and that was in the truck drivers' strike in Minneapolis in the summer of 1934. Three Trotskyites, Brown, Dunne and Skoglund, were the leaders of Local 574 of the General Drivers' Union under whose auspices the strike was conducted. These leaders gave the strike a typical reformist turn.

The employers were trying to spread the red scare. The leaders of Local 574, instead of explaining to the workers the meaning of such a scare, denied that they were Communists. In a leaflet issued during the strike we read:

> "Don't allow the red scare to keep you from coming to this meeting. If we were 'Reds' and 'Communists,' why haven't we pulled the petroleum industry out on strike where a large part of our organization is?"

This was subsequently lauded by *The Militant* as "facing the issue squarely."

> "In 'Frisco, the cry of Communist tore a deep hole in the strike front. In Minneapolis, it was a complete dud. The leaders faced the issue squarely. They did not rush into print denying their accusations. Nor did they shout their opinions to the wide world."[97]

There was the issue of martial law in connection with that strike. Governor Olson of Minnesota declared martial

[97] *The Militant,* August 25, 1934.

law in Minneapolis. The employers, organized in the Citizens' Alliance, fought the martial law because they did not want Olson to have too much power and because they believed that the strike could be well taken care of by local police. The Citizens' Alliance applied in the courts for an injunction against martial law. The governor stood firm against the lifting of martial law. *The Trotskyites upheld the governor.* Brown, president of Local 574, declared: "We are naturally pleased to see the governor's hand upheld in his declaration of martial law and I believe that the decision contributes to the development of conditions likely to end this strike."

The Trotskyites proceeded from the premise that Olson, being a Farmer-Laborite, is really not representing the capitalists, that he is some kind of a *neutral* person who can be swayed one way or the other.

The continuation of martial law meant the defeat of the strike. Instead of fighting martial law by continuing mass picketing, by broadening the strike, by calling out other industries for the support of the truck drivers' strike, the Trotskyites put their hope in Olson.

There was a great sentiment for a general strike in Minneapolis. The Communist Party advanced the idea of a united labor conference which should decide the question of a general strike "with the object to fight for the rights of the workers to join unions of their own choice, for the right to picket, for freedom of speech and assemblage, the release of our brothers in the stockade and for the lifting of all military regulations, which threaten to break the strike." The Communists pointed to the experience of San Francisco

where a general strike tied up nearly all economic activities for five days. They said: What was done in San Francisco can be done in Minneapolis. The Trotskyites were faced with such an overwhelming sentiment of the workers in favor of the general strike that they could not reject it point blank. They did it—by referring the question to the leaders of the A. F. of L. in Minnesota.

Says the *Organizer,* official strike organ, August 18, 1934:

> "In view of the concerted attack on Local 574 by all the forces of capital, is labor ready to bring its own reserves into action? [*i.e.,* call a general strike—MJ.O.] That is the question. The answer rests, first, with the leaders of organized labor in Minneapolis, and second, with the rank-and-file of the individual unions with whom the power of decision rests."[98]

"The leaders of organized labor"—those were the reformists of the Central Labor Union of Minneapolis who were opposed tooth and nail to the general strike.

The general strike was killed. The truck drivers' demands were not satisfied although the strikers had the power to *force* concessions from the employers.

* * *

What is the role of the Trotskyites? They cover themselves with revolutionary phrases. They make believe they are terribly concerned over the progress of the world revolution. In reality they hamper the revolutionary movement

[98] *The Organizer,* August 18, 1934.

by their propaganda and their tactics. This small hand of disgruntled petty-bourgeois individuals has one aim—to discredit revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice.

The following passage from one of the Trotskyite "these" fits the authors perfectly. "The task of the Left Opposition," they say, "is not the organization of a new party out of the semi-reformist, semi-syndicalist, demoralized, passive, burned-out elements on the fringe of the Communist movement." The Trotskyites unconsciously gave an excellent picture of themselves. These people have nothing but hatred—hatred for the living revolutionary movement of the masses, hatred for an organized Bolshevik Party that heads the revolutionary movement, hatred for democratic centralism which guarantees a maximum of force with a maximum initiative from below in a Bolshevik Party, hatred for the prototype of Bolshevism—the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., hatred for the leaders of that Party, and hatred for the Communist International.

In the name of "Communism" they speak the same language as Hamilton Fish, Matthew Woll, William Randolph Hearst, and Abraham Cahan.

Says *The Militant* for February 10, 1934:

> "The fact is that if in the struggle for power the fascists have borrowed greatly from Bolshevism, then in the last period the Soviet bureaucracy has familiarized itself with many traits of victorious fascism, first of all by getting rid of the control of the Party and establishing the cult of the Leader."[99]

[99] *The Militant,* February 10, 1934.

With an innocent mien the Trotskyites ask: Why is there still such a "harsh" dictatorship in the Soviet Union? We were told, they say, that Socialism means the abolition of classes. That being so, there must be no internal enemies left. Why then a strong government?

> "The harsh character of the dictatorship is caused by the need of suppressing the resistance of the overthrown ruling classes and to undermine their economic roots. But according to the official theory the basic task of the workers' state is in the main achieved. The Second Five-Year Plan will merely have to complete it."[100]

Still,

> "The Second Five-Year Plan… does not foresee at all a mitigation of government coercion, nor a decrease in the budget of the G.P.U. The ruling bureaucracy does not prepare in the least to give up its commanding positions, on the contrary, it supplies them with ever new and more material guarantees."[101]

When these lines were written did the Trotskyites of America maintain a direct connection with the "Leningrad Center" out of which came the assassination of Kirov, or were they only appraised of its existence? We wonder.

One thing seems clear: when these gentry complain against the "ruling bureaucracy," against the G.P.U., against what they call "coercion," when they are dissatisfied with discipline that exists, as they say, "even within the formal framework of the Party," when they exaggerate about the

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[100] *Ibid.*

[101] *Ibid.*

"harshness" of the dictatorship of the proletariat, saying that it never was so even "during the years of the civil war,"—they speak for themselves. They would like the dictatorship of the proletariat to be lax so as to allow the Trotskyite disrupters to do their evil work undisturbed.

When they receive a blow, when they see that Soviet justice can be merciless against the class enemy, they put forward James P. Cannon to propose action.

> "We contend [says Cannon] that the present methods of the Stalin leadership... is aiming a mortal blow at the Russian revolution itself. The Stalin group would lead the Soviet Union, as it led the German working class, blindfolded to catastrophe. The international working class is the one power in the world that can prevent this catastrophe. It must do so in its own interest, as well as in the interest of the Russian Revolution.
>
> "The international working class must come to the aid of the Soviet Union now against the mortal dangers which menace it from within."[102]

Leaving aside all the protestations of friendship for the "revolution" in the abstract, for the "working class" generally—what does this outpouring mean? It is an appeal to action. It prepares the minds of the workers for the support of intervention in the Soviet Union. It makes the reader believe that anything is better than the rule of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union.

From this to the decision of some inflamed follower to kill the leaders of the revolution—is only one step.

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[102] *The Militant,* December 22, 1934.

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Political groups and parties should be judged not by their words, but by their deeds, we were told by Lenin many times. The crowning deed of the American Trotskyites reveals them in full light. *They fused with the Musteites in the Workers Party of the U.S.*

Who is Muste? We shall quote the Trotskyites themselves. In *The Militant* for July 4, 1931, they speak about "the inherent reformist position of the Muste type of 'progressive'." After the formation by Muste of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, *The Militant* had the following to say editorially. First it enumerated a number of names, one of them a former Lovestoneite "who renounced even that mild variety of Communism in order to crawl into the C.P.L.A.;" then another one who was expelled from the Communist Party and had since been engaged in defending the Hillman regime of blackjacking the workers; then Muste himself, "the leader of pseudo-progressives in the labor movement," and then it continued:

> "These are elements without a political home, the classic exponents of centrism who seek to repeat today the farcical experiment made a decade ago with the formation of a 'Two and a Half International.' That the sponsors of the new Party have their eyes turned towards the recent attempts made by the 'Left' wing leaders of the British Independent Labor Party to build a new 'International' cannot be doubted for an instant. *It is equally sure that the second edition of the Two and a Half International,, including its American 'section,' will follow the first back into the camp of Social-Democracy from which it emanated* [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]. No

> other fate is reserved for the petty-bourgeois politicians who attempt to eke out a brief independent existence on the basis of the workers' dissatisfaction with the Social-Democracy."[103]

Muste's Conference for Progressive Labor Action was later transformed into the American Workers Party. Added to it was a number of disgruntled individuals who called themselves Communists but whose Communism consisted mainly in fighting Marxism-Leninism ideologically. Here was Max Eastman, the author of anti-Marxist books; here was Sidney Hook whose book on Marx is one gross distortion of Marxism; here was V. F. Calverton who for many years published an anti-Marxian magazine, etc.

The American Workers Party was formed by adding these individuals to the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. The moving spirit in the new "Party" remained the mild progressive reformist, Muste, whose role in the labor unions consisted in cooperating with the worst labor bureaucrats and covering up their policies with progressive phrases.

By the end of 1934 the Trotskyite group joined the American Workers Party. It fused with the Muste group, forming the Workers Party of the U.S. Cannon hails this fusion. In *The Militant* for November 17, 1934, he expresses confidence that the formation of this "party" will bring about Communist unity. "The chaos and disintegration will give place to a clear lineup of parties: Social-Democratic, Stalinist (Centrist) and the party of revolutionary Marxism."

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[103] *The Militant,* August 8, 1931.

The party of revolutionary Marxism is the one that consists of Cannon plus Muste, Eastman, Hook, Calverton, and a number of other intellectuals who have never been Marxists.

By their action will political groups be recognized.

The Trotskyites felt too insignificant. Like the lean cows of Pharaoh, they "ate up" the Musteites "and it could not be known that they had eaten them." They boast of having consolidated "revolutionary Marxism." This is a clown's grimace. The new "party" is nothing but a typical two-and-a-half international formation. That it will sooner or later sink into the lap of the Second International is attested by the example of the Trotskyite group of France, which has joined the French Socialist Party.

* * *

An example of Trotskyite veracity.

One of the first acts of the "Workers Party of U.S." was to greet the anniversary of Lenin's death with a leaflet, *Lenin's Testament.* This piece of Trotskyite calumny, which decries "Stalinism" as "rude, disloyal and bureaucratic," reproduces what is purported to be an authentic document written by Lenin in 1923 and "suppressed" by the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. The document is supposed to state that Trotsky is more fitted to be general secretary of the Communist Party than Stalin, who is "too rude."

Of this "Lenin's will" Trotsky, while still a member of the Communist Party, had the following to say in an article entitled, *Trotsky Trounces Eastman,* published in the *Daily Worker* (New York) August 8, 1925.

When it was in Trotsky's interest to divorce himself from such a "disciple" as Max Eastman (whose book, *Since Lenin Died,* was a stench in the nostrils of every revolutionist) Trotsky wrote a scathing article refuting the legend about Lenin's will and concluding with the words: "His (Eastman's) booklet can only render service to the worst enemies of Communism and revolution. It therefore objectively constitutes a weapon of counter-revolution."[104] When it was in Trotsky's interest to make a show of far-flung influence, Eastman is made one of the pillars of the new "party of revolutionary Marxism" and the "mischievous invention" is peddled as Lenin's will. Now Trotsky again publishes a pamphlet to show that the "testament" was true.

These counter-revolutionists have so much entangled themselves in a network of lies and falsehoods that they cannot make a single move without perfidy.

Lenin said: "Trotsky always lives on gossip." "Trotsky deceives the workers in the most unscrupulous and shameless manner."

Discussing Lenin's "Testament" at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in October, 1927, Stalin brought out the fact that the document was not a "testament," that it was a letter addressed by Lenin to the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, that the letter had been read at the Thirteenth Congress, and that the Congress unanimously decided not to publish it, among other reasons because Lenin himself did

[104] *Ibid.*

not wish or ask for its publication. Such letters addressed by Lenin to individual Party functionaries and Party conferences were not uncommon. The letters were read by those to whom they were addressed—and there was no "concealment." This question of Lenin's "Testament" was dealt with repeatedly at the Plenary Sessions of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, said Stalin at the above session—and cries were heard from the floor: "Dozens of times." Surely the Party did not overlook the letter in question.

As to the contents of the letter, Stalin pointed out that the Party *had no reason* to be dissatisfied with it or try to hide it, because it actually annihilated three leaders of the opposition, whereas about Stalin it only mentioned his "rudeness" *but found no mistakes in his political line.* Stalin quotes the following passage from Lenin's letter:

> "I shall not characterize any other members of the Central Committee with regard to their political qualities. I should like merely to remind you that the October episode [opposition to the seizure of power—M.J.O.] of Zinoviev and Kamenev was no mere chance occurrence, but that it can just as little be regarded as a personal fault as Trotsky's 'non-Bolshevism.' "[105]

Stalin calls attention of the session to the fact that,

> " ... not a single word, not a single allusion in the 'Testament' touches on Stalin's mistakes. Only his rudeness is mentioned. Lack of civility, however, is not a shortcoming

[105] *Inprecorr,* No. 64, 1927, p. 1429.

> in Stalin's political attitude or political position and cannot be so."[106]

As to Lenin's suggestion "that the comrades should discuss the question of dismissing Comrade Stalin from his post and appointing for it another person who, in all other respects, is only distinguished from Stalin by one quality, *i.e.*, that of being more tolerant, loyal, civil, and considerate towards the comrades, less moody, etc.," Stalin said:

> "Yes. Comrades, I am rude towards those who are rudely and disloyally destroying and disintegrating the Party. I have never made a secret of it and shall not do so now. Even at the first meeting of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee (1924) I handed in my resignation of the function of General Secretary, asking the Plenary Session to relieve me of this duty. The Party Congress itself dealt with this question. Every single delegation dealt with this question, and all the delegations, *including Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev* [Our emphasis—MJ.O.] unanimously resolved that Stalin should remain in his post. What could I do? Relinquish my post? It is not in my character to do so."[107]

* * *

The "fourth international" now preached by the Trotskyites is only a summing up of the main features of the vanguard of counter-revolution.

The Trotskyites "should begin open negotiations with the Left Socialist organizations," said Cannon in October 1933, in fulfillment of the program of his master. The

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[106] *Ibid.*

[107] *Ibid.*

Trotskyites were successful in their negotiations. In France the Trotskyites joined the Socialist Party in order to strengthen it at the present epoch when masses of workers are moving to the Left. It is the aim of the Trotskyites to make the Socialist Party of France more attractive to the workers. "If the Communists try to disorganize the Socialist Party," writes their organ, the *Voix Communiste,* No. 38, 1934, "then only our ideas and our methods may inject a revolutionary kernel into the Socialist Party, enabling it to resist complete crash." The Trotskyites desire to be that pink tint on the yellow countenance of the leadership of the Second International which will keep the workers from joining the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

The merging of the Trotsky group with the party of the Second International is, in true Trotsky fashion, hailed as a progressive factor.

> "We Marxists [says the *Voix Communiste,* No. 235, 1934,] must acknowledge that at the given moment the merging of the two parties would be progressive not in comparison with Lenin's slogans of 1914, not in comparison with the Tours Congress, but in comparison with the present situation. As such, the merging of both parties would signify the possibility of beginning anew. This is the essence of the entire question."[108]
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> "The working class movement has been driven into an historical impasse... and this beginning of the impasse the 'capitulation' is turned into a progressive factor!"[109]

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[108] *The Communist International,* No. 21, November 5, 1934.

[109] *Ibid.*

At the time when masses of Socialist workers are becoming dissatisfied with the policies of the Second International and are joining the united front of militant action with the Communists, the Trotskyites are attempting to return to the pre-1914 era, to "begin anew." As if nothing happened in these twenty years. As if you can turn the wheels of history backward.

Let us see now who's who in the "fourth international." The German Trotskyite group, which was never strong, liquidated itself in January 1933. Its paper, *Die Permanente Revolution,* declared that the estimations of Trotsky as regard the U.S.S.R., Germany, Spain, all proved wrong. There is hardly a Trotskyite group now among the German emigres, not to speak of Germany proper. There is a tiny group in England, entirely insignificant. There is the French group which is united in legal wedlock with the Socialist Party. There is the American group which is united with Muste. They would like to take with them into the fourth international the whole Socialist Party of France. They will try to take with them into the fourth international the Workers Party of the U.S. Can anybody doubt that it will be an international of real "Bolshevik-Leninists?" Perhaps the fourth international will be joined by another "Leningrad Center" which, under the slogan of Trotsky-Zinoviev, is just now hatching new conspiracies against the Soviet leaders.

And this hodgepodge of reformist and Trotskyite degenerates, this pack of disgruntled intellectuals aching to be mass leaders, this medley of sentiments, wishes opinions programs "plans" all eaten through with hypocrisy, all covering up reformism with high-sounding "revolutionary"

and "Marxist" phrases, all intended to convey something different from what the principal figures actually believe this concoction which is only besmirching the name Communist, is advanced as that international body which is destined to win away the workers of the world from the Communist International.

A historical analogy is not out of place here. Between 1912 and 1914 Trotsky had a dream of uniting all the factions of the Russian Mensheviks and some of the "better" Bolsheviks (those whom he hoped to split away from Lenin) into one big party of which he, Trotsky, would be the acknowledged leader. He had then his own tiny faction and published a paper in Vienna. He joined the bloc of several factions of the Mensheviks known as the August Bloc. He then began to preach to the Bolsheviks to desert Lenin (whom he considered the leader *"of the reactionary wing"* of the Social-Democratic Party) and to join the child of his brain. His argumentation at that time very much resembles that explaining the fourth international today. He believed that he represented Marxism "as a whole." The Bolsheviks, in his opinion, were one-sided; the Mensheviks were also one-sided. He, Trotsky, alone was the consummate Marxist.

He formulated his concept in the following words:

> "The position which is based on a dialectical combination of the reformist and the revolutionary tasks of the movement seems to them both [to the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks] to be 'conciliationism' or 'the golden middle road.' Having dissected Marxism into parts, they sincerely fail to

> recognize it when it appears standing between them in its shape as a whole."[110]

Here, too, we have "the reformist and the revolutionary tasks" combined as in the fourth international. Here, too, we have an appeal to the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks not to be one-sided but to recognize Trotsky as the true leader of Marxism. Lenin found no words strong enough to castigate this stand.

> "People like Trotsky [he wrote], with his inflated phrases about the R.S.D.L.P. and his toadying to the liquidators [extreme Right Mensheviks], who have nothing in common with the R.S.D.L.P., today represent 'the prevalent disease.' They are trying to build up a career for themselves by cheap sermons about 'agreement'—agreement with all and sundry… Actually, they preach surrender to the liquidators who are building a Stolypin labor party. [Stolypin was the Tsar's Prime Minister]"[111]

Then as now a wave of revolutionary movement was rising. The darkest times that followed the Revolution of 1905 were drawing to an end. It was felt that the workers had recuperated and were ready to start a new round of revolution. The Bolsheviks advanced the fundamental demands of a republic, confiscation of the landed estates in favor of the peasants, and the eight-hour day, as the most extreme demands of the impending bourgeois-democratic revolution. Trotsky then as now thought that the workers were not ready to fight for the extreme demands of the

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[110] *Borba,* Russian magazine published by Trotsky, No. 1, 1914.

[111] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works,* Vol. 17; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, p. 216.

impending revolution (which today is the proletarian Socialist revolution). He advanced the slogan of "freedom of association, assemblage and strikes"—and no more. He conceived this as a *step* towards the struggle for a republic. "In order that the struggle for a republic," he wrote in his Vienna paper, *Pravda,* November 29, 1911, "may not be a naked slogan of a few select ones, it is necessary that you, class-conscious workers, should teach the masses how to understand in their own practice the necessity of the freedom of coalition and to struggle for this vital class demand"—a forerunner of his present advice to make the masses draw conclusions "from their democratic logic." Lenin, in commenting upon this slogan, pointed out that "the revolutionary phrase serves here to cover up and justify the falsity of Liquidationism, to fill the minds of the workers with rubbish."

Winding up his characterization of Trotsky, Lenin said:

> "It is impossible to argue with Trotsky on the merits of the issue because Trotsky holds no views whatever. We can and should argue with confirmed liquidators and otzovists [a group of Bolsheviks demanding the recall from the Duma of the Bolshevik deputies]; but it is no use arguing with a man whose game is to hide the errors of both these trends; in his case the thing to do is to expose him as a diplomat of the smallest caliber."[112]

Today one exposes Trotsky as a counter-revolutionary renegade who inspires the murder of revolutionary leaders.

[112] *Ibid.,* p. 362.

TROTSKY THE HISTORIAN

"Trotsky distorts Bolshevism, because he has never been able to form any definite views on the role of the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution.

"*But far worse is the distortion of the history of this revolution*. [Our emphasis—M.J.O.]"[113]

To make falsification of Bolshevism more effective, Trotsky has undertaken to falsify its history. Again, we must confine ourselves to a few examples.

How did the idea of an armed insurrection take shape in the October days of 1917? This is how Trotsky tells the story:

"As soon as the order for the removal of the troops [from Petrograd] was communicated by Headquarters to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet... it became clear that this question in its further development would have decisive political significance. The idea of an insurrection began to take form from that moment. It was no longer necessary to invent a Soviet body. The real aim of the future committee was unequivocally brought out when in the same session Trotsky concluded his report on the

[113] Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 17; Progress Publisher: Moscow, 1977, p. 380.

> withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-Parliament [a consultative body convoked by Kerensky—M.J.O.] with the exclamation: 'Long live the direct and open struggle for a revolutionary power throughout the country!' That was a translation into the language of Soviet legality of the slogan: 'Long live the armed insurrection.' "[114]

Trotsky made an exclamation—and that started the armed uprising. He says so himself.

He then continues in a modest way to tell about his role in the revolution. "Trotsky had formulated some brief general resolution... Trotsky continued to speak. The multitude continued to hold their hands in the air. Trotsky chiseled out each word: Let this vote of yours be your oath... The multitude held their hands high. They agreed. They took the oath." (Trotsky quotes here the Menshevik, Sukhanov). "Trotsky was called in to consider this question... Trotsky was then playing the decisive role. The advice he gave us was a product of his revolutionary intuition." (Trotsky quotes Antonov). The draft of the practical plan "was edited by Trotsky." "The President, Trotsky, was also about to approach the automobile... "

Another man seems to have been in the revolution—Lenin. But in comparison—with Trotsky the magnificent—he appears in Trotsky's writings somewhat puny. Stalin quotes two of his references to Lenin:

> "Do you want to know how our Party settled the question of dispersing the Constituent Assembly? Listen to Trotsky:

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[114] Trotsky, Leon, *History of the Russian Revolution,* Vol. 3; University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 1964, p. 92.

' "Of course, the Constituent Assembly will have to be dispersed,' said Lenin, 'but what about the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries?"

'But our apprehensions were greatly allayed by old Natanson. He came in to 'take counsel' with us, and after the first few words he said:

' "We shall probably have to disperse the Constituent Assembly by force."

' "Bravo!" exclaimed Lenin. "What is true is true! But will your people agree to it?"

' "Some of our people are wavering, but I think that in the end they will agree," answered Natanson.'

"That is how history is written.

"Do you want to know how the Party settled the question about the Supreme Military Council? Listen to Trotsky:

' "Unless we have serious and experienced military experts we shall never extricate ourselves from this chaos," I said to Vladimir Ilyich after every visit to the Staff.

' "That is evidently true, but they might betray us... "

' "Let us attach a commissar to each of them."

' "Two would be better," exclaimed Lenin, "and strong handed ones. There surely must be strong-handed Communists in our ranks." '

' "That is how the structure of the Supreme Military Council arose."

"That is how Trotsky writes history.

"Why did Trotsky need these "Arabian Nights" stories derogatory to Lenin?"[115]

The answer is given in the whole career of Trotsky.

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[115] Stalin, J.V., *Works,* Vol. 6; Foreign Languages Publishing House: Moscow, 1953, pp. 371-372.

In order to prove that he is the author of the theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution passing into the socialist revolution he gives the following account of the history of Bolshevism:

> "From the year 1905 the Bolshevik Party had waged a struggle against the autocracy under the slogan 'Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry.' This slogan, as well as its theoretical background, derives from Lenin. In opposition to the Mensheviks, whose theoretician, Plekhanov, stubbornly opposed the 'mistaken idea of the possibility of accomplishing a bourgeois revolution without the bourgeoisie,' Lenin considered that the Russian bourgeoisie was already incapable of leading its own revolution. Only the proletariat and peasantry in close union could carry through a democratic revolution against the monarchy and the landlords. The victory of this union, according to Lenin, should inaugurate a democratic dictatorship, which was not only not identical with the dictatorship of the proletariat, but was in sharp contrast to it, for its problem was not the creation of a socialist society, nor even the creation of forms of transition to such a society, but merely a ruthless cleansing of the Augean stables of medievalism.
>
> "The popular and even officially recognized idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution could not, consequently, mean anything more than that the workers' party would help the peasantry with a political weapon from its arsenal, suggest to them the best means and methods for liquidating the feudal society, and show them how to apply these means and methods. In any case, *to speak of the leading role of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution did not at all signify that the proletariat would use the*

> *peasant uprising in order with its support to place upon the order of the day its own historic task—that is, the direct transition to a socialist society.* The hegemony of the proletariat in the democratic revolution was sharply distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat, and polemically contrasted against it. *The Bolshevik Party had been educated in these ideas ever since the spring of 1905*." [Our emphasis—M.J.O.][116]

Trotsky would have us believe that before 1917 the Bolsheviks never taught the proletariat that its hegemony in a bourgeois-democratic revolution must be used to place on the order of the day the direct transition to a socialist revolution. Compare with this what we quoted from Lenin about the immediate transition from a bourgeois-democratic to a Socialist revolution. Compare especially with the following:

> "From the democratic revolution we will immediately begin, just in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the conscious and organized proletariat, to pass over to the socialist revolution... We will, with all our power, help the entire peasantry to carry through the democratic revolution, in order that we, the party of the proletariat, may be the easier enabled to pass, as quickly as possible, to a new, higher task—the socialist revolution."

Lenin was indefatigable in expressing his scorn for Trotsky's methods. He spoke of the "adventurist policy" of Trotsky's faction. He speaks about Trotsky's "subtle perfidy." He says that Trotsky is "committing plagiarism." Lenin knew his Trotsky.

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[116] Trotsky, Leon, *History of the Russian Revolution,* Vol. 1; University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 1964a, pp. 314-315.

Trotsky falsifies the history of Leninism, the history of the greatest achievement of the world proletariat—to serve the bourgeoisie and to aggrandize Trotsky.

* * *

"This scoundrel Trotsky," as Manuilsky called him at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Comintern, and his associates of every stripe, have made it their special task to slander and malign the greatest living leader of the revolution, Stalin. But in vain. He is the embodiment of what is most abhorrent to the bourgeoisie—the proletarian revolution under Communist leadership, completion of the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., Bolshevization of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries, relentless struggle for the correct Leninist line, resumption of the offensive against capitalism by the proletarian forces on a worldwide front, inclusion in this front of the oppressed peoples in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

If anything is widely known about Stalin it is his iron will, his persistence in carrying out a program, his colossal driving power which has kindled with creative enthusiasm scores of millions of people. Listen how the falsifier of history describes Stalin:

> "When faced by great problems Stalin always retreats—not through lack of character as in the case of Kamenev, but through narrowness of horizon and lack of creative imagination. His suspicious caution almost organically compels him at moments of great decision and deep difference of

> opinion to retire into the shadow, to wait, and if possible to insure himself against both outcomes."[117]

The fighter who, together with Lenin, steered the October revolution, is one who "always retreats". The great strategist of the civil war, whose plan of military action, quickly and decisively executed, brought about the decisive victory on a front of several hundred miles in South Russia over the White forces of General Denikin, is one who "at moments of great decision" retires "into the shadow." The author of the Five-Year Plan, a momentous undertaking on an unheard of scale, setting one hundred and sixty million people to work on the task of remaking one-sixth of the earth's surface according to a certain social design, is one suffering from "lack of creative imagination." The revolutionist who carried through the last great class war in the Revolution—the liquidation of the kulaks as a class—is pictured as a man who loves "to wait," to insure himself "against both outcomes." The fearless leader who always fights ideological battles against opportunism, who detects hidden opportunism no matter how cleverly disguised, who in the very early stages of the Trotsky opposition predicted with astounding clarity that it is to become "the rallying point of non-proletarian elements which are trying to disintegrate the dictatorship of the proletariat," is characterized as one who cannot make decisions. The builder of the life of minority nationalities in the U.S.S.R., the man who worked out the practical methods of the Leninist solution of the national problem and has directed the building of Socialism in a manner to create a rich,

[117] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.,* 1964, p. 164.

colorful, many-sided cultural life among one hundred nationalities differing in economic development, language, history, customs, tradition, but united in common work for a beautiful future, is one who is afflicted with "narrowness of horizon." The world leader whose every advice to every Party of the Comintern on every problem is correct, clear, balanced, and points the way to new, more decisive class battles, is declared to be a man of "suspicious caution."

This is how Trotsky writes history.

What is the aim of all these vilifications? Nikolaiev slew Kirov. Do the Trotskyites knowingly create a psychological atmosphere that would fire some madman to attempt the murder of Stalin?

THE DANGER OF TROTSKYISM

"Nobody dares speak aloud in Russia."

"The Russian workers have had dwellings, had clothes, had food. In consequence of malnutrition and bad hygienic conditions, epidemics are spreading among them."

"Instead of proclaimed beautiful perspectives and particularly beneficial privileges, the workers of heavy industry have obtained an official eight-hour workday plus two hours overtime—shock-brigader and super-shock-brigader work under conditions where there is a constant lack of materials and instruments, where the machines and apparatus are continually out of order, the work rooms are not heated, and ventilation is absent."

"The system of 'dekulakization' and largescale collectivization has turned Russia from a country of booming agriculture into a country of widespread ruin. Instead of the advantages promised to follow from collective creativeness and largescale application of machines, the peasants have remained exhausted. Hard forced labor in the collective farms has led to a situation where the peasant cannot be the creator of the most necessary products."

Who are the authors of these statements? Do they emanate from the Trotskyite camp? They sound very much like Trotskyite declarations. Remember what Trotsky wrote

about "bureaucratism" in Russia, about democracy being stifled, about absence of elementary rights under the "Stalinist regime." Does it not resemble the statement that "nobody dares speak aloud in Russia"?

And now about the economic situation. Remember what Trotsky wrote about the conditions of the workers.

> "Economic tasks are being set without any account being taken of the actual means. An increasingly inhuman load is being dumped on the shoulders of the workers... Malnutrition plus forced exertions. The combination of these two conditions is enough to do away with the equipment and to exhaust the producers themselves… One cannot believe one's eyes… Poor nourishment and nervous fatigue engender an apathy to the surrounding environment. As a result, not only the old factories but also the new ones that have been built according to the last word in technology fall quickly into a moribund state."[118]

And this is what Trotsky wrote about the situation of the peasants:

> "The headlong chase after breaking records in collectivization, without taking any account of the economic and cultural potentialities of the rural economy, has led in actuality to ruinous consequences. It has destroyed the stimuli of the small commodity producer long before it was able to supplant them by other and much higher economic stimuli. The administrative pressure, which exhausts itself quickly in industry, turns out to be absolutely powerless in the sphere of rural economy... One hundred percent

[118] Trotsky, *Op. Cit.*, 1933, p. 21.

collectivization has resulted in one hundred percent overgrowth of weeds on the fields."

Is there any material difference between the last two quotations and the quotations at the beginning of this chapter? It is difficult to detect any. The spirit is the same. The substance is the same. Yet the first four quotations are taken from a publication called The Russian Fascist appearing in the United States of America in the Russian language (the magazine is published in Putnam, Connecticut, by a man named A. Vonsyatsky).

The Russian Fascists and the former leader of the October Revolution, Leon Trotsky, speak the same language.

What is the difference between them? One would be inclined to think that the fascists speak in the name of the dictatorship of capital whereas Trotsky speaks in the name of the Russian workers and peasants. But the fascists, too, profess to speak in the name of the masses. They appear in their publications as the great champions of the downtrodden and exploited—the oppressors and exploiters being, in their presentation, the Bolsheviks with Stalin at their head. The fascists, too, appeal in the name of democracy. They even say they are not against the Soviets. They only want "freedom of unhampered voting and the right to elect non-partisans into the Soviets"—a Trotskyite demand.

Are the fascists friends of the Russian masses? We do not think any enlightened person would believe that. Is Trotsky a friend of the Russian masses? Some people think so, but the fact that his statements so closely resemble those of the fascists should make them doubtful as to Trotsky's real objective.

The difference between the fascists and the Trotskyites is this—that the fascist deception is easily detected by every thinking person whereas the Trotskyite deception is not so easily detected because it is covered with "revolutionary," "Marxian," even "Leninist" phrases.

Therein lies the danger of Trotskyism.

One great worldwide victory was achieved by the world proletariat in October 1917: the Bolshevik Revolution which established the dictatorship of the proletariat. For over 17 years the dictatorship of the proletariat has been ruling in a gigantic country. Successes which could not have been dreamt of under the old regime have been achieved in the comparatively brief span of time after the end of the civil war. Progress of industry which made the U.S.S.R., as far as heavy metallurgy is concerned, the first country in Europe and the second in the world, has actually transfigured the vast land, opening before it still greater and more staggering possibilities. Progress of agriculture, which transformed a country of twenty million small backward individual peasant holdings into a country of the most modern largescale collectivized agriculture, put the U.S.S.R. on a firm foundation as regards the production of foodstuffs and raw materials and made it to a large extent independent of the caprices of weather conditions. Heights of culture have been achieved which in many respects place the country far ahead of anything known in the capitalist world.

All this was accomplished not without struggles. Struggles against the former owners of wealth. Struggle against the White forces of the landlords and capitalists. Struggles against the imperialist armies of intervention. Struggles

against the enemies that penetrated into every crevice of Soviet life in order to damage and wreck. Struggle against the village exploiters, the kulaks. Struggle against the intellectual saboteurs who offered every possible resistance to the workers' rule. Struggle against the inefficiency, the lack of education, the lack of training on the part of the workers. Struggle against the backwardness of the peasantry. Struggle against old habits, centuries-old customs, prejudices, superstitions. Struggle against alien elements within the Communist Party who threatened to destroy its unity and impede therefore the progress of the revolution.

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, with Lenin and Stalin and then Stalin at its head, all these difficulties have been overcome, most of the battles won, the foundations of socialism laid, the edifice of socialism nearly completed. The toilers of the Soviet Union are entering a new era, an era of abundance, of higher culture, of a more beautiful and colorful life.

For what is this economic progress if not a foundation for more and better goods to satisfy the masses? What is this cultural progress if not a means of raising Soviet humanity to a higher, more human level? What is the entire system if not the open road to still greater, still more marvelous progress?

Compare this with the downfall of industry and agriculture in the capitalist world, with factories shut down, cottonfields and wheatfields ploughed under, wheat burned, milk spilled into the rivers, tens of millions of workers thrown out into hunger and misery, thousands upon thousands dying, children destitute, young boys and girls

roaming the roads, schools and colleges curtailed, teachers and technicians, high specialists and artists swelling the ranks of the unemployed and unable to produce culture. Compare the Soviet achievements with this huge waste of human energy, human talent, human possibilities—and the importance of the Soviet Union will stand out in a sharp light.

The Soviet Union is a beacon light for all the oppressed and exploited of the world. The Soviet Union has done away with the exploitation of man by man. It has done away with the oppression of minority nationalities, of colonies and semi-colonies. It has made the formerly oppressed sections of Russia inhabited by non-Russians into veritable gardens of national freedom where national culture blossoms—culture that is national in form and proletarian in content. It has developed the formerly backward regions to make them reach the level of the most highly developed regions.

The Soviet Union stands out as the example for the masses of the world. It shows how capitalist slavery and national oppression can be abolished. The Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. stands as the example of how the Parties of the proletariat in every country must be organized and how they must conduct their struggles in order to achieve the victory of the working class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Communist International is the organization which unites all the Communist Parties and makes them into one great Bolshevik world party, leader of the world revolution.

There is not a single revolutionary group among the workers and oppressed nationalities in the world that is not

stimulated by the example of the Soviet Union There is not a single expression of revolt among the masses that is not heightened and made more conscious and more decisive in consequence of the existence of the Communist Parties and the Communist International. Remove the Soviet Union from the political scene, destroy the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., crush the Communist International—and you bring about the greatest defeat of the exploited, and the greatest triumph for the exploiters.

This is why world capitalism hates the Soviet Union. This is why the world imperialist powers are always conspiring against the Soviet Union. This is why they are assiduously preparing for war against the Soviet Union. They know their enemy. They know the danger that threatens their domination and their very existence. They are bent on crushing, wrecking, destroying, wiping out the hated dictatorship of the proletariat.

He who helps them is an enemy of the working class and of all the oppressed. Trotsky and the Trotskyites belong to this camp.

There are soft-hearted and "fair-minded" intellectuals who think that Trotsky did not get a square deal. Those champions of "fair play" forget that it is Trotsky who did not give the Soviet Union a square deal. It is he that never was fair to the Russian workers and to their Communist Party. It is he who never came with a fair and square attitude hut always kept skeletons in his closet. It is Trotsky who, while a member of the Central Committee and of its Political Bureau, plotted against the Party and therefore against the Soviet Union, against the very rule of the

proletariat. When the Communist Party finally was forced to expel him, it was because he turned traitor to the revolution.

The stamp of renegade is burning on his forehead.

Those intellectuals who seem to be fascinated by the false glitter of his literary output should think a moment of what his activities actually amount to. He is supposed to be the champion of inner-Party democracy—he says so himself—but when it came to the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. he wanted to change them into a purely bureaucratic apparatus which rules from above, and for this purpose he proposed to give them "a severe shakeup," to "rub them strongly with sand." He was supposed to be the champion of rapid industrialization—for which he advanced unsound and essentially destructive measures—but when, under the leadership of the Communist Party and Stalin, industrialization did make phenomenal progress, he demands a halt, he laments the "breakneck" speed. He was supposed to be the champion of collectivization of the peasant holdings—if need be by force, which would have ruined the relationship between the workers and the poor and middle peasants and wrecked the revolution—but when collectivization finally did make rapid progress, he decries it as ruining agriculture and ruining the peasants. He was supposed to be "ultra-revolutionary," a Left oppositionist—by which he means a better Communist than all the other Communists—but his activities have one aim: to undermine, to shatter, to weaken and consequently to destroy the Communist Party of the Soviet Union without which there can be no socialist construction and no Soviet Union either. He is supposed to be

against "bureaucratism" in the Party and in the State apparatus—a danger which the Party and the Soviet State themselves fight against and mitigate, and which he, Trotsky, exaggerates a million times—but what he is organizing is tiny cliques of disgruntled bureaucrats, renegades with small capabilities and tremendous ambitions, thwarted individuals who could not achieve leadership in real Communist Parties, creatures poisoned by all the vices of capitalist politicians and having nothing to do with the masses. He is supposed to be dissatisfied with the policies of the Communist International and the Communist Parties in the various countries because—to him, he says—they are not radical enough, but whenever his followers engage in any kind of activities among the workers they follow faithfully and obediently in the footsteps of the William Greens, Matthew Wolls, John Lewises, and other misleaders of labor. He is supposed to be the great advocate of the united front, accusing the Communist International of having ruined the German revolution by not proposing a united front—which is an accusation based on his own fabrications—but when a united front is developing, like that in France and in the United States, his grouplets join with the reformists against the united front, thus trying to put a monkey wrench into the machinery of uniting the workers for common struggle. He is supposed to be displeased with the Communist International because, he says, it is not advancing the revolution rapidly enough, but he himself is creating that abortive contraption, the fourth international, which is meant to fight not for the socialist revolution but for bourgeois democracy, *i.e.,* for the perpetuation of exploitation and oppression. He

covers himself with the name of Lenin—whom he fought most of his life and with whom he never fully agreed—he boasts of carrying forward the traditions of Lenin, but he does it in order to abuse the great genius who is continuing the work of Lenin at the present epoch and who is leading the Soviet masses from victory to victory, Joseph Stalin.

Let no one think that Trotskyism is mere disagreement with one or the other policy of the Soviet government, that it is mere propaganda. To be sure, Trotskyism uses the weapon of propaganda, the "arms of criticism," but only to pass to "criticism by arms," to the attempts at overthrowing the Soviet system by armed force. The murdering of Kirov is only an instance of what methods of struggle Trotskyism would like to develop, to assume gigantic proportions.

It is precisely for the purpose of bringing about such "developments" that the "Fourth International" is being attempted. "Is it possible to remove the bureaucracy 'peacefully'?" asks Trotsky in *The Soviet Union and the Fourth International*—and the answer is negative. Of course, Trotsky does not say that he wishes to destroy the Soviet Union. The Trotskyites speak about the "bureaucracy" only, *i.e.*, about the Communist Party and the apparatus of the Soviet State. But it is quite clear from the outset that when these are removed, the Soviet system is overthrown. Trotsky advocates the formation in the U.S.S.R. of a party to accomplish this task. "The fundamental historic task," he says, "is to create the revolutionary party in the U.S.S.R. from among the healthy elements of the old party and from among the

youth."[119] This party, which Trotsky calls "revolutionary" and composed of "healthy elements" in the same way as Hitler calls his party "revolutionary" and "full of Germanic vigor," is to wrest power not by the instrumentality of the existing Communist Party or the Soviet State institutions. "After the experiences of the last few years, it would be childish to suppose that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be removed by means of a Party or Soviet congress,"[120] says Trotsky. "No normal 'constitutional' ways remain to remove the ruling clique,"[121] *i.e.,* to remove the organization of power of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky advances his thesis frankly: "The bureaucracy [State organization of the proletariat and the collective peasantry—M.J.O.] can be compelled to yield power into the hands of the proletarian vanguard [the counter-revolutionary plotters and murderers of the Nikolaiev type—M.J.O.] only by *force*."[122]

Does Trotsky envisage civil war? He prefers to call it by another name. He prefers to fire his followers by picturing a situation where they are so strong that "the Stalinist [Party and State] apparatus will remain suspended in mid-air,"—but he is at the same time very explicit. "Should it (the apparatus) still attempt to resist, it will then be necessary to apply against it not the measure of civil war, but rather measures of police character," *i.e.,* clubs, guns, gas bombs. But do not think that Trotsky shrinks before an armed

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[119] Trotsky, Leon, *The Soviet Union and the Fourth International*; Pioneer Publishers: New York, 1934, p. 24.

[120] *Ibid*.

[121] *Ibid*., p. 25.

[122] *Ibid*.—Trotsky's emphasis

uprising against the Soviet government. He says that an armed uprising is justified. "In any case what would be involved is not an armed insurrection against the dictatorship of the proletariat but the removal of a malignant growth upon it."[123] Trotsky would have us believe that an uprising of counter-revolutionists—which by the nature of things must be assisted by the former landlords, manufacturers, kulaks and the officials of the tsar's government—would not be an uprising against the dictatorship of the proletariat but the removal of what he chooses to call "a malignant growth" (he called *Lenin* "the leader of the reactionary wing" of the Social-Democratic Party). But not much acumen is needed to understand that an armed uprising against the Communist Party and the Soviet State would return the former exploiters to power. The Russian fascists in America also say that they want to preserve the Soviet system. They deserve as much credence as Trotsky.

A lurid light is thrown on Trotskyism by its open admission that it hopes for war to facilitate the overthrow of the Soviets. Which is closer, asks Trotsky in a delirium of wish fulfillment: the collapse of the Soviet system by itself, without the action of the new party, or the emergence of such a party? Neither, would a reasonable human being say, because there is no danger of a collapse of the Soviet system and no prospect of the counter-revolution ever having a chance to build a mass party in the U.S.S.R. But here Trotsky reveals another angle of his outlook: "A major historical test—*which may be a war*—will determine the relation of

[123] *Ibid*.

forces."[124] So, this is it. The Trotskyites hope for an imperialist war to help the counter-revolution overthrow the Soviet system. They try to organize the "Fourth International" to "await a clear call" for an attack on the Soviet Union. War may be the occasion.

Nowhere have the Trotskyites revealed themselves to such an extent.

Trotskyism does the same work as the open counter-revolutionists. In substance there is no difference between Trotskyism and Hearstism. But Trotskyism represents that peculiar danger that it is cloaked as "Left" Communism and that it emits phrases about "world revolution."

The capitalists need various classes of agents to delude the workers, to destroy their unity, to divert them from the path of revolutionary struggle. The capitalists have their Roosevelts with New Deal phraseology and "social-security" demagogy. Where the workers are no more willing to accept the Roosevelt demagogy, the capitalists have another agent, the union bureaucracy which pretends to speak in the name of labor while delivering the workers to their exploiters. Where the workers have advanced still further, there are the Socialist leaders, who, in the name of "democracy" (bourgeois-democracy, exploiters' democracy), keep the workers from joining the Communist Party and engaging in revolutionary struggles against capitalism for Soviet Power. Whenever the workers are so radicalized that even the socialist deception can no more keep them chained to the chariot of capitalism, the latter has another—Trotsky and the

[124] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Trotskyites. These come in the name of "Left" Communism. They come as the "true Leninists." But the effect of their activities is the same—aid to capitalism by undermining all that is really revolutionary, by disheartening the workers, by spreading among them a panic in relation to the Soviet Union, by making them join the Musteites and similar elements—under the banner of the counter-revolutionary "fourth international."

Trotskyism does not sink roots into the masses of the proletariat, but its danger for the Communist Party, and particularly for those petty-bourgeois intellectuals who are moving towards the Communist Party in the capitalist countries, must not be underestimated. It is the petty bourgeoisie that is, through Trotskyism, trying to disorganize and demoralize the revolutionary forces that are mobilizing against capitalism. The petty-bourgeois elements, says Lenin, "surround the proletariat on all sides... they saturate it... they demoralize it, they continually make it relapse into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disruption, individualism, transition from enthusiasm to dismay." This is true about the capitalist countries no less than it was true about the Soviet Republic in 1920. The petty bourgeoisie is surrounding the proletariat on every side, and Trotskyism is being continually regenerated as the expression of this particular brand of counter-revolution. It is only natural that the intellectuals, hailing from the petty bourgeoisie, should be particularly exposed to the danger of Trotskyism. The lot of the intellectuals in the present crisis is far from enviable. Hundreds of thousands have been thrown out of work. Scientific, educational, and cultural activities have been crippled.

The intellectual youth has almost no hope of getting work that would enable it to develop its talents and to lead a comfortable existence. The intellectuals are becoming radicalized. But, being petty-bourgeois, many of them have an aversion for the Communist Party, for its theory and practice. Here Trotskyism comes in handy. It gives the intellectuals of this kind a "way out." It makes it possible for them to pose as Communists without participating in the class struggle. It gives them the opportunity to pose as "critics" of the Communist Party "from the Left" and thus satisfy their desire to appear "radical." It gives them a platform from which to fight the Communist Party and thus satisfy their petty-bourgeois inclinations—without at the same time appearing reactionary. It supplies them with material for the mouthing of phrases about Lenin and Stalin, the Communist International and the world revolution while sticking deeply in the petty-bourgeois mud. It makes them believe they are "Communists" while it caters to all their petty-bourgeois hatred for proletarian discipline and proletarian straightforward revolutionary action.

And this is precisely the reason why Trotskyism must be branded as the enemy of the working class, why Trotskyism should be shunned by anybody who has sympathy for the revolutionary movement of the exploited and oppressed the world over.

It must be the supreme task of the toilers in every country to build the Communist Party, as section of the Communist International, and to follow its line of struggle against capitalism and for the Soviet System.

The Party of Communists USA

The Party of Communists USA (PCUSA) traces its roots to the dropped clubs from the revisionist Communist Party USA (CPUSA). The PCUSA is the political party of the working class and is dedicated to the interests of all working people, and all oppressed peoples. Its aim is a socialist society, on the road to building communism.

The PCUSA is dedicated to upholding of Marxism-Leninism, scientific socialism, proletarian internationalism, and socialism-communism. Our focus is on class struggle, workers' rights, and creating the conditions for a socialist revolution. The PCUSA follows the model created by Comrade Lenin of the *Party of a New Type,* adhering to the principles of Democratic Centralism.

League of Young Communists USA

The League of Young Communists USA (LYCUSA) is the communist youth organization of the PCUSA. The League is politically united with the PCUSA, and yet is organizationally autonomous with our own constitution, membership, and publications. We call for a stronger, more active, and more united youth and student movement.

The purpose of our communist youth organization is to prepare young cadre to become full members of the PCUSA. The LYCUSA's main task is to give our members the most learning and experience possible. However, the LYCUSA is specifically tasked with creating a generation of Marxist-Leninists, dedicated to internationalism, scientific socialism, and the class struggle to build socialism into communism.

People's School for Marxist-Leninist Studies

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 8:00 – 9:40 PM EST

The sole goal of the People's School for Marxist-Leninist Studies (PSMLS) is to educate the working class to prepare to build socialism in the United States.

The PSMLS is the current manifestation in the long line of Party-sponsored schools in the US. Today, the People's School continues the task of ideologically educating workers, including those who are unemployed, oppressed peoples, women, and youth in the science of Marxism-Leninism and its application in various struggles.

US Friends of the Soviet People

US Friends of the Soviet People is dedicated to supporting struggles to restore socialism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. USFSP is the US affiliate of the International Council for Friendship and Solidarity with the Soviet People.

USFSP acts as a unifying force to help consolidate and coordinate the anti-imperialist forces of the world with the ongoing movement to restore the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as socialist states. The people of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe themselves will choose their paths toward socialism.