
November 1942

Fourth International

Anniversary of the Russian Revolution:

Three Conceptions of the Revolution . by *Leon Trotsky*

25 Years of the Revolution . . . by *John G. Wright*

The Fifth Year of the Revolution . by *James P. Cannon*

The New Taxes: An Attack on Labor

Editorial Comment on the Results of Roosevelt's Ultimatum

Our Tasks Under the Nazi Boot . . . by *Marc Loris*

A Defamer of Trotsky . . . by *Joseph Hansen*

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

The articles on India in **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** have evoked keen interest:

Our agent in Boston writes: "Will you please send us five more copies of the current F.I. We have some Indian contacts here to whom we are sending both last and this month's issues. Incidentally, we have started pushing the F.I.'s again and just a slight amount of talk resulted in a shortage of copies this month instead of the old surplus. Hope it keeps up so we can increase our bundle."

Our agent in Harlem reports that a number of copies of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** were sold to a progressive Negro youth group which expressed particular interest in the articles and editorials on India and other colonial countries.

An editorial on India in the October 10 *Pittsburgh Courier*, a leading Negro newspaper, calls attention to "the brilliant analysis by Felix Morrow in **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** for September" which "revealed the full infamy of the conspiracy on the part of the press and propaganda agencies against the movement for Indian freedom.

"Mr. Morrow makes clear that the Cripps' account of what caused the rejection of his proposals was a complete fabrication prepared after the conferences with Indian leaders had been concluded and disseminated to build up American opinion favorable to British repressions."

An Indian came to our office in order to buy the September issue of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**, for its articles on India.

Salesmen of *The Militant* at the seamen's unions, who have taken along with them the October issue of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**, report good sales because of the maritime article by Lang. A seaman who came to our office expressed the hope that this article would fall into the hands of many seamen, "especially NMUers."

* * *

From a subscriber in Connecticut: "As a farmer by occupation I would like if you could carry more articles on the subject of agriculture and agricultural problems. I'm sure it would be of much interest to other readers. The series of articles on

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Editor FELIX MORROW

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Manager's Column Inside Front Cover

agriculture by C. Charles were very much appreciated. Also articles on agriculture in *The Militant* would be appreciated."

The educational director of a trade union local in Michigan subscribed to the F.I. with the request: "Recently the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** carried a series of articles on the state of American agricultural economy. Would it be possible for me to obtain the copies containing those articles?"

C.H., agent in Portland, Oregon, sends in a one-year combination subscription to **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and **THE MILITANT**, remarking: "He is an ex-SLP member, who dropped out because of their obvious isolation and sterility. When I showed him our press he was immediately interested."

R.Q., an agent in Pennsylvania, writes that instead of delivering the magazine and paper in person to two of her contacts, she has gotten from each a one-year combination sub.

* * *

A subscriber from abroad writes: "Enclosed is money order for \$4.50 for renewal of year's sub to your paper and also **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**,

plus something for mailing charges. I would not like to miss a number and you can be sure that others here feel the same about it. I feel that I owe a great deal to Felix Morrow for his penetrating analysis and also to Albert Parker, to mention a couple of your contributors. Your spotlight on India shows facts which we do not otherwise get. Good luck and more power to you."

From Scotland: "Could you send us a regular supply of **FOURTH INTERNATIONALS**. There is also a crying need for any and all of Leon Trotsky's works which are quite unobtainable here. . . . Young people are approaching us daily and this material would prove invaluable as a training field."

From Argentina comes a note asking us to send the F.I. and paper regularly.

From Ireland: "The papers you send are invaluable to me and others. Please keep on sending them. . . . I saw a copy of Cannon's evidence printed in England, and thought it a very useful introduction to socialism. The sort of thing that I would like to have several copies of to give away."

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933 OF **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** published monthly at New York, N.Y., for October 1, 1942.

State of New York)
County of New York) ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Reba Aubrey, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Fourth International Publishing Assn., 116 University Place, New York City; Editor, Felix Morrow, 116 University Place, New York City; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, Reba Aubrey, 116 University Place, New York City.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Fourth International Publishing Assn., 116 University Place, New York City; Felix Morrow, 116 University Place, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is —(This information is required from daily publications only.)

REBA AUBREY,

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of October, (Seal) 1942, CARNIG AIAMIAN.
(My commission expires March 30, 1944.)

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME III

NOVEMBER 1942

NO. 11

Editorial Comment:

The New Taxation, a Triumph for Big Business—It Places the Burden of the War on the Masses—Not One Voice in Congress Defended the Workers—The Fight for a Labor Party

Roosevelt's ultimatum to Congress quickly produced results during October. Less than 24 hours after the October 1st deadline set in the presidential ultimatum, Roosevelt had on his desk the legislation he had demanded, empowering him to fix prices and freeze wages, which he did in his executive order of October 4th. The order brought farm prices under a ceiling agreed to in a compromise between the Administration and the farm bloc. But with the workers there was no compromise: wages were effectively frozen to the level of September 15, 1942. This was quickly followed by the next step in the assault on the workers' living standards: the tax bill adopted almost unanimously by Congress on October 20th and signed by Roosevelt the next day.

Wage-freezing and taxation of the workers are two halves of one scheme. Wage-freezing holds the workers fast in the vise; then the government proceeds to tear huge chunks out of the workers' living standards through new taxes. This is the strategy of the capitalist class and its government. This is how they shift the burden of the war on to the backs of the working class.

A Triumph for Big Business

Big Business openly exulted at the passage of the new tax bill. When it became clear that the Senate Finance Committee was following a policy of complete subservience to the large corporations, and that this policy would prevail in Congress, the joy of the capitalist class was manifested in that most sensitive gauge of the mood of American capitalism: the stock market. On Thursday, October 8th, for the first time in many months, the New York Stock Exchange had a million-share day, and another one the next day; and on the next—Saturday, October 10th—the Dow-Jones industrials index reached 114.93—the highest point since Pearl Harbor. The advance of the index for the week was 3.59 points.

Barron's, the outstanding financial weekly, explained the advance in its October 12 issue:

"For the strength of stock prices and the sharp revival of trading several explanations can be cited. The most convincing and the most tangible undoubtedly was the overwhelming rejection of the LaFollette amendment to the Senate Finance Committee tax bill calling for an increase in the straight corporate tax to 50 per cent from 40 per cent. An even stronger symptom of Senatorial sentiment was the subsequent adoption of an amendment eliminating the scheduled taxation of future state and municipal bond issues. . . . The whole-hearted Senate espousal of the conservative point of view augurs strongly for the ultimate enactment by

Congress of a sound taxation program which will safeguard the integrity and earning power of industry."

As Congress completed the bill, the *Magazine of Wall Street* (October 17) gleefully confessed that it was better than Big Business had hoped for:

"As it now stands it is a more sensible and realistic bill than most observers thought would be possible to get in an election year. For this we can chiefly thank the Senate Finance Committee."

And when Roosevelt signed the bill, making it law, *Barron's* (October 20) happily noted:

"Tax treatment of corporations is more liberal than was deemed possible when the Senate Finance Committee began its hearings. . . . Business men have every reason for relief over the character of the new tax bill, and would seem to be conjuring up trouble unnecessarily over possible 1943 confiscatory levies so long as Senator George [Democratic chairman of the Finance Committee] is in the saddle."

The ultra-reactionary *United States News* of October 30 writes:

"The 1942 Revenue Act . . . represents a complete defeat for New Deal tax ideas in general. It's not so hard on income of corporations. Its underlying policies are rather conservative, not at all radical. . . ."

"As for corporation profits after taxes: The 1942 net is to be only about 15 per cent below 1941, over all. It's to be about 12 per cent above 1940. That's not counting the post-war refund.

"With refund, net profits of all corporations will be about 5 per cent under 1941; will be nearly 25 per cent above 1940. That is a very favorable picture."

These figures are particularly significant since 1941 was an exceptional boom year for net profits.

Thus their own words testify that the capitalists consider the passage of the tax bill a victory in their campaign to place the burden of the war on the backs of the workers. How great a victory it was for the capitalist class becomes clear when we analyze the new taxation.

The normal-plus-surtax rate of taxes on big corporations was about 31 per cent for 1941—a peace year (normal estimated as the average for 1936-39). The new rate is 40 per cent—only slightly more than 9 per cent higher. To put a better face on what was being imposed on the workers, the Treasury began by asking a 55 per cent "normal" rate for Big Business; but this was whittled down to 45 per cent by the House, and 5 per cent lower by the Senate. The whittling down was done, of course, by the Administration's own party leaders in the House and Senate.

Taxes on excess profits (usual estimated as those above

the 1936-39 average) were formally set at 90 per cent but, with a 10 per cent refund after the war, actually at 80 per cent. For many of the big corporations the refund is the least of the gifts included in the new bill. It provides that no more than 80 per cent of any company's net income shall be taken by taxes. "For companies with low pre-war earnings and extra-fat current profits this means a real saving over the top 1942 rates," reports *Time* magazine. That is, for companies with low pre-war earnings in terms of fixed capital—above all Big and Little Steel—this means more net profits than in 1941. Moreover, companies which had one "very bad" year during 1936-39, bringing down the average after which excess profits are computed, are given special forms of relief. Whole categories of enterprises are exempted from paying *any* excess profit taxes: manganese, antimony, tin and other metal mining. Other exemptions, based on increased output over 1936-39, are granted to lumber mills, coal and iron mines. Provisions for computing tax rates over longer periods (including previous poor years) are so generous that, *Time* magazine reports, "some corporations will be entitled to rebates" at the end of this year!

Two other items which particularly pleased Big Business were the rejection by Congress of a proposal to tax state and municipal securities, and the adoption of a provision that war contracts, when re-negotiated once, shall not be reopened again.

Thus Congress dealt gently indeed with Big Business. This part of the tax bill is aptly enough characterized by *Time* as "helping convince big and little businessmen that the U. S. has not scuttled the profit motive."

Finally, remember that by previous legislation corporations are entitled to charge off against taxes in a 60-month period the cost of new plants built for the "emergency." For example, a company which built a million dollar plant may this year subtract \$200,000 from the amount it owes for taxes. As the Truman Committee complained, the army and navy are extremely liberal in certifying which plants come in this category. The result is that certain corporations will pay little taxes on huge war profits this year.

The Tax Burden of the Workers

Contrast this with the blows dealt by Congress to the living standards of the workers and dirt farmers.

The level of income at which income tax payments begin has been lowered from \$750 for single persons to \$600, and from \$1,500 for married persons to \$1,200. This means that about 10,500,000 wage workers hitherto exempt must now pay income taxes, bringing the total of wage and salary workers now subject to income taxes to a total of about 26,500,000. Exemptions for dependents have also been lowered from \$400 to \$350. The more than ten million new income tax payers are, of course, among those whose below-subsistence wages were hitherto considered much too low to justify taxing them.

At the same time, the amount of income taxes has been increased. As an example, a married man with a dependent wife, if he earns between \$1,500 and \$2,000, will pay at least seven times as much as he paid in 1941. He will be paying, in income and "Victory" taxes, nearly five weeks' wages!

In addition to the millions of the lowest-paid workers who have been added to the income tax rolls, *all* workers who earn more than \$12 a week must pay, apart from income taxes, an additional 5 per cent "Victory" tax on every dollar over the \$12. This tax will be deducted from the pay

envelope by the employer and sent to the government. Refunds between 25 per cent and 40 per cent are provided for, payable either after the war or in a year if the taxpayer establishes that he has made certain expenditures for government bonds, payment of insurance premiums and debts. Meanwhile, however, the "Victory" tax is a wage cut. Even with the refund, it extracts between three to more than four per cent of the wages over \$12 of every worker. It is estimated that nearly 50 million workers will pay this tax, which is levied on all regardless of the number of dependents.

Other chunks of the workers' living standards are taken by new increases in excise (consumption) taxes on cigarettes and two-for-a-nickel cigars, alcoholic beverages, etc.

The weight of these new federal taxes is only realized if one adds them to the federal, state and local tax burden already being carried by the workers previously. The capitalist propaganda for the latest tax bill pretended that the masses were hitherto paying little or nothing in taxes. The demonstrable truth is, however, that the workers were already carrying the main weight of taxation.

Sixty per cent of all taxation was being paid by those earning under \$3,000 per year, a government sponsored study showed in 1938-39.* Already then, the workers were paying nearly 20 per cent of their incomes in open and hidden taxes. This is graphically illustrated by the following table:**

Income Class Per Year	Per Cent of All Income Units	Per Cent of Income Paid Out in Taxes		
		Fed.	State & Local	Total
Under \$ 500	17.0	7.9	14.0	21.9
500-\$ 1,000	29.5	6.6	11.4	18.0
1,000- 1,500	22.1	6.4	10.9	17.3
1,500- 2,000	13.1	6.6	11.2	17.8
2,000- 3,000	11.3	6.4	11.1	17.5
3,000- 5,000	4.6	7.0	10.6	17.6
5,000- 10,000	1.5	8.4	9.5	17.9
10,000- 15,000	.4	14.9	10.6	25.5
15,000- 20,000	.2	19.8	11.9	31.7
Over 20,000	.3	27.2	10.6	37.8

These figures, let us emphasize, are for 1938-39. Since then, the tax burden on the lower income categories increased tremendously with the growth of state and local sales taxes, increases in city and county taxes on workers' possessions, the extension and rise of excise taxes. As for federal income taxes, the level of income at which taxes were imposed sank lower and lower even before the latest tax bill; between 1939 and 1941 the exemption for married couples was lowered from \$2,500 to \$1,500 and for single persons from \$1,000 to \$750. Thus, even before the latest tax bill, the percentage of income which workers and dirt farmers were paying in taxes was already much larger than the very large figures for 1938-1939. It was on top of all this preceding taxation that the latest burdens have been placed on the masses.

Nor is this the end of the process. On the contrary, having tasted blood, the capitalists are demanding more. Having established the precedent of "broadening" the tax base by adding more than ten million lower-paid workers to the income-tax paying population and subjecting practically all the workers to the "Victory" tax, Big Business is already proposing that even heavier taxes should be imposed on the toilers to the advantage of the capitalist class. Secretary of

**Who Pays the Taxes*, by Gerhard Colm and Helen Tarasov. Temporary National Economic Committee Monograph No. 3. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1941.

**Op. cit.

the Treasury Morgenthau, before final passage of the latest tax bill (which will yield between seven and nine billions), had already announced that he would present to Congress a new six billion dollar tax bill. Immediately the *Magazine of Wall Street* (October 17) declared it is now obvious that "whether through a sales tax or otherwise, the major part of any further increase in the total tax revenue will have to be had from the masses of lower-income people." Like the tax bill passed by Congress on October 20th, the next bill—and those which will come after it—will be designed to place the main burden on the masses on the pretext of preventing inflation by curtailing mass purchasing power. There are numerous signs that the capitalist class and its government are preparing for further increases in taxing the workers under this pretext. Even before the last bill was passed, Senator George declared, on October 10: "This bill does not go very far in checking inflation." On October 21, the *New York Times* quoted Representative Allen T. Treadway, Republican member of the House Ways and Means Committee, counterpart of the Senate Finance Committee, as saying about the next tax bill: "The only new source of income left was the sales tax. He hoped that the new tax bill would be so passed that it would bear heavily on increased war income (of workers) rather than on normal income." And *Business Week* (October 24) declared: "Almost everyone agrees that the (October 20th) tax bill is inadequate as an anti-inflation measure." It is all too clear that, flushed with success, the capitalists are preparing a new tax offensive against the masses.

Federal taxation, including the bill adopted October 20th, will reach nearly 25 billion dollars for 1942. This is, however, less than a third of the estimated war expenditures for this year. The remaining fifty billions and more must be borrowed and become governmental debt, except for that part of it which will be raised by still further taxation. How much more taxation will there be of the masses? As much as the ruling class can get away with imposing on the workers and dirt farmers.

In return for this taxation will the masses at least be spared the evils of inflation? This is the argument of the Administration, that the trinity of price-fixing, wage-freezing and curtailment of purchasing power through taxation will halt the admittedly existent inflationary tendency. We refuted this argument in some detail last month. Here we need only note the central fact that the basic cause of the inflationary process today is the diversion of capital and labor to war production and the consequent ever smaller supply of consumer goods. Hence the pressure of purchasing power on prices continues, only slightly diminished by the new taxes. The most that can be claimed is that the Administration's program slows up the process of inflation in this way. Simultaneously, however, the Administration is accelerating the inflationary process by its ever greater war expenditures. It is not a case of either rising prices or heavier taxes. The workers are being subjected to both.

The Permanent Trend in Taxation

Let no worker imagine that this attack upon his living standards will be limited to the duration of the war. All indications point to a post-war public debt of at least \$200 billions, even if the United States is victorious in a relatively short time. As today, so then, the capitalist class will seek to place the tax burden on the workers. Indeed, many of the war taxes will never be repealed during the lifetime of American capitalism. To the already indicated public debt must be

added the costs of the projected attempt to "police" the post-war world.

The continuing increase in the tax burden on the masses is an organic aspect of the degeneration of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism. Following the first American imperialist war—against Spain—an outstanding bourgeois economist noted:

"It appears that our Federal government is, on its financial side, mainly a huge machine for collecting taxes in order to defray the direct and indirect cost of war." (C. J. Bullock, "The Growth of Federal Expenditure," *Political Science Quarterly*, 1903.)

At the time Bullock wrote these words, the Federal debt was less than a billion dollars; today it is already \$91 billions. During the rise of American capitalism, the total taxes were small and easily met by the expanding economy. Now, on the contrary, as a result of depression and war, taxes are huge while the economy, as shown by the ten-year economic depression, is stagnant and can be invigorated temporarily only by the spur of war needs.

This basic tendency is expressed by the following figures. In 1913, 2 per cent of the national income was absorbed by federal taxes. Ten years later 4.4 per cent was taken by the Federal government in taxes. In 1929 it was 4.8 per cent; 4.5 per cent in 1932, and rose to 9.3 per cent in 1938. At present Federal taxation will take about 20 per cent of the national income. In these figures are expressed the symptoms of an outlived social system.

This basic tendency dictates the strategy in this field of the two main classes of modern society. For the capitalist class, to free themselves as much as possible from the burden of foisting it on the masses. For the working class, to defend its living standards by an irreconcilable struggle against the capitalists and their subservient government.

The struggle against taxation, in previous generations a relatively unimportant problem for the working class in the United States, is now on the order of the day. Here we have one more expression of the "Europeanization" of America, for in the period between the two World Wars this was one of the most burning issues for the European working class.

The Fight for a Labor Party

Nobody, literally nobody, defended the interests of the workers and the dirt farmers in Congress as the tax bill was being put over. It was Roosevelt's own party that molded the final bill. There was, indeed, little difference between it and the original proposals of the Treasury. Morgenthau had proposed somewhat higher taxes on corporations, but the essential principles of his proposals were embodied in Poll-Tax Senator George's completed work: preservation of corporate profits as an "incentive for efficient production," and curtailment of the purchasing power of the masses. The essential identity of aims between Roosevelt and George is indicated by the fact that Roosevelt made no effort to exert pressure upon Congress on those details where he did differ—and Roosevelt has shown that he does not hesitate to press Congress on questions that he deems important! As for such other "friends of labor" as Senator LaFollette, he said some hard words about the bill when it was first presented, offered an ineffectual amendment—then did not even have the courage to vote against the bill. The simple truth is that, neither in the House nor the Senate, did labor have any friends.

That there was not a single labor representative in Congress

to speak up in defense of the workers' standard of living—this is the measure of the bankruptcy of the official leadership of the trade union movement. Why isn't there a group of Senators and Representatives elected on a labor ticket? Nobody can pretend that the trade unions could not elect them. The eleven million members of the trade union movement and their families, plus the agricultural workers and others who are not unionized but who would undoubtedly vote with the workers' organizations, dirt farmers and the white collar and professional elements who are pro-labor, together constitute the overwhelming majority of the nation. Given any serious attempt to mobilize them under the banner of a Labor Party based on the trade unions, the very least they would succeed in achieving immediately would be the election of a group of Senators and Congressmen from labor's ranks and pledged to defend labor's interests. Instead we have the shameful spectacle of the great workers' organizations limited to a perfunctory appearance at hearings of the Senate and House committees and then, with a free hand, the political agents of the capitalist class trot their anti-labor bills through Congress without a single voice raised in protest.

Throughout the history of the American labor movement, the workers have tended to embark on independent political action whenever economic action on a trade union level has proved inefficacious. Today, more than ever before, they are blocked off from economic action. The unions are hog-tied by the agreement of the official leadership not to strike. Moreover, all the questions confronting the workers today are *political*: government-regulated wages and prices, government boards everywhere, taxation directed against the masses, and—the workers begin to see—all these questions are in turn connected with the character and conduct of the war. Now, more than ever, the workers need independent political action. Yet not a single top leader in the trade unions breathes a word about it. The AFL and CIO leaders are as terrified of it as are the bosses.

They have good reason to fear it. They may very well be swept away in the stormy rise of a Labor Party. A La-

bor Party which arises in the America of today must tend to come into collision on fundamentals with the capitalist class. This is the epoch of the death agony of capitalism. The war is an expression of this death agony. A Labor Party, like that of England, arising during a period when capitalism still seemed endowed with indefinite possibilities of expansion, could comfortably adapt itself to a capitalist outlook. But a Labor Party arising in America during the precipitous decline of world capitalism can have a very different development. The British Labor Party adapted itself on the basis of concessions which the capitalists could grant at the expense of the vast masses of colonial slaves, especially in India and China. But the whole colonial world is rising from its knees today and all the forces of American imperialism will not suffice to beat it down again. The Labor Party in America must from its first day confront a capitalist class which will fight to the death against any concessions. That means irreconcilable class struggle. That means to pose the question of POWER—who shall rule, the capitalist class or the working class? The AFL and CIO leaders however, men of yesterday, are utterly alien to the conception of a working class which fights to rule its own destiny.

Every day's developments, nevertheless, drive the workers in the direction of a Labor Party. What is necessary now is to generalize for the workers their own experiences with the government. We must help them see the interconnection between the various blows dealt the workers by the political agents of the capitalist class, now capped (for the moment) by the new taxation. Once they see the strategy of the capitalists, the workers will understand that it is a question of class against class, of Labor Party against the capitalist parties. Life itself is teaching this; we need only to speed the process of education of the workers. When the demand for the Labor Party grows to mass proportions in the trade unions, it is probable that not a few of the AFL and CIO top leaders will try to go along. With or without them, however, the workers will have their party.

—C. C.

—F. M.

The Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR'S NOTE: This document was written by Leon Trotsky approximately a year before he was assassinated by Stalin's agent in August 1940. Trotsky's original intention was to include it as a chapter in the biography of Lenin on which he worked during his exile in Norway but which he never completed. Of particular importance is that in this summary Trotsky definitively explains the essential points of his agreements and disagreements with Lenin on the theory of the permanent revolution in its direct application to the development of the Russian revolution.

The revolution of 1905 became not only "the dress rehearsal for 1917" but also the laboratory from which emerged all the basic groupings of Russian political thought and where all tendencies and shadings within Russian Marxism took shape or were outlined. The center of the disputes and differences was naturally occupied by the question of the historical character of the Russian revolution and its future

paths of development. In and of itself this war of conceptions and prognoses does not relate directly to the biography of Stalin who took no independent part in it. Those few propaganda articles which he wrote on the subject are without the slightest theoretical interest. Scores of Bolsheviks, with pens in hand, popularized the very same ideas and did it much more ably. A critical exposition of the revolutionary conception of Bolshevism should, in the very nature of things, have entered into a biography of Lenin. However, theories have a fate of their own. If in the period of the first revolution and thereafter up to 1923, when revolutionary doctrines were elaborated and realized, Stalin held no independent position then, from 1924 on, the situation changes abruptly. There opens up the epoch of bureaucratic reaction and of drastic reviews of the past. The film of the revolu-

tion is run off in reverse. Old doctrines are submitted to new appraisals or new interpretations. Quite unexpectedly, at first sight, the center of attention is held by the conception of "the permanent revolution" as the fountainhead of all the blunderings of "Trotskyism." For a number of years thereafter the criticism of this conception constitutes the main content of the theoretical—*sit venio verbo*—work of Stalin and his collaborators. It may be said that the whole of Stalinism, taken on the theoretical plane, grew out of the criticism of the theory of the permanent revolution as it was formulated in 1905. To this extent the exposition of this theory, as distinct from the theories of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, cannot fail to enter into this book, even if in the form of an appendix.

* * *

The development of Russia is characterized first of all by backwardness. Historical backwardness does not, however, signify a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, with merely a delay of one or two centuries. It engenders an entirely new "combined" social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating a peculiar interrelationship of classes. The same thing applies in the sphere of ideas. Precisely because of her historical tardiness Russia turned out to be the only European country where Marxism as a doctrine and the Social Democracy as a party attained powerful development even before the bourgeois revolution. It is only natural that the problem of the correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism was submitted to the most profound theoretical analysis precisely in Russia.

Idealist-democrats, chiefly the Narodniks, refused superstitiously to recognize the impending revolution as bourgeois. They labelled it "democratic" seeking by means of a neutral political formula to mask its social content—not only from others but also from themselves. But in the struggle against Narodnikism, Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, established as long ago as the early 'eighties of the last century that Russia had no reason whatever to expect a privileged path of development, that like other "profane" nations, she would have to pass through the purgatory of capitalism and that precisely along this path she would acquire political freedom indispensable for the further struggle of the proletariat for socialism. Plekhanov not only separated the bourgeois revolution as a task from the socialist revolution—which he postponed to the indefinite future—but he depicted for each of these entirely different combinations of forces. Political freedom was to be achieved by the proletariat in alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie; after many decades and on a higher level of capitalist development, the proletariat would then carry out the socialist revolution in direct struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Lenin, on his part, wrote at the end of 1904:

"To the Russian intellectual it always seems that to recognize our revolution as bourgeois is to discolor it, degrade it, debase it. . . . For the proletariat the struggle for political freedom and for the democratic republic in bourgeois society is simply a necessary stage in the struggle for the socialist revolution."

"Marxists are absolutely convinced," he wrote in 1905, "of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does this mean? This means that those democratic transformations. . . which have become indispensable for Russia

do not, in and of themselves, signify the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of bourgeois rule, but on the contrary they clear the soil, for the first time and in a real way, for a broad and swift, for a European and not an Asiatic development of capitalism. They will make possible for the first time the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class. . . ."

"We cannot leap over the bourgeois democratic framework of the Russian revolution," he insisted, "but we can extend this framework to a colossal degree." That is to say, we can create within bourgeois society much more favorable conditions for the future struggle of the proletariat. Within these limits Lenin followed Plekhanov. The bourgeois character of the revolution served both factions of the Russian Social Democracy as their starting point.

It is quite natural that under these conditions, Koba (Stalin) did not go in his propaganda beyond those popular formulas which constitute the common property of Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks.

"The Constituent Assembly," he wrote in January 1905, "elected on the basis of equal, direct and secret universal suffrage—this is what we must now fight for! Only this Assembly will give us the democratic republic, so urgently needed by us for our struggle for socialism." The bourgeois republic as an arena for a protracted class struggle for the socialist goal—such is the perspective.

In 1907, i.e., after innumerable discussions in the press both in Petersburg and abroad and after a serious testing of theoretical prognoses in the experiences of the first revolution, Stalin wrote:

"That our revolution is bourgeois, that it must conclude by destroying the feudal and not the capitalist order, that it can be crowned only by the democratic republic—on this, it seems, all are agreed in our party." Stalin spoke not of what the revolution begins with, but of what it ends with, and he limited it in advance and quite categorically to "only the democratic republic." We would seek in vain in his writings for even a hint of any perspective of a socialist revolution in connection with a democratic overturn. This remained his position even at the beginning of the February revolution in 1917 up to Lenin's arrival in Petersburg.

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For Plekhanov, Axelrod and the leaders of Menshevism in general, the sociological characterization of the revolution as bourgeois was valuable politically above all because in advance it prohibited provoking the bourgeoisie by the specter of socialism and "repelling" it into the camp of reaction. "The social relations of Russia have ripened only for the bourgeois revolution," said the chief tactician of Menshevism, Axelrod, at the Unity Congress. "In the face of the universal deprivation of political rights in our country there cannot even be talk of a direct battle between the proletariat and other classes for political power. . . . The proletariat is fighting for conditions of bourgeois development. The objective historical conditions make it the destiny of our proletariat to inescapably collaborate with the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the common enemy." The content of the Russian revolution was therewith limited in advance to those transformations which are compatible with the interests and views of the liberal bourgeoisie.

It is precisely at this point that the basic disagreement between the two factions begins. Bolshevism absolutely refused to recognize that the Russian bourgeoisie was capable of leading its own revolution to the end. With infinitely greater power and consistency than Plekhanov, Lenin advanced the

agrarian question as the central problem of the democratic overturn in Russia. "The crux of the Russian revolution," he repeated, "is the agrarian (land) question. Conclusions concerning the defeat or victory of the revolution must be based . . . on the calculation of the condition of the masses in the struggle for land." Together with Plekhanov, Lenin viewed the peasantry as a petty-bourgeois class; the peasant land program as a program of bourgeois progress. "Nationalization is a bourgeois measure," he insisted at the Unity Congress. "It will give an impulse to the development of capitalism; it will sharpen the class struggle, strengthen the mobilization of the land, cause an influx of capital into agriculture, lower the price of grain." Notwithstanding the indubitable bourgeois character of the agrarian revolution the Russian bourgeoisie remains, however, hostile to the expropriation of landed estates and precisely for this reason strives toward a compromise with the monarchy on the basis of a constitution on the Prussian pattern. To Plekhanov's idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie Lenin counterposed the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. The task of the revolutionary collaboration of these two classes he proclaimed to be the establishment of a "democratic dictatorship," as the only means of radically cleansing Russia of feudal rubbish, of creating a free farmers' system and clearing the road for the development of capitalism along American and not Prussian lines.

The victory of the revolution, he wrote, can be crowned "only by a dictatorship because the accomplishment of transformations immediately and urgently needed by the proletariat and the peasantry will evoke the desperate resistance of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie and Czarism. Without the dictatorship it will be impossible to break this resistance, and repel the counter-revolutionary attempts. But this will of course be not a socialist but a democratic dictatorship. It will not be able to touch (without a whole series of transitional stages of revolutionary development) the foundations of capitalism. It will be able, in the best case, to realize a radical redivision of landed property in favor of the peasantry, introduce a consistent and full democratism up to instituting the republic, root out all Asiatic and feudal features not only from the day-to-day life of the village but also of the factory, put a beginning to a serious improvement of workers' conditions and raise their living standards and, last but not least, carry over the revolutionary conflagration to Europe."

The Critique of Lenin's Conception

Lenin's conception represented an enormous step forward insofar as it proceeded not from constitutional reforms but from the agrarian overturn as the central task of the revolution and singled out the only realistic combination of social forces for its accomplishment. The weak point of Lenin's conception, however, was the internally contradictory idea of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry." Lenin himself underscored the fundamental limitation of this "dictatorship" when he openly called it *bourgeois*. By this he meant to say that for the sake of preserving its alliance with the peasantry the proletariat would in the coming revolution have to forego the direct posing of the socialist tasks. But this would signify the renunciation by the proletariat of its *own* dictatorship. Consequently, the gist of the matter involved the dictatorship of the peasantry even if with the participation of the workers. On certain occasions Lenin

said just this. For example, at the Stockholm Conference, in refuting Plekhanov who came out against the "utopia" of the seizure of power, Lenin said: "What program is under discussion? The agrarian. Who is assumed to seize power under this program? The revolutionary peasantry. Is Lenin mixing up the power of the proletariat with this peasantry?" No, he says referring to himself: Lenin sharply differentiates the socialist power of the proletariat from the bourgeois democratic power of the peasantry. "But how," he exclaims again, "is a victorious peasant revolution possible without the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry?" In this polemical formula Lenin reveals with special clarity the vulnerability of his position.

The peasantry is dispersed over the surface of an enormous country whose key junctions are the cities. The peasantry itself is incapable of even formulating its own interests inasmuch as in each district these appear differently. The economic link between the provinces is created by the market and the railways but both the market and the railways are in the hands of the cities. In seeking to tear itself away from the restrictions of the village and to generalize its own interests, the peasantry inescapably falls into political dependence upon the city. Finally, the peasantry is heterogeneous in its social relations as well: the kulak stratum naturally seeks to swing it to an alliance with the urban bourgeoisie while the nether strata of the village pull to the side of the urban workers. Under these conditions the peasantry as such is completely incapable of conquering power.

True enough, in ancient China, revolutions placed the peasantry in power or, more precisely, placed the military leaders of peasant uprisings in power. This led each time to a redivision of the land and the establishment of a new "peasant" dynasty, whereupon history would begin from the beginning; with a new concentration of land, a new aristocracy, a new system of usury, and a new uprising. So long as the revolution preserves its purely peasant character society is incapable of emerging from these hopeless and vicious circles. This was the basis of ancient Asiatic history, including ancient Russian history. In Europe beginning with the close of the Middle Ages each victorious peasant uprising placed in power not a peasant government but a left urban party. To put it more precisely, a peasant uprising turned out victorious exactly to the degree to which it succeeded in strengthening the position of the revolutionary section of the urban population. In bourgeois Russia of the twentieth century there could not even be talk of the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry.

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Lenin's Appraisal of Liberalism

The attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie was, as has been said, the touchstone of the differentiation between revolutionists and opportunists in the ranks of the social democrats. How far could the Russian revolution go? What would be the character of the future revolutionary Provisional Government? What tasks would confront it? And in what order? These questions with all their importance could be correctly posed only on the basis of the fundamental character of the policy of the proletariat, and the character of this policy was in turn determined first of all by the attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie. Plekhanov obviously and stubbornly shut his eyes to the fundamental conclusion of the political history of the 19th century: Whenever the proletariat comes forward

as an independent force the bourgeoisie shifts over to the camp of the counter-revolution. The more audacious the mass struggle all the swifter is the reactionary degeneration of liberalism. No one has yet invented a means for paralyzing the effects of the law of the class struggle.

"We must cherish the support of non-proletarian parties," repeated Plekhanov during the years of the first revolution, "and not repel them from us by tactless actions." By monotonous preachments of this sort the philosopher of Marxism indicated that the living dynamics of society was unattainable to him. "Tactlessness" can repel an individual sensitive intellectual. Classes and parties are attracted or repelled by social interests. "It can be stated with certainty," replied Lenin to Plekhanov, "that the liberals and landlords will forgive you millions of 'tactless acts' but will not forgive you a summons to take away the land." And not only the landlords. The tops of the bourgeoisie are bound up with the landowners by the unity of property interests, and more narrowly by the system of banks. The tops of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are materially and morally dependent upon the big and middle proprietors—they are all afraid of the independent mass movement. Meanwhile, in order to overthrow Czarism it was necessary to rouse tens upon tens of millions of oppressed to a heroic, self-renouncing, unfettered revolutionary assault that would halt at nothing. The masses can rise to an insurrection only under the banner of their own interests and consequently in the spirit of irreconcilable hostility toward the exploiting classes beginning with the landlords. The "repulsion" of the oppositional bourgeoisie away from the revolutionary workers and peasants was therefore the immanent law of the revolution itself and could not be avoided by means of diplomacy or "tact."

Each additional month confirmed the Leninist appraisal of liberalism. Contrary to the best hopes of the Mensheviks, the Cadets not only did not prepare to take their place at the head of the "bourgeois" revolution but on the contrary they found their historical mission more and more in the struggle against it.

After the crushing of the December uprising the liberals, who occupied the political limelight thanks to the ephemeral Duma, sought with all their might to justify themselves before the monarchy and explain away their insufficiently active counter-revolutionary conduct in the autumn of 1905 when danger threatened the most sacred props of "culture." The leader of the liberals, Miliukov, who conducted the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Winter Palace, quite correctly proved in the press that at the end of 1905 the Cadets could not even show themselves before the masses. "Those who now chide the (Cadet) party," he wrote, "because it did not protest at the time by arranging meetings against the revolutionary illusions of Trotskyism . . . simply do not understand or do not remember the moods prevailing at the time among the democratic public gatherings at meetings." By the "illusions of Trotskyism" the liberal leader understood the independent policy of the proletariat which attracted to the soviets the sympathies of the nethermost layers in the cities, of the soldiers, peasants, and all the oppressed, and which owing to this repelled the "educated society." The evolution of the Mensheviks unfolded along parallel lines. They had to justify themselves more and more frequently before the liberals, because they had turned out in a bloc with Trotsky after October 1905. The explanations of Martov, the talented publicist of the Mensheviks, came down to

this, that it was necessary to make concessions to the "revolutionary illusions" of the masses.

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In Tiflis the political groupings took shape on the same principled basis as in Petersburg. "To smash reaction," wrote the leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, "to conquer and carry through the Constitution—this will depend upon the conscious unification and the striving for a single goal on the part of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. . . . It is true that the peasantry will be drawn into the movement, investing it with an elemental character, but the decisive role will nevertheless be played by these two classes while the peasant movement will add grist to their mill." Lenin mocked at the fears of Zhordanya that an irreconcilable policy toward the bourgeoisie would doom the workers to impotence. Zhordanya "discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic overturn and forgets . . . about the peasantry! Of all the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and is enamoured of the landlord-liberals. And he does not know the peasants. And this in the Caucasus!" The refutations of Lenin while correct in essence simplify the problem on one point. Zhordanya did not "forget" about the peasantry and, as may be gathered from the hint of Lenin himself, could not have possibly forgotten about it in the Caucasus where the peasantry was stormily rising at the time under the banner of the Mensheviks. Zhordanya saw in the peasantry, however, not so much a political ally as a historical battering ram which could and should be utilized by the bourgeoisie in alliance with the proletariat. He did not believe that the peasantry was capable of becoming a leading or even an independent force in the revolution and in this he was not wrong; but he also did not believe that the proletariat was capable of leading the peasant uprising to victory—and in this was his fatal mistake. The Menshevik idea of the alliance of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie actually signified the subjection to the liberals of both the workers and the peasants. The reactionary utopianism of this program was determined by the fact that the far advanced dismemberment of the classes paralyzed the bourgeoisie in advance as a revolutionary factor. In this fundamental question the right was wholly on the side of Bolshevism: the chase after an alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie would inescapably counterpose the Social Democracy to the revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. In 1905 the Mensheviks still lacked courage to draw all the necessary conclusions from their theory of the "bourgeois" revolution. In 1917 they drew their ideas to their logical conclusion and broke their heads.

On the question of the attitude to the liberals Stalin stood during the years of the first revolution on Lenin's side. It must be stated that during this period even the majority of the rank-and-file Mensheviks were closer to Lenin than to Plekhanov on issues touching the oppositional bourgeoisie. A contemptuous attitude to the liberals was the literary tradition of intellectual radicalism. One would however labor in vain to seek from Koba an independent contribution on this question, an analysis of the Caucasian social relations, new arguments or even a new formulation of old arguments. The leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, was far more independent in relation to Plekhanov than Stalin was in relation to Lenin. "In vain the Messrs. Liberals seek," wrote Koba after January 9, "to save the tottering throne of the Czar. In vain are they extending to the Czar the hand of

assistance! . . . The aroused popular masses are preparing for the revolution and not for reconciliation with the Czar. . . . Yes, gentlemen, in vain are your efforts. The Russian revolution is inevitable and it is as inevitable as the inevitable rising of the sun! Can you stop the rising sun? That is the question!" And so forth and so on. Higher than this Koba did not rise. Two and a half years later, in repeating Lenin almost literally, he wrote: "The Russian liberal bourgeoisie is anti-revolutionary. It cannot be the motive force, nor, all the less so, the leader of the revolution. It is the sworn enemy of the revolution and a stubborn struggle must be waged against it." However, it was precisely in this fundamental question that Stalin was to undergo a complete metamorphosis in the next ten years and was to meet the February revolution of 1917 already as a partisan of a bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie and, in accordance with this, as a champion of uniting with the Mensheviks into one party. Only Lenin on arriving from abroad put an abrupt end to the independent policy of Stalin which he called a mockery of Marxism.

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The Peasantry and Socialism

The Narodniks saw in the workers and peasants simply "toilers" and "the exploited" who are all equally interested in socialism. Marxists regarded the peasant as a petty bourgeois who is capable of becoming a socialist only to the extent to which he ceases materially or spiritually to be a peasant. With the sentimentalism peculiar to them, the Narodniks perceived in this sociological characterization a moral slur against the peasantry. Along this line occurred for two generations the main struggle between the revolutionary tendencies of Russia. To understand the future disputes between Stalinism and Trotskyism it is necessary once again to emphasize that, in accordance with the entire tradition of Marxism, Lenin never for a moment regarded the peasantry as a socialist ally of the proletariat. On the contrary, the impossibility of the socialist revolution in Russia was deduced by him precisely from the colossal preponderance of the peasantry. This idea runs through all his articles which touch directly or indirectly upon the agrarian question.

"We support the peasant movement," wrote Lenin in September 1905, "to the extent that it is a revolutionary democratic movement. We are preparing (right now, and immediately) for a struggle with it to the extent that it will come forward as a reactionary, anti-proletarian movement. The entire gist of Marxism lies in this two-fold task. . . ." Lenin saw the socialist ally in the Western proletariat and partly in the semi-proletarian elements in the Russian village but never in the peasantry as such. "From the beginning we support to the very end, by means of all measures, up to confiscation," he repeated with the insistence peculiar to him, "the peasant in general against the landlord, and later (and not even later but at the very same time) we support the proletariat against the peasant in general."

"The peasantry will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution," he wrote in March 1906, "and with this it will completely exhaust its revolutionary spirit as the peasantry. The proletariat will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and with this it will only unfold in a real way its genuine socialist revolutionary spirit." "The movement of the peasantry," he repeated in May of the same year, "is the movement of a different class. This is a struggle not against

the foundations of capitalism but for purging all the remnants of feudalism." This viewpoint can be followed in Lenin from one article to the next, year by year, volume by volume. The language and examples vary, the basic thought remains the same. It could not have been otherwise. Had Lenin seen a *socialist* ally in the peasantry he would not have had the slightest ground for insisting upon the *bourgeois* character of the revolution and for limiting "the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" to purely democratic tasks. In those cases where Lenin accused the author of this book of "under-estimating" the peasantry he had in mind not at all my non-recognition of the socialist tendencies of the peasantry but, on the contrary, my inadequate—from Lenin's viewpoint—recognition of the bourgeois-democratic independence of the peasantry, its ability to create its *own* power and thereby prevent the establishment of the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat.

The re-evaluation of values on this question was opened up only in the years of Thermidorian reaction the beginning of which coincided approximately with the illness and death of Lenin. Thenceforth the alliance of Russian workers and peasants was proclaimed to be, in and of itself, a sufficient guarantee against the dangers of restoration and an immutable pledge of the realization of socialism within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. Replacing the theory of international revolution by the theory of socialism in one country Stalin began to designate the Marxist evaluation of the peasantry not otherwise than as "Trotskyism" and, moreover, not only in relation to the present but to the entire past.

It is, of course, possible to raise the question whether or not the classic Marxist view of the peasantry has been proven erroneous. This subject would lead us far beyond the limits of the present review. Suffice it to state here that Marxism has never invested its estimation of the peasantry as a non-socialist class with an absolute and static character. Marx himself said that the peasant possesses not only superstitions but the ability to reason. In changing conditions the nature of the peasant himself changes. The regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened up very broad possibilities for influencing the peasantry and re-educating it. The limits of these possibilities have not yet been exhausted by history. Nevertheless, it is now already clear that the growing role of the state coercion in the USSR has not refuted but has confirmed fundamentally the attitude toward the peasantry which distinguished Russian Marxists from the Narodniks. However, whatever may be the situation in this respect today after twenty years of the new regime, it remains indubitable that up to the October revolution or more correctly up to 1924 no one in the Marxist camp—Lenin, least of all—saw in the peasantry a socialist factor of development. Without the aid of the proletarian revolution in the West, Lenin repeated, restoration in Russia was inevitable. He was not mistaken: the Stalinist bureaucracy is nothing else than the first phase of bourgeois restoration.

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The Trotskyist Conception

We have analyzed above the points of departure of the two basic factions of the Russian Social Democracy. But alongside of them, already at the dawn of the first revolution, was formulated a third position which met with almost no recognition during those years but which we are obliged to set down here with the necessary completeness not only because it found its confirmation in the events of 1917 but

especially because seven years after the October revolution, this conception, after being turned topsy-turvy, began to play a completely unforeseen role in the political evolution of Stalin and the whole Soviet bureaucracy.

At the beginning of 1905 a pamphlet by Trotsky was issued in Geneva. This pamphlet analyzed the political situation as it unfolded in the winter of 1904. The author arrived at the conclusion that the independent campaign of petitions and banquets by the liberals had exhausted all its possibilities; that the radical intelligentsia who had pinned their hopes upon the liberals had arrived in a blind alley together with the latter; that the peasant movement was creating favorable conditions for victory but was incapable of assuring it; that a decision could be reached only through the armed uprising of the proletariat; that the next phase on this path would be the general strike. The pamphlet was entitled "Before the Ninth of January," because it was written before the Bloody Sunday in Petersburg. The mighty strike wave which came after this date together with the initial armed clashes which supplemented this strike wave were an unequivocal confirmation of the strategic prognosis of this pamphlet.

The introduction to my work was written by Parvus, a Russian emigre, who had succeeded by that time in becoming a prominent German writer. Parvus was an exceptional creative personality capable of becoming infected with the ideas of others as well as of enriching others by his ideas. He lacked internal equilibrium and sufficient love for work to give the labor movement the contribution worthy of his talents as thinker and writer. On my personal development he exercised undoubted influence especially in regard to the social-revolutionary understanding of our epoch. A few years prior to our first meeting Parvus passionately defended the idea of a general strike in Germany; but the country was then passing through a prolonged industrial boom, the Social Democracy had adapted itself to the regime of the Hohenzollerns; the revolutionary propaganda of a foreigner met with nothing except ironical indifference. On becoming acquainted on the second day after the bloody events in Petersburg with my pamphlet, then in manuscript, Parvus was captured by the idea of the exceptional role which the proletariat of backward Russia was destined to play.

Those few days which we spent together in Munich were filled with conversations which clarified a good deal for both of us and which brought us personally closer together. The introduction which Parvus wrote at the time for the pamphlet has entered firmly into the history of the Russian revolution. In a few pages he illuminated those social peculiarities of belated Russia which were, it is true, known previously but from which no one had drawn all the necessary conclusions.

"The political radicalism of Western Europe," wrote Parvus, "was, as is well known, based primarily on the petty bourgeoisie. These were the handicraft workers and, in general, that section of the bourgeoisie which had been caught up by the industrial development but was at the same time pushed aside by the capitalist class. . . . In Russia, during the pre-capitalist period, the cities developed more along Chinese than European lines. These were administrative centers, purely functionary in character, without the slightest political significance, while in terms of economic relations they served as trading centers, bazaars, for the surrounding landlord and peasant milieu. Their development was still very insignificant when it was halted by the capitalist process which began to create big cities after its own pattern, i.e., factory cities and centers of world trade. . . . The very same thing that

hindered the development of petty-bourgeois democracy served to benefit the class consciousness of the proletariat in Russia, namely, the weak development of the handicraft form of production. The proletariat was immediately concentrated in the factories. . . .

"The peasants will be drawn into the movement in ever larger masses. But they are capable only of increasing the political anarchy in the country and, in this way, of weakening the government; they cannot compose a tightly welded revolutionary army. With the development of the revolution, therefore, an ever greater amount of political work will fall to the share of the proletariat. Along with this, its political self-consciousness will broaden, its political energy will grow. . . .

"The Social Democracy will be confronted with the dilemma: either to assume the responsibility for the Provisional Government or to stand aside from the workers' movement. The workers will consider this government as their own regardless of how the Social Democracy conducts itself. . . . The revolutionary overturn in Russia can be accomplished only by the workers. The revolutionary Provisional Government in Russia will be the government of a *workers' democracy*. If the Social Democracy heads the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, then this government will be Social Democratic. . . .

"The Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia but the very process of liquidating the autocracy and of establishing the democratic republic will provide it with a rich soil for political work."

In the heat of the revolutionary events in the autumn of 1905, I once again met Parvus, this time in Petersburg. While preserving an organizational independence from both factions, we jointly edited a mass workers' paper, *Russkoye Slovo*, and, in a coalition with the Mensheviks, a big political newspaper, *Nachalo*. The theory of the permanent revolution has usually been linked with the names of "Parvus and Trotsky." This was only partially correct. The period of Parvus' revolutionary apogee belongs to the end of the last century when he marched at the head of the struggle against the so-called "revisionism," i.e., the opportunist distortion of Marx's theory. The failure of the attempts to push the German Social Democracy on the path of more resolute policies undermined his optimism. Toward the perspective of the socialist revolution in the West, Parvus began to react with more and more reservations. He considered at that time that the "Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia." His prognoses indicated, therefore, not the transformation of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution but only the establishment in Russia of a regime of workers' democracy of the Australian type, where on the basis of a farmers' system there arose for the first time a labor government which did not go beyond the framework of a bourgeois regime.

This conclusion was not shared by me. The Australian democracy grew organically from the virgin soil of a new continent and at once assumed a conservative character and subjected to itself a young but quite privileged proletariat. Russian democracy, on the contrary, could arise only as a result of a grandiose revolutionary overturn, the dynamics of which would in no case permit the workers' government to remain within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Our differences, which began shortly after the revolution of 1905, resulted in a complete break between us at the beginning of

the war when Parvus, in whom the skeptic had completely killed the revolutionist, turned out on the side of German imperialism, and later became the counsellor and inspirer of the first president of the German republic, Ebert.

The Theory of Permanent Revolution

Beginning with the pamphlet, "Before the Ninth of January," I returned more than once to the development and justification of the theory of the permanent revolution. In view of the importance which this theory later acquired in the ideological evolution of the hero of this biography, it is necessary to present it here in the form of exact quotations from my works in 1905-6.

"The core of the population of a modern city, at least in cities of economic-political significance, is constituted by the sharply differentiated class of wage labor. It is precisely this class, essentially unknown during the Great French Revolution, that is destined to play the decisive role in our revolution. . . . In a country economically more backward, the proletariat may come to power sooner than in an advanced capitalist country. The assumption of some sort of automatic dependence of proletarian dictatorship upon the technical forces and resources of a country is a prejudice derived from an extremely oversimplified 'economic' materialism. Such a view has nothing in common with Marxism. . . . Notwithstanding that the productive forces of industry in the United States are ten times higher than ours, the political role of the Russian proletariat, its influence upon the politics of the country, and the possibility of its coming influence upon world politics is incomparably higher than the role and significance of the American proletariat. . . ."

"The Russian revolution, according to our view, will create conditions in which the power may (and with the victory of the revolution *must*) pass into the hands of the proletariat before the politicians of bourgeois liberalism get a chance to develop their statesmanly genius to the full. . . . The Russian bourgeoisie is surrendering all the revolutionary positions to the proletariat. It will have to surrender likewise the revolutionary leadership of the peasantry. The proletariat in power will appear to the peasantry as an emancipator class. . . . The proletariat basing itself on the peasantry will bring all its forces into play to raise the cultural level of the village and develop a political consciousness in the peasantry. . . . But perhaps the peasantry itself will crowd the proletariat and occupy its place? This is impossible. All the experience of history protests against this assumption. It shows that the peasantry is completely incapable of playing an *independent* political role. . . . From what has been said it is clear how we regard the idea of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.' The gist of the matter is not whether we consider it admissible in principle, whether we find this form of political cooperation 'desirable' or 'undesirable.' We consider it unrealizable—at least in the direct and immediate sense. . . ."

The foregoing already demonstrates how erroneous is the assertion, later endlessly repeated, that the conception presented here "leaped over the bourgeois revolution." "The struggle for the democratic renovation of Russia," I wrote at that time, "has wholly grown out of capitalism and is being conducted by the forces unfolding on the basis of capitalism and is being aimed *directly and first of all* against the feudal-serf obstacles on the path of the development of capitalist society." The question, however, was: Just what forces and methods are capable of removing these obstacles? "We may set a

bound to all the questions of the revolution by asserting that our revolution is *bourgeois* in its objective aims, and therefore in its inevitable results, and we may thus shut our eyes to the fact that the chief agent of this bourgeois revolution is the proletariat, and the proletariat will be pushed toward power by the whole course of the revolution. . . . You may lull yourself with the thought that the social conditions of Russia are not yet ripe for a socialist economy—and therewith you may neglect to consider the fact that the proletariat, once in power, will inevitably be compelled by the whole logic of its situation to introduce an economy operated by the state. . . . Entering the government not as impotent hostages but as a ruling power, the representatives of the proletariat will by this very act destroy the boundary between minimum and maximum program, i.e., *place collectivism on the order of the day*. At what point the proletariat will be stopped in this direction will depend on the relationship of forces, but not at all upon the original intentions of the party of the proletariat. . . ."

"But it is not too early now to pose the question: Must this dictatorship of the proletariat inevitably be shattered against the framework of the bourgeois revolution? Or may it not, upon the given *world-historic* foundations, open before itself the prospect of victory to be achieved by shattering this limited framework? . . . One thing can be stated with certainty: Without direct state support from the European proletariat the working class of Russia cannot remain in power and cannot convert its temporary rule into a prolonged socialist dictatorship. . . ." From this, however, does not at all flow a pessimistic prognosis: "The political emancipation led by the working class of Russia raises this leader to unprecedented historical heights, transfers into its hands colossal forces and resources and makes it the initiator of the world liquidation of capitalism, for which history has created all the necessary objective prerequisites. . . ."

In regard to the degree to which the international Social Democracy will prove able to fulfill its revolutionary task, I wrote in 1906:

"The European socialist parties—above all, the mightiest among them, the German party—have each worked out their own conservatism. As greater and greater masses rally to socialism and as the organization and discipline of these masses grow, this conservatism likewise increases. Because of this the Social Democracy, as an organization embodying the political experience of the proletariat, may become at a certain moment a direct obstacle in the path of the open conflict between the workers and bourgeois reaction. . . ." I concluded my analysis, however, by expressing assurance that the "Eastern revolution will imbue the Western proletariat with revolutionary idealism and engender in it the desire to speak to its enemy 'in Russian'. . . ."

* * *

Let us sum up. Narodnikism, in the wake of the Slavophiles, proceeded from illusions concerning the absolutely original paths of Russia's development, and waved aside capitalism and the bourgeois republic. Plekhanov's Marxism was concentrated on proving the principled identity of the historical paths of Russia and of the West. The program derived from this ignored the wholly real and not at all mystical peculiarities of Russia's social structure and of her revolutionary development. The Menshevik attitude toward the revolution, stripped of episodic encrustations and individual deviations, is reducible to the following: The victory

of the Russian bourgeois revolution is conceivable only under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie and must hand over power to the latter. The democratic regime will then permit the Russian proletariat to catch up with its older Western brothers on the road of the struggle for socialism with incomparably greater success than hitherto.

Lenin's perspective may be briefly expressed as follows: The belated Russian bourgeoisie is incapable of leading its own revolution to the end. The complete victory of the revolution through the medium of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" will purge the country of medievalism, invest the development of Russian capitalism with American tempos, strengthen the proletariat in the city and country, and open up broad possibilities for the struggle for socialism. On the other hand, the victory of the Russian revolution will provide a mighty impulse for the socialist revolution in the West, and the latter will not only shield Russia from the dangers of restoration but also permit the Russian proletariat to reach the conquest of power in a comparatively short historical interval.

The perspective of the permanent revolution may be summed up in these words: The complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is inconceivable otherwise than in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat basing itself on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which will inescapably place on the order of the day not only democratic but also socialist tasks, will at the same time provide a mighty impulse to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West will shield Russia from bourgeois restoration and secure for her the possibility of bringing the socialist construction to its conclusion.

These terse formulations reveal with equal clarity both the homogeneity of the last two conceptions in their irreconcilable contradiction with the liberal-Menshevik perspective as well as their extremely essential difference from one another on the question of the social character and the tasks of the "dictatorship" which was to grow out of the revolution. The frequently repeated objection of the present Moscow theoreticians to the effect that the program of the dictatorship of

the proletariat was "premature" in 1905 is entirely lacking in content. In the empirical sense the program of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry proved to be equally "premature." The unfavorable relation of forces in the epoch of the first revolution rendered impossible not the dictatorship of the proletariat as such but, in general, the victory of the revolution itself. Meanwhile all the revolutionary tendencies proceeded from the hopes for a complete victory; without such a hope an unfettered revolutionary struggle would be impossible. The differences involved the general perspectives of the revolution and the strategy flowing therefrom. The perspective of Menshevism was false to the core: it pointed out an entirely different road for the proletariat. The perspective of Bolshevism was not complete: it indicated correctly the general direction of the struggle but characterized its stages incorrectly. The inadequacy of the perspective of Bolshevism was not revealed in 1905 only because the revolution itself did not receive further development. But at the beginning of 1917 Lenin was compelled, in a direct struggle against the oldest cadres of the party, to change the perspective.

A political prognosis cannot pretend to the same exactness as an astronomical one. It suffices if it gives a correct indication of the general line of development and helps to orient oneself in the actual course of events in which the basic line is inevitably shifted either to the right or to the left. In this sense it is impossible not to recognize that the conception of the permanent revolution has fully passed the test of history. In the first years of the Soviet regime this was denied by none; on the contrary, this fact met with recognition in a number of official publications. But when on the quiescent and ossified summits of Soviet society the bureaucratic reaction against October opened up, it was from the very beginning directed against this theory which more completely than any other reflected the first proletarian revolution in history and at the same time clearly revealed its incomplete, limited and partial character. Thus, by way of repulsion, originated the theory of socialism in one country, the basic dogma of Stalinism.

Revolutionary Tasks Under the Nazi Boot

By MARC LORIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Fourth International* has opened its pages to a discussion on the national question in Europe. The first discussion article, "The National Question in Europe," by Marc Loris, was published in our September issue. The fact that it was a discussion article was inadvertently omitted. Marc Loris' present article is a continuation of his first. Other discussion articles by various contributors will be published in succeeding issues.

The official position of the Socialist Workers Party on the national question in Europe, adopted unanimously at its Tenth Convention in October, appeared in our October issue under the heading "The National Question in Europe."

Nazi oppression passed over Europe like a steam-roller. Throughout the continent there now remains, between the Nazi power and the population, no legal organization in which the masses can take shelter and regroup themselves. After the political parties and the trade unions, the work of destruction has been extended even to the most neutral and most insignificant organizations, for the Nazis feared—and

with good reason—that even the slightest of them might become a crystallization-point of resistance. Into the tiniest groups the Nazis introduced their own men, who proposed adherence to the "New Order"; even stamp-collectors' organizations were *gleichgeschaltet*.

What remains of the workers' organizations had to pass over into illegality and to new methods. The traditional bourgeois and petty-bourgeois organizations have given way to underground groups, of a new character, not directly stemming from the old parties. Small illegal groups which often do not extend beyond the limits of a city or of a region are appearing everywhere, only a few can maintain contacts—and even those very irregularly—on a national scale. Innumerable little newspapers spring up and disappear. Liaisons are established and broken again. On the whole, there is to be observed, with the passing months, a certain progress toward centralization, but very slowly, and often interrupted as a result of the severe conditions of illegality. Even that

political movement which was best adapted to underground work, Stalinism, is suffering greatly: in spite of a powerful apparatus and abundant resources, relations between the center and the regional organizations are often broken—a situation which cannot fail to create favorable occasions for discussion and united action between the Communist Party members and the Trotskyists.

Of all the working-class organizations, however, the Stalinist parties remain the most powerful and the most active—and by a large margin. The Stalinist propaganda is, of course, completely chauvinist in character, and is very careful not to speak of socialism. Apart from the Stalinists, the two most noteworthy centers of resistance of the working-class movement are formed by the Left Socialist groups in Poland (some of them close to Trotskyism and all hostile to the Government-in-Exile) and by what remains of the Norwegian trade union movement, which the Nazis have been unable to wipe out entirely. Of the Second International but little remains. Lately there could be noted a certain renewal of activity by the official Socialist groups in Belgium and in the north of France; but it retains an extremely fragmentary character.

The Petty-Bourgeois Movements

Broad layers of the petty bourgeoisie have lost their economic and social balance. The German occupation has caused, on the whole, an enormous pauperization and even, to a certain degree, proletarianization, of the petty bourgeoisie. This social crisis finds its political expression in the formation of the innumerable groups and movements which reflect all the rainbow colorations of the petty bourgeoisie.

At the reactionary end of this spectrum are to be found the traditional chauvinist groups, such as the Gaullist organization in France. One must carefully distinguish between the masses' very widespread but rather vague sympathies for the "democratic" camp, including DeGaulle, and the Gaullist organization itself. The latter is made up above all of former military men and functionaries. They have no feeling for activity by the masses to whom, for that matter, they are incapable of speaking. Most of them are nearly as terrified of a movement of the masses as of the German occupation. Their principal activity in the military field is espionage on behalf of England and, in the political field, waiting for an Anglo-American debarkment.

At the other extreme of this rainbow are to be found some organizations which are honestly looking for a way out of the intolerable situation of the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie. The elements most suited to become the spokesmen of these lawyers are the youth and the intellectuals. Thus among their leaders are often to be found students, teachers and writers. Violently repelled by fascism, these social strata are turning toward socialism in search of a solution for their misfortunes. They willingly concede that the bourgeois system is coming to its end, and accept the program of the federation of peoples, but they have not yet overcome all their distrust of the workers. Their leaders often keep hunting for a rosier path than that of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," and accuse Marxism of being "narrow." Between these extreme types of groupings are to be found, of course, all intermediary forms.

In the terrible conditions of illegality, there are inevitably, among the various underground groups, frequent practical agreements: for printing newspapers, for transporting literature and people, etc.—even finding paper is a serious problem.

Without such contacts, it would be simply impossible to exist; and they involve, needless to say, no compromise in program.

Even now in the occupied countries, especially in western Europe, occasions for public demonstrations are not infrequent: housewives' demonstrations against the lack of food-stuffs, demonstrations against those restaurants which serve food to the rich without ration cards, demonstrations against the "collaborationists," public demonstrations on various national holidays (Bastille Day, etc.). These demonstrations are organized by illegal groups of every kind, and the question of our participation arises. It is difficult to give a general answer. The important point for determining whether we participate is not so much the nature of the occasion or of the initiators of the demonstration, but the political situation and the possibilities of the given moment. If certain demonstrations are repeatedly held, mobilizing an increasing number of demonstrators, it is the duty of the revolutionary party to call on the workers to participate in them, even though organized by petty-bourgeois national groups. Of course, it is also the task of the party to appear in them with its own slogans. After the crushing of all organizations, the disappearance of all organized political life, every manifestation which *restores the feeling of collective action* however modest or confused its objectives may be, is extremely progressive, and the task of the revolutionary party is to aid, and if possible, to broaden it.

Obviously, while taking advantage of every possible step forward, we cannot limit our freedom to criticize reactionary and utopian programs. Now as always, the Marxists carry on their work of explaining and clarifying. They must especially denounce the falsity and the hypocrisy of all the chauvinist groups who desire nothing but revenge and who, although demanding the freedom of their own nation, do not hesitate and will not hesitate to participate in the oppression of other nations. Thus, all movements which find their inspiration in London and Washington (governments-in-exile, General DeGaulle, etc.) must be characterized not as national movements, but as imperialist movements by their aims as well as by their methods (alliance with Anglo-American imperialism, exploitation of Belgian colonies, of a part of the French, Dutch colonies, etc.). These groups attempt to chain the popular national revolt to one of the imperialist camps. In new circumstances they fill the traditional role of the bourgeois parties that have their base in the petty bourgeoisie. One such party was the defunct Radical-Socialist Party of France which rested on the democratic aspirations of the French peasant the better to chain him to big business. Now the Gaullist movement exploits for imperialist aims the aroused national sentiment. Its program and those of like groups can bring only new catastrophes to Europe.

As for the various petty-bourgeois groupings which are turning in the direction of socialism, we must have a much more patient and pedagogical attitude toward them. These groups, rebelling against the present oppression, go so far as to blame the system of imperialist trusts and monopolies, but they always retain, as we have indicated, some apprehension toward the workers' program. Their general program, vaguely speaking, is the most consistent formal democracy. In discussions with these groups the main task is to show the reality behind the forms of pure democracy, and patiently but firmly point out to them that a choice is inevitable, for there is no "third way."

In the present situation all democratic demands are charged with an enormous revolutionary potentiality; for in the epoch

of the disintegration of the capitalist regime only the proletarian revolution can bring reality to democratic principles. Therefore the Marxist parties must be the most resolute champions of these demands, knowing well that their fulfillment leads society to the threshold of socialism. But this is also the reason that democratic demands become a lie when separated from the socialist program, for without this program they cannot materialize. Not only is bourgeois democracy merely a formal democracy covering up the real inequality between capitalist and proletarian; but in our epoch even this formal democracy can exist only at brief intervals, in anemic form and will soon give way to Bonapartist and fascist dictatorships or to socialism. To speak of freedom now, and to remain silent about the only means of attaining it, by the proletarian revolution, is to repeat an empty phrase, is to deceive the masses. Joint action with democratic petty-bourgeois groups, often unavoidable and moreover desirable, can never stop us from criticizing their programs before the masses and from trying to win the best part of their organization.

The programs of nearly all the underground groupings, Stalinists included, contain the demand for a Single National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage. For some of these groups, that is their only program for the day following the fall of the Hitlerian empire. In the French section of the Fourth International, especially in the occupied zone, a discussion has been taking place on this slogan of a National (or Constituent) Assembly.

The arguments in favor of its adoption are reduced, in general, to this: If we are ready to fight for democratic liberties how can we fail to write into our program the demand which crowns all these freedoms, the National Assembly? This reasoning is not correct. We fight with the masses for even the smallest democratic liberties precisely because this fight opens the road to the proletarian revolution; at the same time we explain that this revolution is the only assurance against the return of oppression, of dictatorship, of fascism. The National Assembly is by no means the crowning of democratic demands. The real meat of these demands can come into existence only through the development of workers' and peasants' committees. When separated from the question of power—bourgeois or proletarian—the slogan of a National Assembly at the present moment in Europe is nothing but an empty form, a shell without revolutionary content. Under today's conditions of illegality, the slogan does not correspond to any real experience of the masses, while every group covers different political programs with this formula; the slogan thus takes on a ritual character and becomes a piece of democratic charlatanism.

Will we not pass through a "democratic" stage after the collapse of Nazi power? This is very likely. But it is also very likely that in this period we will already be seeing the formation of workers' committees, embryo soviets, transforming the "democratic stage" into a more or less long dual power. It is possible that at that time the slogan of a National Assembly may become filled with a certain revolutionary content. General DeGaulle's movement officially declared, some months ago, that at the downfall of Nazism, the power will come into the hands of a single Assembly elected by all the French in the most democratic manner; but in articles and conversations Gaullist representatives are already explaining that between the collapse of the Nazi tyranny and the convoking of the National Assembly there will elapse an interregnum necessary to save the country from chaos and to re-

establish order, and that during this time democracy will be quite limited. We can easily imagine what this means. It is possible that at that time the cry for immediate convoking of the Assembly will correspond to the real experience of the masses and will have an offensive character against the provisional government. However, that is the music of tomorrow.

Terrorism and Sabotage

The criticism of the petty-bourgeois and Stalinist programs should be followed, of course, by a critique of their methods. Nazi oppression has already aroused in Europe multiple forms of resistance: passive demonstrations of all kinds, attempts on the lives of German officers, wiping out "collaborationists," explosions, train wrecks, fires, production slow-downs in the factories, damaging of machines, strikes, street demonstrations, hunger riots, guerrilla activity—the last of these becoming almost full-fledged war in the Balkans. The very variety of these activities reveals the diversity of the social strata that have been drawn into the movement. The difficulties of the present moment, the participation of petty-bourgeois layers therein, and the deliberate policy of Stalinism, have aroused a wave of adventurism.

Individual terrorism has become common throughout the entire continent. The Stalinists in particular have combined a vulgarly chauvinist opportunism in their program with a stupid and criminal adventurism in action. The revolutionary party can only repeat all the classic arguments of Marxism against individual terrorism; they still retain today all their original validity. In discussions with workers under Stalinist influence, we must in particular point out the connection between terrorism and bureaucratism. The terrorist hero and the bureaucrat both want to act for the masses, apart from them. Both terrorism and bureaucratism reflect contempt for the incompetent masses who must be pulled out of their difficulties by the individual. We repeat: Nothing can be gained by individual attempts; they merely sacrifice precious devotion uselessly and delay the action of the masses. Of course, our criticism of terrorism does not arise from any moral indignation. We must constantly emphasize that we are on the side of the terrorists in their struggle against the oppressors, but that as against terrorism we are for more efficacious methods.

Certain forms of sabotage which are the action of individuals or of tiny isolated groups are scarcely to be distinguished from terrorism and are often nothing more than explosions of rage and despair, without any real efficacy. But, ever since the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, the Czech workers have undertaken to sabotage production *inside* the factories. Their example is now followed throughout all Europe.

Sabotage was a means of struggle of the youth of the labor movement, at a time when capitalism had to impose the discipline of the modern factory on the handicraft or peasant masses. It was then that there appeared the Scotch "ca'canny," anarcho-syndicalism in France, the I.W.W. in America. These movements represented only a brief passing tendency of the class struggle. The workers found in the strike a weapon which was both more effective and less costly.

Nazi oppression has rendered strikes extremely difficult in the Europe of today. Hence the workers have been obliged to have recourse to sabotage, which bears the relation to the strike that guerrilla warfare does to regular warfare. There is no doubt that throughout the entire continent the workers have often undertaken to slow down production and lower its

quality on their own initiative, without awaiting the summons of illegal organizations, thus demonstrating that this method has at present nothing artificial about it and that its "abnormal" character simply corresponds to "abnormal" conditions.

The revolutionary party must of course work to extend sabotage inside the factories in the occupied countries. The task is, above all, to interest in this the bulk of the workers of the plant and not to consider this work a technical job reserved to a few isolated "experts." This is equally important from the practical as well as the political point of view. Repression is rendered infinitely more difficult, and the collective nature of the struggle helps to overcome the atomization of the working class brought about by the crushing of its organizations. The first months of the German occupation were, in general, characterized by a disappearance of collective consciousness, each thinking only of saving himself, in his own way. This state of mind has already been overcome at least partially, precisely by the movement of national resistance. The revolutionaries must always endeavor to restore to the workers the consciousness of their collective power.

The collective forms which can be taken by sabotage within the factories are: the slowing down of production, the lowering of its quality, the rapid wearing out of the machines. Everywhere that they can, revolutionaries must bring about the formation of a committee inside the factory—illegal, obviously—which organizes and supervises the work of sabotage and protection against stool-pigeons. It is this collective sabotage, which regroups the workers around a common goal and against which repression can only with difficulty operate, which represents the greatest danger for Hitler. Sabotage, when conceived of as a direct aid to the Soviet Union, does not exclude isolated acts against particularly sensitive points in the economic and military apparatus (power plants, tunnels and railroad bridges, etc.). But all that can be done in this field will always remain relatively limited. Only by taking on a mass character can sabotage really threaten the German military machine, and it can acquire this character only at the center of the collective strength of the workers, in their places of work.

"But," a Stalinist might say, "do not the interests of the defense of the USSR not justify individual terrorism? Aren't you yourselves for the defense of the Soviet Union? The European masses are engaged in a war against the Nazis behind the front—and in war all methods are good! Of course, Marxists are right in opposing terrorism considered as a means of 'exciting' the masses to struggle, but now the killing of German officers by revolvers or bombs is a simple war measure." This reasoning, which reflects the present policy of the Stalinists in the occupied countries, betrays an ignorance of military art as well as of revolutionary policy. It is precisely in a serious struggle that all methods are not good. The task of the military chief or of the revolutionary militant consists in choosing the means which lead to the end and putting aside those which are sterile or even harmful.

Terrorism, by its very nature, always retains an individual character. "Mass terrorism" would be—the revolution. All the terrorism today is, when all is said and done, scarcely a pin-prick for Hitler. But, on the other side of the ledger, the liabilities are enormous. The best working-class blood is shed without counting. The disproportion between the sacrifices and the results obtained can engender nothing but discouragement and passivity. It is not easy to judge from afar, but it seems that the movement of resistance suffered a serious

set-back in Czechoslovakia after the assassination of Heydrich.

We have always maintained that the defense of the USSR is indissolubly linked with the class struggle of the international proletariat. This principle has direct consequences for the defense of the workers' state. Stalin sacrificed the revolutionary interests of the international proletariat for alliances with the imperialist bourgeoisies. After the successive defeats of the European proletariat, engendered by Stalinism, the catastrophe was inevitable. Today, Stalin tries to jump over the consequences of his fatal policy by hurling the workers of occupied Europe into the adventure of terrorism. He thus not only blocks their revolutionary future, but also does a disservice to the military interests of the USSR.

The sabotage of production within the factories can produce infinitely greater results than can the murder of a few hundred or even a few thousand German officers or collaborationists. Awakening the collective initiative of the working class instead of paralyzing it, sabotage of production can attain a scope which no wave of terrorism can ever reach. At the same time it accelerates the regroupment of the working class, recreates its collective consciousness, and prepares it to enter its revolutionary future. The last few months have revealed that Hitler is struggling desperately to keep up his armament production. Sabotage in the factories represents for him a mortal danger. But one of the most important conditions for its spread is turning our back on individual terrorism and all forms of adventurism. Even in the Europe of today the USSR's immediate military requirements and the interests of the European proletariat's revolutionary future completely coincide.

We must further note that individual terrorism is an obstacle to fraternization with the German soldiers. It tightens the bonds between soldiers and officers instead of breaking them. The German military authorities take the greatest precautions to prevent contact between troops and inhabitants. Every attempt to spread propaganda among the German soldiers is punished with extreme severity, for this is a mortal danger to the Nazi generals. This is also why the task of fraternization can never be abandoned by revolutionists.

The Guerrillas

In central and southeastern Europe geographic and social conditions have permitted the appearance of guerrillas. They have sprung up especially in regions where the population is spread out, where railroads are scarce, where communication is difficult. They are principally peasant movements. But not entirely. Whenever they were able, groups of workers have joined the bands. It has even been noticed that in Czechoslovakia guerrilla bands have been formed directly by workers. It is reported that "densely wooded areas are furnishing a place of safety to the hundreds of saboteurs from the mines and the iron and steel plants of Kladno, to organizers of passive resistance, and leaders of strikers. After a recent clash which occurred between the Nazi police and Czech miners who were found to be in possession of dynamite, the Germans undertook to drive the refugees from this territory; but the fugitives, having full support of the population, successfully eluded the members of the Gestapo." In various parts of Poland the peasants have formed guerrilla bands, which are now aided by Soviet partisans who have succeeded in filtering through the Nazi lines. Guerrilla bands are also very active in Ruthenia.

But it is in the Balkans that the movement has taken on the

greatest proportions, and especially in what was yesterday Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was a product of Versailles, financially supported by France as a bastion of her hegemony in Europe. The fact that the Belgrade government ruled over at least five different nationalities was one of the reasons for the quick German victory. The country was occupied by the Germans and Italians. The Yugoslav state was destroyed. Under the weight of unprecedented oppression, the peasants have started to gather together in the mountains to resist. The imperialist war was succeeded by a national struggle, half revolt, half war, against the German and Italian oppressors, as well as against the governments they set up in Belgrade and Zagreb. This struggle is going through many vicissitudes. Bands are entirely dispersed only to form again later on. Villages revolting prematurely are crushed. Officially, several hundred villages have already been reported razed by the Germans and Italians.

Moreover, the movement is widely divided. Information is scarce and often rather dubious, nevertheless it is clear that various bands operate separately. They are separated by national differences: Serbians, Slovenes, Bosnians, Montenegrins, etc.; they are also separated politically and socially. The Chetniks, a Serbian organization under the direct control of Mikhailovich, seems to be the most reactionary. It opposes any social change and thinks only of re-establishing the previous regime. Other bands have set up "Communist" or "Soviet" regimes. What is the reality behind these words? It is rather difficult to tell. These bands are composed, it seems, of peasants; mine workers have joined many of them and now form a substantial proportion of some bands. At any rate, the differences are great enough to have provoked armed conflicts among the various bands, and Mikhailovich has undertaken repressions against these "Communists."

Thus, as soon as the weight of oppression is somewhat lightened, the national struggle immediately raises the social question. The example of Yugoslavia shows, although on a limited scale, the extremely unstable character of the movement of national resistance in Europe today and how it leads immediately to the class struggle. Of course, we are entirely on the side of the bands of poor peasants and workers in their conflicts with the reactionary elements. But that does not mean abandoning the ground of national independence. Criticism of Mikhailovich and other conservative groups should proceed on the basis of liberating the country: Mikhailovich's repressions sabotage the resistance; in order to arouse the peasants we have to open up a social perspective for them, etc. However, temporary military agreements between the revolutionary groups and Mikhailovich are still entirely possible in the future.

Cannot the movement of resistance completely merge with the imperialist war? This is possible and would be nothing new. Many national wars have ended up as imperialist wars. If the Anglo-American camp should open a new front in the Balkans, the national character of the struggle would disappear immediately. But this is tomorrow's possibility, not today's reality. At the present time, the struggle in the Balkans is a link in the whole movement of resistance of the European peoples to Nazism, and it thus takes on great importance. The guerrillas, being principally a peasant movement, create the greatest danger for the states where quasi-feudal relations still prevail in the countryside (especially Hungary, but also Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia). Revolution in central and southeastern Europe, where the agrarian problem has never been resolved even in the bourgeois manner, will kindle large

peasant revolts, and the present movement of resistance is their direct preparation.

Four months ago the Hungarian government officially announced the arrest of three hundred officers and non-commissioned officers of the Hungarian army for having helped guerrilla bands in Yugoslavia, Poland and the USSR by transmitting arms and information to them. We can measure the importance of this incident if we recall that Hungary is one of the countries where the landlords' rule over the peasants is most brutal. The resistance in Yugoslavia has called forth revolt in all the neighboring countries. Guerrillas have appeared in Greece, Macedonia, Rumania and Bulgaria. Even in Croatia, to which Hitler gave formal independence, the peasants are starting to form guerrilla bands against the Italians. It would be imprudent to exaggerate the present political consciousness of these movements or to build too great hopes on them as long as they have not found a leadership in the urban proletariat. But to deny their importance for the revolution and to remain indifferent toward them would be blind passivity.

From National Resistance to the Proletarian Revolution

Exactly what role will the demand for national liberation play in the preparation and development of the European revolution? Only the historian of the future will be able to answer this question precisely and to him will fall the lot of definitively measuring the place occupied by national revolt in the great torrent of hatred, of anger, of despair and of hope, which carries the peoples of occupied Europe toward the revolution. To us falls the lot of giving an answer for action. This answer is: The slogan of national liberation has played up to the present, and will continue to play for some time, an important role in regrouping the masses, overcoming their atomization and drawing them into the political struggle. This is more than enough for it to appear on our banner.

Through what concrete forms of struggle will the movement of resistance in the various European countries pass? How will it connect with the proletarian revolution? The answer to these questions depends on the relationship of the contending forces, in particular the unfolding of the imperialist war. If Germany should maintain a firm grip on the European continent for many years, it would be difficult for the movement to raise itself above its present political level, which is still primitive, and would threaten to take an increasingly narrow national character. But the perspective of a long German domination over Europe must now appear to be more and more illusory even to Hitler himself.

The resistance of the Soviet workers and *kolkhozniki* shows more and more clearly the limits of the German military machine. The progressive weakening of German imperialism will bring with it not only a quantitative multiplication of revolutionary actions throughout the continent, but will give a new character to the struggle. Terrorist attempts will be superseded by the action of the masses.

During recent weeks the first signs of this transformation have appeared. Athens has seen a general transport workers' strike lasting several days. The workers of the Renault factories, heart of the Parisian proletariat, have threatened to go out on strike several times. The Belgian miners of the Borinage have recently unleashed several strike movements, and even, it is reported, obtained the liberation

of hostages from the German authorities by threatening a general strike of miners. Above all, the present movement of the French workers of the unoccupied zone has aroused great masses.

These are the first signs of profound changes in the situation. Its principal causes are the weakening of the German oppressor and the rebirth of the collective consciousness of the masses. The renewal of activity of the masses will cause the wave of individual terrorism to recede by giving more reality each day to the perspective of the revolution. Mutinies have already broken out, it appears, among the German soldiers in Norway and among the Italian troops. It is hard to determine the amount of truth in this information. However, it is at least plausible and, if premature, the future will give it truth. The mutinies will lead directly to the fraternization of German soldiers with the oppressed peoples. The common struggle against common oppression will unite the masses around the program of the Socialist United States of Europe.

The demand for national liberation and participation in the present movement of resistance do not in any way imply that we must expect new bourgeois national revolutions or some revolution of a special character which would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "national," "popular" or "democratic." Any large revolution is "national" in the sense that it carries along the great majority of the nation, and the "popular" and "democratic" character of any revolution worthy of the name is apparent at first glance. But we cannot transform this sociological description, essentially superficial, into a political program without turning our backs on the realities of the social classes, that is, abandoning Marxist ground. Both the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917 were national, popular and democratic, but the first consolidated the reign of private property while the other ended it. That is why one was bourgeois and the other proletarian. As for the coming European revolution, its proletarian character will be apparent from its very first steps.

But will we not pass through a transition period after the fall of the Hitlerian empire? To those who pose this question, we must reply with another question: Of what transition are you speaking? A transition from what to what? A transition from the bourgeois revolution to the proletarian revolution? Or a transition between the Nazi dictatorship and the dictatorship of the proletariat? These are two very different things. Naturally, the proletarian revolution will pass through many vicissitudes, pauses, even temporary retreats. But the first thing to understand, if one does not wish to commit error after error, is that it will be a proletarian revolution struggling with the bourgeois counter-revolution.

Is a "democratic" stage, that is a renewal of bourgeois parliamentarism, possible after the collapse of Nazism? Such an eventuality is not excluded. But such a regime would not be at all the fruit of a bourgeois revolution or of a non-class "democratic revolution"; it would be the temporary and unstable product of a proletarian revolution which has not yet been completed and still has to settle accounts with the bourgeois counter-revolution. He who has not completely penetrated this dialectic has nothing to offer to the European masses.

The present situation in the occupied countries is still profoundly reactionary. The task of the revolutionary socialists is still propaganda work, the gathering together and the formation of cadres. It is our duty to show, everywhere and always, the necessity of organized action of the masses. To all forms of adventurism flourishing at present, we must counterpose the organization of revolutionary violence. In the face of every carefully organized action, on a large or small scale, the Nazis will be disconcerted. They have no "secret weapon" against revolution. They were victorious in Germany only thanks to the incapacity of the workers' leaders and never have had to face real actions of the masses. When these multiply, the Nazis will know how to answer them only with that combination of violence and imbecility which characterizes all regimes condemned by history.

Twenty-five Years of the Revolution

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

Twenty-five years ago the Russian workers, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, carried through the first victorious proletarian revolution. This anniversary finds the Soviet Union in the gravest crisis of its entire existence. We Trotskyists remain what we have always been: the best defenders of the Soviet Union.

The victory of the Russian revolution, as Lenin said, opened up a new epoch in world history. For this new epoch in which we live the experience and lessons of the Russian revolution are still the decisive ones.

The Russian revolution, which resulted directly from the first imperialist world war, demonstrated irrefutably that in modern society there is only one class capable of solving all the burning social problems and of providing the program and leadership for the attainment of social progress. That class is the working class.

Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, were the first to discover, analyze and clarify the historic mission of the workers under capitalism. They did this in the middle

of the nineteenth century, at a time when capitalism was still in its ascendancy. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, the Russian workers proved in action in 1917 that the scientific doctrine of Marxism was not a utopia but the living reality.

Let us briefly review the unparalleled achievements of the Russian working class. They comprised a minority of the population in one of the most backward countries of Europe. But their numerical strength was not at all the true gauge of their internal powers and resources. They attained power. Upon establishing the workers' rule in the territories of the former Czarist empire, they could not proceed immediately to the solution of socialist tasks as will the workers in the advanced capitalist countries like the United States, England, Germany. The Russian workers found themselves confronted with tasks far more complex. They, like the workers in all backward countries, had first to accomplish the tasks of the democratic revolution, above all the agrarian revolution. Historically, these tasks were those of another class, the capitalist

class. But the belated Russian capitalists, like their counterparts in all other backward countries, were not only impotent to carry out these tasks but actually opposed their solution. To fulfill the democratic revolution it was necessary to overthrow both the Czarist autocracy and the Russian capitalists. This is precisely what the Russian workers did in an alliance with the peasants in October 1917.

They swept from the face of the earth the most reactionary government which had existed up to that time in Europe. They purged the country of all the rubbish of feudalism. They carried through the democratic revolution more completely than was ever done before. Had the Russian workers accomplished nothing more, this alone would have amply justified their revolution. However, as is well known, they did not stop with this.

The backward and predominantly rural economy of the former Czarist empire had been shattered during the years of Czarist participation in the first World War. During the eight months of the Provisional Government, there was a further decline. Russia was bankrupt. Upon this bankrupt country, German imperialism imposed the infamous peace of Brest-Litovsk. And over and above this, the combined forces of world reaction then imposed three years of civil war, the most bitter and destructive in modern times.

It was under these conditions and against such insuperable odds that the Russian workers proved the ability of workers not only to get power but to keep it.

In the very heat of struggle the Red Army was organized. This task was entrusted to Leon Trotsky, who remained Commissar of War throughout the civil war and for almost five years thereafter. The onslaught of the counter-revolution and of imperialist intervention was beaten back on 22 fronts.

There was nothing accidental about this epoch-making victory of the Soviet Union at its very birth. The lessons of the civil war apply with just as much force today as they did in 1918-21.

What Leninism Built and Stalinism Destroyed

The principal instrument of the Russian revolution was the Bolshevik Party. This party prepared and insured the October revolution. It created the Soviet state and safeguarded its conquests. The Bolshevik Party was built by Lenin and his collaborators in more than thirty years of irreconcilable struggle. Stalin destroyed it completely in less than a decade. He murdered entire generations of Bolsheviks, the oldest as well as the youngest. During the infamous Moscow Frame-ups (1935-38) he killed all of Lenin's closest collaborators—Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov, Serebryakov, I. N. Smirnov, Piatakov, Preobrazhensky and countless others. In the same purges and subsequent ones that were kept secret, he destroyed the next generation which had raised him to power. He ruthlessly crushed the youth. The *Komsomols*—the Russian YCL—were erased as a political organization in 1936. Even this "reorganized" *Komsomol* was purged and re-purged. As late as May 1940, over 70 per cent of the leaders of this organization were removed. The party and the youth have ceased to exist politically. They are now bureaucratic shells completely isolated from the masses. They are not even permitted to issue statements on the war. The burning and immediate task of the Soviet workers is to reconstitute their

revolutionary party, and thus regain the indispensable instrument for the preservation of the workers' state.

The Russian revolution revealed the soviets—the Councils of Workers, Soldiers, Agricultural Laborers and Peasants—as the most natural, most efficient and most democratic form of government in the transition period between capitalism and socialism. Lenin hailed the soviets as a million times more democratic than any bourgeois parliamentary republic. And this was true of the soviets under Lenin and Trotsky. They played a central role in the civil war. Victory would have been impossible without them. They welded the alliance between the workers and peasants against all the exploiters. They assisted and facilitated the work of the Revolutionary Military Council. They mobilized the draftees; conducted a struggle against deserters, collected foodstuffs, raw materials, supplies. Above all, they developed the initiative and the creative abilities of the masses themselves. Stalin abolished the soviets long ago. They were replaced by the fiction of the Stalinist "Constitution" and its equally fictitious "Supreme Council." This handpicked body has not been summoned a single time since the outbreak of the war. Even its Presidium, of which Stalin is now chairman, has played no role whatever. The revival of the soviets, and of workers' democracy without which they are only a sham, remains essential for the successful defense of the USSR.

Lenin and Trotsky viewed the trade unions as a school of Communism and as one of the institutions through which the workers ruled in the factories and in the soviets. Democracy in the trade unions was for the Bolsheviks an indispensable condition for the preservation and advancement of the workers' state. The last time there was a convention of the Red Trade Unions was in 1932. The trade unions have become the same silent lifeless shells as the destroyed party, the suppressed *Komsomols*, the "Supreme Council of the Soviets," not to mention the Third International and its "helmsman," Dimitrov.

Victory was gained under Lenin and Trotsky because under their leadership the workers depended on their own program, their own strength, their own organizations. For lack of these they suffer defeats today. The responsibility for these defeats must be placed where it belongs, not on the workers but on the treacherous Stalinist leadership.

At the termination of the civil war, the Russian workers were for the first time free to turn their attention and efforts to the task of economic reconstruction. The country was in a catastrophic condition. "Industrial production for 1921, immediately after the end of the civil war, amounted at most to one-fifth of the pre-war level. The production of steel fell from 4.2 million tons to 183 thousand tons—that is, to 1/23 of what it had been. The total harvest of grain decreased from 801 million hundredweight to 503 million in 1922. That was a year of terrible hunger. Foreign trade at the same time plunged from 2.9 billion rubles to 30 million. The collapse of the productive forces surpassed anything of the kind that history had ever witnessed." (Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 22.)

The imperialist enemies of the workers' state and their Menshevik flunkies were certain that the Bolsheviks could never emerge from the economic chaos, famine and ruin into which the combined forces of world reaction had plunged the country. To make things doubly sure, the imperialists maintained a blockade. The restoration of Soviet economy did indeed appear to be a hopeless task. The country's economic life had to be rebuilt literally from the beginning in almost

every sphere. But the Russian workers once again accomplished the seemingly impossible. In the space of a few years, despite the fact that the work of reconstruction had to be carried on in conditions of isolation from the world market, they brought production back to pre-war levels.

In making their revolution the Russian workers had banked—as they had every right to—upon the help of the workers in other countries, particularly of the advanced capitalist lands. They looked upon their revolution as the first stage of the world revolution that would free all countries from the yoke of imperialism and allow the development of productive forces on a world scale, through world cooperation and planning. This international socialist outlook is simply the political expression for the needs and realities of modern technique and industry, and therefore of all the peoples today. But the treachery of the parties of the Second International enabled the world bourgeoisie to emerge from the post-war crisis and to keep the Soviet Union isolated. The young parties of the newly found Communist International were as yet too weak and inexperienced to wrest power from the class enemy. This unexpected tardiness of the world revolution brought about a temporary stabilization between the young workers' republic and the decaying system of imperialism. And this unstable correlation of forces in its turn laid the basis for the growth of political reaction inside and outside the Soviet Union.

From the Czarist empire, the Soviet working class had inherited along with backwardness an enormous bureaucracy. Considerable sections of these *chinovniks* (Czarist functionaries) were retained in the machinery of the newly founded state. At the same time, the conditions of backwardness and isolation provided a favorable milieu for the solidification and intrenchment of a new bureaucratic layer. These new formations merged with the old. The bureaucratization of the government led in its turn to the growth of the bureaucracy within the Bolshevik Party and finally resulted in its complete destruction by Stalin.

This rising Soviet bureaucracy, with its chieftain Stalin, bears the chief responsibility for the continued isolation of the Soviet Union and for the subsequent delay of the world revolution. Grown conservative, this bureaucracy brought about the defeat of the German workers in 1923 through its influence upon and control of the Third International. From 1923 on, Stalin and his flunkies began to lose confidence in the power of the world working class. The preservation of their own power and privileges became more and more their prime consideration. In the autumn of 1924, after Lenin's death, Stalin promulgated the false and reactionary theory of "socialism in one country."

The uncompromising internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky taught the workers that it was necessary to make "the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capitalism." Under Stalin it became more and more the doctrine of the Third International to make the greatest international sacrifices for the sake of safeguarding the "irrevocable triumph of socialism" in the USSR. Stalinism led section after section of the world working class to defeats, each graver than the one preceding.

These defeats increased the isolation of the Soviet Union. At the same time they facilitated the intrenchment of Stalin's personal dictatorship over the workers' state.

But even under the reign of a monstrous, rapacious, inefficient, self-seeking and self-perpetuating bureaucracy, the Soviet working class was able to demonstrate to the world

the superiority of the socialist methods of production. The bureaucracy sapped but failed to destroy the inner power and resources of the isolated proletariat. Under the Five Year Plans, Soviet industry and agriculture developed at unprecedented tempos. Entire new branches of industry were developed. The economic gains of the USSR are all the more significant since they were made in the period of the most profound and debilitating economic crisis in the history of world capitalism. The Soviet workers did not and could not build socialism as the criminals and misleaders in the Kremlin boasted. But they did prove once and for all that the abolition of capitalism assures the possibility of unprecedented economic progress even under the most adverse conditions imaginable, even in a backward country, even under conditions of isolation and under a leadership that mismanaged, wasted and devoured. Many of these conquests are now charred ruins. Many others are in the hands of the Nazis. But the significance of these successes can never be deleted from the annals of history or lost to mankind.

The economic successes of the Soviet Union point the road of salvation to our war-torn civilization. Decaying imperialism is now engaged in a work of destruction which threatens to throw mankind back to barbarism. Untold wealth has already been expended, and vaster amounts are scheduled for annihilation. Not only entire cities but enormous productive areas have been reduced to rubble and wasteland. Completely geared to their respective war machines, the productive forces of the most advanced countries are deteriorating more and more rapidly. Cold, hunger and disease hover over continents while millions die behind the lines or in the global battlefields.

Each additional month of warfare poses more and more imperiously before the peoples of all countries the question: How can we ever emerge from and repair the havoc of this war?

The prospects of an imperialist peace—which is itself being postponed by "democrats" and fascists alike to a more and more indefinite future—are no less fearsome than the present reality. In peace as in war, decaying capitalism has nothing to offer except greater oppression, degradation and suffering. Capitalism will, if permitted to emerge from this war, undertake the work of reconstruction, and this under conditions of post-war stagnation, depression, crises and armies of unemployed that will make the last economic convulsion of 1929-1939 seem like "good times." Capitalist diplomats, if permitted, will arrange another peace which will be only a preparation for still another and vaster slaughter. But the experience of the Russian revolution has already pointed out the only road of salvation: Only socialist methods can make good the ravages of the Second World War, to say nothing of moving society forward.

If the Soviet workers, in a degenerated workers' state, were able to achieve what they did, what will the German proletariat, under the regime of a genuine workers' democracy, be able to accomplish with the resources of their country? Or the workers of England? Or of the United States? What will the Socialist United States of Europe do?

In the light of the Russian experience these are no longer questions of speculation or theory. They are today questions of fact. The masses of the world have nowhere to turn for guidance except to the Russian revolution. From it alone can they gather renewed hope and strength and courage.

The Stalinist bureaucracy has from the beginning tried to usurp the credit for the economic achievements under the Five

Year Plans. Those petty-bourgeois fainthearts and deserters who today deny the proletarian character of the Soviet Union are in effect trying to perpetuate this monstrous lie of Stalinism, but in a different form. They assign these achievements to a "new exploitive class." But planned economy and its successes are not, as these betrayers of Marxism claim, the product of a mythical new class of managers and bureaucrats. They stem directly from the October revolution whose banner Stalinism succeeded in usurping.

The program of industrialization and planned economy was literally forced upon the bureaucracy by the irreconcilable struggle of the Soviet proletarian vanguard, the Left Opposition (1923-29) led by Leon Trotsky. Having brought the country to the very edge of disaster by their domestic policy, the bureaucracy had no other recourse left except to adopt this program and to apply it in a terribly distorted form. Despite Stalin and against the Stalinist regime, the Soviet workers carried through on their shoulders the entire burden of the Plans. No amount of falsifications will alter these facts.

The Strangled Revolution Still Lives

For the last seventeen months, the working class of Russia has been compelled to fulfill, once again under the greatest handicaps and the most adverse conditions, the great historical task of the defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack. They entered into their titanic struggle against the Nazi invasion without their most qualified military leaders. Shortly before the outbreak of the war, Stalin beheaded the Red Army. In the space of a single year—May 1937 to May 1938—the Red Army was stripped of all those commanders who had been recruited during the civil war. Together with them were removed those rank and file fighters who rose to command in the next 15 years. Between 30,000 and 40,000 officers were imprisoned, exiled or murdered. Among those executed was the flower of the General Staff—Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, Yakir and the other generals who had modernized and mechanized the Red Army, who devised the strategy and

plans of defense and who built the fortifications on the Western and Eastern fronts. In August 1940, Stalin crowned his crimes by assassinating Leon Trotsky, the only man to whom the Soviet masses could have turned with confidence for leadership.

Moreover, Stalinism has deprived them of their most powerful and reliable weapons and allies: the program of the socialist struggle and the aid of the revolutionary workers of Germany, Europe and the whole world. Even at this critical hour victory would be assured if the embattled masses of the USSR raised the banner of revolutionary struggle for socialism and summoned the workers of Europe, above all those of Germany, to join them in the struggle against the imperialist oppressors, "democratic" and fascist alike and for the establishment of the Socialist United States of Europe. But this road is barred by Stalin and the Soviet masses have to continue the fight thus handicapped. Every day, every hour of this isolated struggle drains away vital blood, vital territories. Because of Stalinism the Soviet Union has suffered staggering and unnecessary sacrifices and losses. The further continuation of the struggle poses more and more imperiously before the workers of the Soviet Union the problem of how to remove this Stalinist incubus without endangering the defense at the front.

Only traitors can spread the lie that this heroic and tragic struggle against such insuperable odds is a reactionary one. The Soviet soldiers, workers and peasants are fighting one of the most progressive wars ever fought. Beneath contempt are those who try to explain away their incredible military feats and resistance as a docility of slaves driven to slaughter. The truth is that they are not fighting to perpetuate the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Nor are they fighting, as the Stalinist lie has it, a national war for the sake of "Holy Russia." They are fighting and will continue to fight to the end in order to protect the conquests of the October revolution. They are demonstrating on the battlefields that the October revolution, although strangled, still lives on.

A Defamer of Trotsky

By JOSEPH HANSEN

The August number of the *New International*, organ of the petty-bourgeois opposition which split from the Fourth International in 1940, features an article by Max Shachtman entitled, "Trotsky's Struggle Against Stalinism." Ostensibly written to praise Trotsky, the article actually defames him. It continues the attempts of the former allies of James Burnham to assign to Trotsky a place in history that will accrue to their advantage. Their previous attempts have been answered in our press.*

In defending Trotsky and his memory we are not merely exposing sniveling petty-bourgeois renegades. That is the least of our concerns. Our concern is to protect the name and teachings of Leon Trotsky. If Trotsky were alive today there is little doubt how he would answer his present defamers. The larger part of their temerity arises solely from the fact that his voice has been silenced. Doubly incumbent

upon his disciples is it, therefore, to ward off these light-fingered gentlemen who would despoil the priceless revolutionary treasure which Trotsky bequeathed us.

Shachtman's article, written "On the Second Anniversary of the Assassination," is directed ironically enough against "self-styled friends of the cause Trotsky represented" who do not understand how the Stalinist bureaucracy came into power in view of Trotsky's outstanding position of authority following the October revolution. This is a subject worthy of analysis; more than a few articles in our press have been devoted to this theme. But Shachtman is interested neither in defending Trotsky's analysis of Stalinism, with which he disagrees, nor in attacking the "self-styled friends" with whom he belongs. The article is designed with a different end in view. It is an obeisance before the icon which our self-styled friend has carved out of Trotsky. It is intended to spread the impression that he is somehow still friendly toward Trotskyism; at the same time the article is intended to belittle Trotsky in favor of the genius of Max Shachtman.

*See "Trotsky's Last Battle Against the Revisionists," by Joseph Hansen, *Fourth International*, November 1940; and "On Some Critics of Trotsky," by Marc Loris, loc. cit., August 1942.

Our inodest friend first attempts to belittle Trotsky by assuming that the Russian revolution has been "finally destroyed." Trotsky waged implacable war against this assumption. Shachtman fails to mention that! Thereby he deliberately creates the impression that the Old Man's mind was a trifle befuddled in his later years, since presumably he was incapable of grasping what has happened to the Soviet Union whereas Shachtman saw through it all with no more effort than might be required in skimming through the articles of such disillusioned petty-bourgeois intellectuals as Eastman, Hook, Lyons, Souvarine and Professor Burnham who reached a similar position well in advance of this critic of Trotsky.

Secondly he attempts to belittle Trotsky by indicating that the Old Man was wrong in his estimate of Shachtman and his role as Burnham's attorney, whereas the gifted critic, who sees farther and deeper than Trotsky, was right then and is right now. Trotsky noted this tendency in his opponent in 1940 when he wrote, "In a word, during the space of two or three weeks Shachtman has discovered that I make mistakes ninety-nine times out of a hundred, especially where Shachtman himself happens to become involved." These words probe the heart of the latest article, providing the key to understanding why our mental wonder finds it necessary to continue his defamation of Trotsky.

We quote from Shachtman's article: "And, with all the errors in judgment that he (Trotsky) made—and they were more numerous and often much more serious and harmful to the cause than some of his newly-acquired idolators are willing to admit, since they believe that he must be presented not merely as a revolutionary genius but as an infallible archangel—his methods and the considerations of his dilettante or muddleheaded critics." (The typographical error—*if* such it is—occurs in the original.)

What errors of Trotsky are referred to by our infallible theoretician who is not so impressed with Trotsky's infallibility? The ones Trotsky acknowledged, such as his August 1912 bloc against Lenin? Scarcely. Trotsky himself called Shachtman's attention to this error, asking him not to repeat in 1940 the error made in 1912. Does he refer to the "errors" invented by the Stalinists? Obviously not; the article is directed against Stalinism. Only one conclusion is possible, the benevolent corrector of Trotsky's errors is referring to Trotsky's "numerous" "serious and harmful" errors in relation to one Shachtman; that is, the "errors" of which our self-styled friend is unable to speak without either acknowledging his betrayal of Marxism and trying to make up for the past by returning to the program of Trotskyism or else, if he continues to adhere to his present program, destroying the last pretense on his part of any connection with Trotskyism. Our bold critic quails before the horns of this dilemma. To touch them would reveal his defamation of Trotsky.

"Self-Styled Friends . . ."

Proof that Shachtman has an ulterior end in view when he praises Trotsky's struggle against Stalinism is likewise furnished by the complete absence of a single reference in his article to the *petty-bourgeois* character of Stalinism. It is not accidental that the article suffers a lapse in this respect.

Perhaps Trotsky's greatest single contribution to Marxism was his analysis of that variety of petty-bourgeois politics called Stalinism. The Marxist struggle against petty-bourgeois tendencies goes back to the youth of Marx and Engels

when they battled the Hegelians, the Utopians and Proudhon. All the great Marxists since then have familiarized themselves with those early struggles as well as those that followed, with the Bakuninists, anarchists, Blanquists, then the revisionists of Marxism such as Bernstein. The struggle against petty-bourgeois tendencies runs like a guiding thread throughout the entire development of Marxism. But Trotsky analyzed in addition the old phenomena in an entirely new manifestation—petty-bourgeois politics in power in a workers' state in imperialist encirclement. His brilliant development of the theory of permanent revolution in his early days in a sense constituted only preparatory work for his crowning achievement—the Marxist analysis of Stalinism. Trotsky, in brief, could be considered something of an authority on the characteristics of petty-bourgeois politics and groups which manifest the disease.

Our theoretician, however, does not so much as breathe the word "petty-bourgeois" in his entire article, either in referring to Stalinism or in referring to the "self-styled friends." Not because he has not heard the word before. Trotsky himself attempted to familiarize his relentless critic with the word and its meaning in 1939-40. In fact Trotsky's final struggle as the leader of world Marxism against petty-bourgeois politics was not only against the Stalinist variety but more particularly against a recurrence of the old classic variety in the faction of Burnham-Shachtman and company.

The struggle with Burnham-Shachtman and company occurred mainly over the question on which Trotsky made his greatest theoretical contribution. Trotsky maintained that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers' state which must be defended unconditionally against imperialist attack. Burnham rejected this viewpoint—it was at the time of the imperialist howl over the invasion of Finland—and called into question Trotsky's analytical abilities. The critic who blesses us with pearls of wisdom about Trotsky's errors defended Burnham's right to his erroneous views although he himself did not agree with them, he said. Today, however, he has openly reached Burnham's position of 1939-40.

That is why there is a ludicrous note in the article when it attacks "self-styled friends of the cause Trotsky represented." It reminds us that our intransigent revolutionary genius once joined with the anti-Marxist Burnham to write an article against just such petty-bourgeois "friends" of Trotskyism as Shachtman is today, an article entitled "Intellectuals in Retreat." Trotsky criticized Shachtman severely for agreeing with Burnham in this article to evade the question of the Marxist method of analysis, reminding him that these petty-bourgeois "friends" could not properly be answered from the Marxist viewpoint unless one exposed *their* method of analysis, that is, their rejection of dialectical materialism. Our critic's present article is constructed on the same framework as "Intellectuals in Retreat"—minus Burnham's professorial decorations and Burnham's vigor. But far from heeding Trotsky's admonition, this errorless being who reproves the Old Man's errors has softened his criticism of the intellectual "friends" still further. Like "petty-bourgeois" the words "dialectical materialism" are exorcised. Now everything is reduced to miscomprehension of the magic touchstone that "Proper timing is connected inseparably with proper focusing." Brilliant genius indeed that can demonstrate the hollowness of Trotsky's advice by reducing the fundamental error of these "self-styled friends" to a question of amateur photography!

At one time Shachtman represented the revolutionary socialist movement, as it has developed in accordance with the

theory and practice taught by Leon Trotsky, as an outstanding journalist. Many radicals may have hoped with Trotsky, when Shachtman was preparing to desert the Fourth International, that "Upon reaching a certain point Shachtman will . . . pull himself together and begin the upward climb again." Trotsky's defamer, however, actuated by forces far greater than he could control, plunged without stopping. Today he stands outside the Fourth International; he is condemned and despised by every genuine representative of Trotsky's ideas, his following consists of no more than a miserable remnant of the petty-bourgeois group who stampeded behind bellwether Burnham into the "third camp." His political stock-in-trade consists now of nothing but defamation of Trotsky. A recapitulation of Trotsky's struggle with the petty-bourgeois opposition in the light of events which have transpired since then will show what depths Shachtman has reached.

1. The petty-bourgeois opposition differed with Trotsky on the question of dialectical materialism. "Witch doctor Burnham," as Trotsky called him, considered it a religion. As for Burnham's attorney, Trotsky said the following: "Precisely here begins Shachtman's betrayal—not a mere mistake as I wished to believe last year; but it is now clear an outright theoretical betrayal. Following in the footsteps of Burnham, Shachtman teaches the young revolutionary party that 'no one has yet demonstrated' presumably that dialectical materialism affects the political activity of the party. 'No one has yet demonstrated,' in other words, that Marxism is of any use in the struggle of the proletariat." (*New International*, March 1940.) Leon Trotsky warned the Fourth International, we repeat, that Shachtman by linking himself with Burnham in the way he did committed "outright theoretical betrayal." The sole response of Burnham's attorney to this date has been that he "would do it again and again tomorrow." He has not publicly changed his position since the death of Trotsky despite the fact that Burnham has openly gone over to the camp of the class enemy. Are we right in concluding that this constitutes one of the "errors" of Trotsky to which Trotsky's defamer still "following in the footsteps of Burnham" can only allude?

2. The petty-bourgeois opposition differed with Trotsky on the question of the class analysis of the Soviet Union. "Witch doctor Burnham" believed that a new exploiting class hitherto unknown to history stood at the head of the "former" workers' state. However, in view of the fact that Abern, the Jim Farley of socialism, still affirmed belief the Soviet Union was a workers' state and Burnham's attorney wished more leisure to think over the "problem," Burnham abstained from advancing his full views publicly. Trotsky remarked: "They permit themselves the luxury of differing on the fundamental question in order to solidarize on secondary questions. If this is Marxism and principled politics then I don't know what unprincipled combinationism means." Trotsky said to Burnham: "You draw your *political* conclusions from your *sociological* premise, even if you have temporarily slipped it into your brief case. Shachtman draws exactly the same political conclusions without a sociological premise; he adapts himself to you. Abern seeks to profit equally both from the hidden premise and the absence of a premise for his 'organizational' combinations. This is the real and not the diplomatic situation in the camp of the opposition. You proceed as an anti-Marxist; Shachtman and Abern as *Platonic* Marxists. Who is worse, it is not easy to determine." (*Fourth International*, May 1940.) Who was right, Trotsky or the critic with

an allergy to Trotsky's "errors"? On deserting the petty-bourgeois group which he had stampeded out of the Fourth International, Burnham was honest enough to admit that Trotsky had been right in his analysis of Burnham's real motivations. He opened his brief-case and produced a book, *The Managerial Revolution*, an elaboration of his fundamental position in the faction struggle. Burnham's attorney thereupon adopted Burnham's "*sociological* premise" in regard to the class nature of the Soviet Union as justification for the "political" conclusion rejecting unconditional defense of the Soviet Union. Are we right in concluding that the charge Shachtman engaged in "*unprincipled combinationism*" and acted as a "*Platonic Marxist*" likewise constitutes one of the "errors" to which Trotsky's defamer can only allude?

3. The petty-bourgeois opposition differed with Trotsky on the key political question of the day, unconditional defense of the Soviet Union. They did so at first in a very shame-faced manner—if the Allies intervened they would leap to the defense, but in the war with Finland, etc., no. Trotsky probed their squirmings: "The attempt of the conjunctural defeatists, i.e., the adventurers in defeatism, to extricate themselves from their difficulty by promising that in the event the Allies intervene they will change their defeatist policy to a defensist one is a contemptible evasion." (*Fourth International*, June 1940.) "We are presented here with a rounded-out theory of *defeatism*. . . . But Shachtman can't bring himself to say so." Burnham even held—and his attorney backed him up—that by defending the Soviet Union the Fourth International gave "objective support" to Nazi Germany. "Educated witch doctor Burnham's reasoning on the theme that by defending the USSR we *thereby* defend Hitler," remarked Trotsky, "is a neat little specimen of petty-bourgeois fat-headedness which seeks to force contradictory reality into the framework of a two-dimensional syllogism." Who was right in this key question? When the Nazi armies attacked, our intransigent hero, who is so bent on straightening Trotsky's "deviations," leaped—to the other side of the barricades. If the Old Man had lived what would he have said of this *outright political betrayal*? We can gain an idea from the sniveling cowardice with which Trotsky's defamer dares only allude to this "error" of Trotsky.

4. The petty-bourgeois opposition differed with Trotsky on the question of unity of the Fourth International. When the Second World War broke out, they split the party. The record is so clear that it is impossible for them to squirm out of responsibility for this crime. Trotsky emphasized this: "The discussion in the Socialist Workers Party of the United States was thorough and democratic. The preparations for the convention were carried out with absolute loyalty. The minority participated in the convention, recognizing thereby its legality and authoritativeness. The majority offered the minority all the necessary guarantees permitting it to conduct a struggle for its own views after the convention. The minority demanded a license to appeal to the masses over the head of the party. The majority naturally rejected this monstrous pretension. . . . The petty-bourgeois minority . . . split from the proletarian majority on the basis of a struggle against revolutionary Marxism." (*Socialist Appeal*, May 4, 1940.) In an internal bulletin, Trotsky's viewpoint is further recorded: "We have the fact that the minority split away from us, in spite of all the measures taken by the majority not to split. This signifies that their inner social feeling was such that it is impossible for them to go together with us. It is a petty-bourgeois tendency, not a proletarian." Are we right in

concluding that this too constitutes one of Trotsky's "errors" to which Trotsky's defamer dares only allude?

5. On deserting the Fourth International, the petty-bourgeois opposition stole the theoretical organ of the Socialist Workers Party. Trotsky did not let this pass: "The petty-bourgeois minority of the SWP split from the proletarian majority on the basis of a struggle against revolutionary Marxism. Burnham proclaimed dialectical materialism to be incompatible with his moth-eaten 'science.' Shachtman proclaimed revolutionary Marxism to be of no moment from the standpoint of 'practical tasks.' Abern hastened to hook up his little booth with the anti-Marxist bloc. And now these gentlemen label the magazine they filched from the party an 'organ of revolutionary Marxism.' What is this, if not ideological charlatanism?" Shachtman never attempted to answer Trotsky's charge that he had "filched" the theoretical organ of the SWP. Is this too one of the "errors" to which Trotsky's defamer dares only allude?

6. Shachtman poses as a "real" Trotskyist in contradistinction to the genuine disciples of Trotsky whom he calls "epigones" and "newly-acquired idolators." Our clever shy-ster would never have dared such defamation during Trotsky's lifetime. The Old Man's death increased his boldness. Now he feels free to pass himself off as Honest John, the Old Man's best friend even if the Old Man didn't know it. But Trotsky himself drew a definitive class line between himself and this petty-bourgeois sharper. "Only the other day Shachtman referred to himself in the press as a 'Trotskyist.' If *this* be Trotskyism then I at least am no Trotskyist. With the present ideas of Shachtman, not to mention Burnham, I have nothing in common. I used to collaborate actively with the *New International*, protesting in letters against Shachtman's frivolous attitude toward theory and his unprincipled concessions to Burnham, the strutting petty-bourgeois pedant. But at the time both Burnham and Shachtman were kept in check by the party and the International. Today the pressure of petty-bourgeois democracy has unbridled them. Toward their new magazine my attitude can only be the same as toward all other petty-bourgeois counterfeits of Marxism. As for their 'organizational methods' and political 'morality,' these evoke in me nothing but contempt.

"Had conscious agents of the class enemy operated through Shachtman, they could not have advised him to do anything different from what he himself has perpetrated. He united with anti-Marxists to wage a struggle against Marxism. He helped fuse together a petty-bourgeois faction against the workers. He refrained from utilizing internal party democracy and from making an honest effort to convince the proletarian majority. He engineered a split under the conditions of a world war. To crown it all, he threw over this split the veil of a petty and dirty scandal, which seems especially designed to provide our enemies with ammunition. Such are these 'democrats,' such are their 'morals!'" ("Petty-Bourgeois Moralists and the Proletarian Party.") This was Leon Trotsky's moral judgment of Shachtman. Are we right in assuming that this too constitutes one of the "errors" to which Trotsky's defamer can only allude?

Trotsky's Judgment of Shachtman

Trotsky analyzed Shachtman's position from the heights of theory right down to morals in the proletarian movement. His conclusions: "outright theoretical betrayal," "unprincipled combinationism," "rounded out defeatism," "ideological charlatanism," "petty-bourgeois counterfeits of Marxism," as bad

as "*conscious agents of the class enemy.*" This estimate of Shachtman and his associates, as we can see, did not result solely from differences over the question of the internal regime in the party as they tried to make out. On the contrary, it is based on differences over the most fundamental questions of Marxism, the very questions on which Trotsky could speak with the greatest authority. No attempt to weaken the devastating effects of this judgment by implying mental softness in Trotsky's last years can hope to succeed. Such an attempt is as futile as trying to evade the judgment by silence or sneaking allusions.

Nor need any petty-bourgeois sentimentalist feel that this conclusion derived from a bad personal attitude on the part of Trotsky toward the shining exemplar of petty-bourgeois politics. On the contrary. In political matters Trotsky was always a model of objectivity. Well known was his propensity to go far out of his way in the hope that a weak or failing comrade might be developed into a better revolutionary or at least saved to the movement. Trotsky sent an air mail letter to Shachtman:

"I believe that you are on the wrong side of the barricades, my dear friend. By your position you give courage to all the petty-bourgeois and anti-Marxist elements to fight our doctrine, our program and our tradition. I don't hope to convince you with these lines, but I do express the prognosis that if you refuse now to find a way towards collaboration with the Marxist wing against the petty-bourgeois revisionists, you will inevitably deplore for years and years the greatest error of your life.

"If I had the possibility I would immediately take an airplane to New York City in order to discuss with you for 48 or 72 hours uninterrupted. I regret very much that you don't feel in this situation the need to come here to discuss the question with me. Or do you? I should be happy. . . ."

This letter was signed in the warmest personal manner. As Shachtman knew thoroughly, the Old Man meant what he said to the bottom of his heart. But the self-styled friend *did not even see fit to reply.* This little incident reveals like a lancet this defamer's real personal attitude toward Trotsky. Whatever grudge might have been involved in the faction struggle was wholly on the part of Shachtman. Not until Trotsky was assassinated did this self-styled friend begin writing honeyed articles of faint praise.

Indeed Shachtman's personal attitude is a large factor in his continued degeneration. By his refusal to draw the lessons of his error he only deepens and widens the chasm separating himself from the Fourth International. Trotsky observed this quality in his opponent. "Comrade Shachtman's latest article, 'An Open Letter to Leon Trotsky,' is an alarming symptom. It reveals that Shachtman refuses to learn from discussion and persists instead in deepening his mistakes. . . ." ("From a Scratch—to the Danger of Gangrene.") The gangrene is spreading. Since Trotsky's death Burnham's attorney has begun revising his estimate of the colonial countries and along with it their *defense.* This difference with Trotsky's position we presume likewise comes under the category of Trotsky's "errors" to which the defamer can only allude.

What started Shachtman on his downward plunge was his lack of understanding of dialectical materialism, the method of analysis of Marxism. The most he ever did was give lip-service to the foundation-stone of Marxism. His article "Intellectuals in Retreat" revealed that Shachtman did not know the ABC's of dialectics. His combination with Burnham showed that instead of making himself an apprentice in dia-

lectics he was seeking a substitute method in bourgeois philosophy. His present articles show that he clings to Burnham's method. That is the basic reason for his failure to draw the lesson of the heroic defense of their state by the Soviet workers against the imperialist invader. That is why he so easily comes to such treacherous conclusions in his estimates of the colonial countries, China, India, etc. That is why he opposes Trotsky's military policy which prepares the workers for the coming struggles in the military arena. That is why above all when he speaks of Trotsky he makes no attempt to measure the profound differences of 1939-40 in the light of subsequent events.

The lack of dialectics in Shachtman's method enabled Trotsky to observe of his opponent: "Who was in the wrong and in what, not a word of this. There is no tradition. Yesterday is expunged from the calculations—and what is the reason for all this? Because in the organism of the party Comrade Shachtman plays the role of a floating kidney."

Our misunderstood genius objected to this severe characterization. But the record of subsequent events only confirms Trotsky's estimate. Shachtman's politics has become reduced to petty swindling—counterfeiting himself as a Trotskyist, while defaming the theoretical authority and political program of the greatest Marxist of our time.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Yugoslav 'Trotskyists'

On July 18 a dispatch from Turkey announced that General Mikhailovich had launched a campaign against some partisan bands in former Yugoslavia because they were composed of "bandits and looters." Commenting on this news in the *Fourth International* and the *Militant*, we indicated at that time that the rather cryptic cable concealed a deep social conflict and we declared that these "bandit" bands were probably made up of poor peasants and mine workers. We had no particular information then, and our description was based on the Marxist analysis of the movement of resistance against the German oppression: the Yugoslav state had been destroyed, resistance was carried on by large masses of armed peasants around whom gathered the mine workers who wished to escape from Nazi control; the movement must inevitably assume a class character.

Information received since then confirms our analysis. A September 17th dispatch from Ankara described Mikhailovich's actions against the "Communist partisans" and indicated the armed forces of the latter to be around 30,000 men.

An October 8th report, received by the American government through official channels and released to the press, brought new details. The partisans include "Communists of both the Stalinist and Trotskyist persuasions" and, the report added: "However, they apparently are not acting under orders of Moscow, but conducting their frays independently. No issue is said to be involved between the Yugoslav government and the Soviet Union." The report from Washington stated further: "Their leader is Kota Naj, part Serb and part Hungarian, who was an officer in a Croatian regiment on the republican side in the Spanish Civil War."

The vilest calumnies are now being spread about the vallant partisans who dared to raise the banner of social revolution. The Washington report declares that the partisans met with hostility from the population. But, then, how explain the ability of an armed force of several thousand men—30,

000 according to official information—to form, to organize itself independently, to acquire enough supplies and ammunition to resist the Germans and Italians as well as the repressions of Mikhailovich?

The leaders of the partisan movement are described as "a collection of international criminals." This is the phrase that the reaction of all countries always uses to designate international revolutionists. In fact, the asperity with which the imperialist agents insult this movement testifies to its genuine revolutionary character.

On a limited scale the movement of the revolutionary partisans of Yugoslavia shows the future of Europe. The present resistance to German oppression on the whole continent is waged by those who have no interest in re-establishing the pre-war regime. The peoples who are today struggling and suffering in order to liberate themselves from German Nazism also are learning how to fight the capitalist regime which gives rise to fascism and war. This is what is made known to us by the courageous revolutionary partisans of Yugoslavia, who are hounded by the Germans and Italians, are the butt of repressions by Mikhailovich and of base calumnies from Washington. Let us salute them as the pioneers of the coming European revolution.

* * *

The latest report on the partisans, in the October 19 *Time* magazine, credits them not with 30,000 armed men, but with 150,000—equal to the number it cites for Mikhailovich! *Time* writes:

"The Partisans, roughly 150,000 strong, were (last week) in control in Slovenia and western Bosnia. They were fighting with great vigor against Germans, Italians and any Yugoslav groups whom they suspected of collaborating with the invaders. In rate of numerical growth and in military aggressiveness the Partisans had left Mikhailovich's guerrillas behind. Mikhailovich leaned heavily on the inactive Government in Exile, and for this reason many of his less enthusiastic followers had joined the Partisans.

". . . Oldtime Serb nationalists, who hold

most of the posts in the Government in Exile, tend to attack the non-Serb elements in Yugoslavia, particularly the Partisans, whom they accuse of plundering the people of Yugoslavia. But poverty-stricken, oppressed Balkan peasants, traditionally pro-Russian, are attracted by slogans, long associated with Moscow, such as 'Land to the Landless,' 'Higher Wages,' and 'People's Governments.'"

A Letter from India

A Postscript to a "Slander"

A letter just received from the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India adds the final postscript to a controversy over a question of fact which has been dealt with in previous issues of *Fourth International*.

Our readers may recall that in our March 1942 issue, in publishing the first section of the program of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, we noted that the document irrefutably demonstrated the complete agreement of our Indian comrades with the Fourth International, and we charged that the Shachtman "Workers Party" has been spreading false stories about the position of our Indian and Ceylonese comrades."

In answer, Shachtman characterized our charge as a "slander," and demanded proof that he had spread such stories. We provided the proof in our May issue, by quoting a bulletin issued by Shachtman containing an "eyewitness" report of S. Stanley that our Indian and Ceylonese comrades agreed with Shachtman in opposing defense of the Soviet Union.

Ordinary mortals would thereupon have subsided into discreet silence. But not Shachtman. He returned to the field, characterizing the editor of *Fourth International* as a "common slanderer." Shachtman declared that, although the Indian and Ceylonese comrades now support us, *previously* they stood with Shachtman. He wrote:

"We reiterate the truth here: When Stanley's report was printed here, the Ceylonese and Indian comrades supported the Shachtman position on the role of Russia in the war as against the position of Trotsky and the Cannonites. Moreover,

so far as we know and unless we hear otherwise the comrades still hold that their position of that period was correct. Does Morrow deny this? . . . We doubt if even Morrow will dare say this in public print. He and his friends know—and have known for some two years—that Stanley merely reported the fact." (*New International*, June 1942.)

We knew nothing of the kind, but in the face of Shachtman's brass, continued refutations in our own name were fruitless. The final word had now to be said by the Indian and Ceylonese comrades. Their answer to Shachtman has now arrived, and it should definitively close this subject even for a Shachtman. The letter says:

"As to the attitude of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party on the 'Russian Question,' we have read a copy of S. Stanley's report on Ceylon. Stanley has been mistaken in supposing that the LSSP or the leadership of the LSSP took any definite position regarding this question on the occasion of his visit. The minority position that S. Stanley espoused was received with an open mind and was given sympathetic consideration, but the question of taking any stand in the matter was deferred, firstly till party leaders who were in jail, and secondly, the Calcutta group could be consulted. In any event the position of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (of which the LSSP is a part) is fundamentally in agreement with the position taken by the majority of the Socialist Workers Party."

F.M.

Stalinism in France

Comrade Jules Cordier, a leader of the Parti Ouvrier International, French section of the Fourth International, lived in Paris under German occupation; he has just sent us a long political document entitled "The National Struggle and the Socialist Revolution." We quote here from one section which summarizes the record of the Stalinist organization in France. The following was written in July-August 1942.

The effect of the German-Soviet pact on the French masses was horrible demoralization, complete political confusion, bitter hatred. To be or declare oneself a member of the Communist Party during the two months following the declaration of war was for the worker to run the risk of having his neck broken by his fellow workers in the factory. From that time on the influence of Stalinism was constantly on the decline. Its compromises and its complicity with the occupying forces, its refusal to engage in the national struggle against the foreign oppressor, brought it still more discredit.

How, then, can one explain the undeniable activity of the Stalinist apparatus among the masses during the war and, after the collapse of the French "democratic" government, during the months preceding the

attack on the Soviet Union? Through the combination of the following three factors: the will of the exploited and oppressed masses to fight and their lack of an apparatus of a revolutionary organization; the existence of a vast Stalinist apparatus rooted in the masses for many long years, determined never to cut itself off from the masses; and the ability of the Stalinist apparatus to attune its demagogy to the revolutionary feelings of the masses in order to bind them to it once more. The masses are not tied to the Stalinist apparatus because of its political line, but in spite of it.

During the first two or three months after the sudden announcement of the Nazi invasion of the USSR, the masses were overwhelmed; they had cherished the picture of an all-powerful Soviet Union which knew how to assure peace to its own people, reserving for the right moment the use of its forces to help other peoples liberate themselves. It was not until after the two months of disastrous retreat and the first definite signs of sustained resistance by the Soviet army and people, that Stalinist influence began to rise again. This could only happen because of the revolutionary feelings of the masses. Events facilitated the Stalinist strategy, which of course was based on a non-revolutionary outlook. But what really gave courage to the workers and induced them to cooperate once more with the Stalinist apparatus, were revolutionary factors: the armed struggle of the Soviet people against the Nazi aggressor, oppressor of all Europe; the will to join in the defense of the conquests of the October revolution.

All these circumstances, particularly amazement at Soviet resistance to a hitherto invincible army, permitted a renewal of "Soviet mysticism," even "Stalinist mysticism." On this basis the Stalinist apparatus succeeded in regaining a more solid control of the masses. However, the duration of this control is limited to the present combination of circumstances.

Stalinist Organization Methods

Even at the time of its greatest expansion in France, Stalinism operated through a limited and extremely centralized nucleus, which worked outward through more and more numerous but less organized social layers. This was necessitated by its bureaucratic structure and the contrast between its phraseology and its real political objectives.

Present events and conditions bring out this bureaucratic method even more. The "responsible" elements are a small group, who are "sure" in the bureaucratic sense of the word. The activity of the broader groups is limited—at least the apparatus tries to limit it—to carrying out directives. The masses are considered merely a favorable medium and a passive instrument for maneuvers. Another important feature is the

absence of a proletarian atmosphere in the organization, even though it is largely composed of workers. The objectives are not proletarian, nor is the organizational structure intended to bring about predominance of proletarian elements and proletarian spirit. We can even say that exactly the opposite is the plan and desire of the apparatus.

This structure is dominated by the real political objectives of Stalinism, which means an absence of perspective and of any real political life. The Stalinists, being unable to openly impose their own orientation, do not desire any more than do the Allies to arm the workers with a political orientation. Of course they refrain from boldly contradicting the revolutionary aspirations of the masses; they calm them when necessary with empty phrases. But the main point of their political line and agitation is the necessity of struggle against German aggression, of "national defense" against the "foreign aggressor." The Stalinist bureaucracy can suggest no common bond among the various national struggles in Europe, other than the identity of the aggressor. No appeal based on the revolutionary character of the USSR, its nature as a workers' state, the socialist revolution, the Socialist United States of Europe; only the call to fight for the victory of the "democratic Allies" against the barbarism of Hitler. The national struggle is deliberately stripped of all social content. The gentlemen at Vichy are denounced primarily as accomplices of Hitler; rarely as exploiters of the nation. The tactical result is, of course, allegiance to DeGaulle in the national struggle. "All Frenchmen must unite with DeGaulle and march under his orders." Such was the directive issued by the Moscow radio to France shortly after the beginning of the Nazi-Soviet conflict.

These policies may confuse the masses, demoralize them and hold up their progress, but they do not convince them.

There is evidence of extraordinary ferment within the Communist Party. Illegal activity demands chosen and tested adherents whose strength of character is a guarantee against blind submission; on the other hand, there is a relaxing of organizational bonds, of the control and pressure of the ruling bureaucracy upon the ranks. Thus there is continuous and lively political discussion; thus the formation of internal tendencies, in some cases stable and lasting. There is considerable variety and autonomy in the activity of local groups.

A few illustrations will suffice. There have been joint actions between local Stalinist groups on the one hand, and Trotskyists on the other, under conditions of entirely free and amicable discussion. In the "Communist region" of A—, three fractions were formed which designated themselves "Stalinist," "Trotskyist," and "for conciliation," with the Trotskyist tendency acknowledged as the majority. Regional leaders of the

C.P. have distributed pamphlets published by a group of our members. The Communist Party section in B— made a decision to reform their organization "in order to avoid repeating the mistakes of the Popular Front" and "without submitting directly, once more, to Moscow." Reacting to agitation by members of the P.O.I., the Stalinist bureaucracy has put out a pamphlet "How to Defend Ourselves," most of which is devoted to a slanderous and police-like attack on the P.O.I.

It is not a question of overestimating these cases, which are no more than symptoms. But it would be foolish and mistaken to ignore them and to underestimate them.

One may say without exaggerating that the evolution of such symptoms in a revolutionary sense depends almost entirely upon the ability and the forces of a con-

sistent revolutionary leadership of the P. O. I.

England

The American Censorship

The American censorship has been deleting, from cables sent by correspondents from America to England, quotations from American newspapers and magazines criticising Churchill's India policy. This became known when Walter Waithman, correspondent in America of the *London News Chronicle*, sent a dispatch published on September 21, which stated:

"I have endeavoured during the last ten days or so, in dispatches which were submitted—as all dispatches are—to the American cable and radio censorship, to say that the Churchill-Amery statement on India has

made a bad impression on some sections of opinion in the United States. The general sense of these dispatches, I think, has been allowed to go through, but the censorship has stopped in my copy—and in the copy of some other British correspondents here—certain specific quotations of critical comment that has appeared in American newspapers or magazines."

Thus the American censorship, ostensibly established to deal with military information, is helping Churchill keep from the British people an understanding of the widespread American criticism of Churchill's policy in India.

* * *

There are 368 Chinese seamen in Walton Prison, Liverpool, serving sentences of two months' imprisonment for striking for a war risk bonus, the October 3 *New Leader* (ILP) reports.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

The Fifth Year of the Revolution

By JAMES P. CANNON

EDITOR'S NOTE: In 1922, James P. Cannon was National Chairman of the Workers Party of America (the legal form of the Communist Party at that time) and delegate to the Communist International. He arrived in Moscow in May 1922 and remained there until the end of the year, participating in the preparations and deliberations of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. Upon returning to the United States, he delivered the following lecture, first in New York in February 1923, and then on a national tour. It was then published as a pamphlet by the Workers Party, from which we reprint it in abridged form.

The Communist International of the days of Lenin and Trotsky told the truth to the workers, as comrade Cannon's lecture illustrates. That heritage is continued by the Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, of which comrade Cannon is the National Secretary.

Russia Through the Shadows

The story of Soviet Russia for the first four years after the revolution was a story of desperate struggle against tremendous odds. The fight of the Russian workers did not end with their victory over the bourgeoisie within Russia. The capitalist class of the entire world came to the aid of Russian capitalism.

The Workers' Republic was blockaded and shut off from the world. Counter-revolutionary plots and uprisings inside of Russia were financed and directed from the outside. Mercenary invading armies backed by world capital, attacked Soviet Russia on all sides. On top of all this came the terrible famine which threatened to deal the final blow.

In those four years Soviet Russia indeed went "through the shadows." But now, after five years of the revolution, we can tell a brighter story. In 1922 Soviet Russia began to emerge from the shadows and started on the upward track.

The long and devastating civil war was at an end and the counter-revolution stamped out. The great famine was conquered. The last of the invading foreign armies—except the Japanese in the Far East—had been driven from Russian soil; and the Workers' Government, freed from the terrible strain and necessity of war, was enabled, for the first time, to turn its efforts and energies to the great constructive task of building a new Russia on the ruins of the old.

While I was yet in Russia the Red Army drove the Japanese out of Vladivostok and set up the soviets again. And before the Fourth Congress of the Communist International was ended, we had the joy of hearing comrade Lenin say that all the territory of Russia was at last living in peace under the Red Flag of the Soviets.

I reached Moscow on the first day of June. Signs of recuperation from the long travail were already noticeable. The streets and sidewalks were being repaired and buildings were being painted; for the first time in five years, they told me. During the war all resources and all energies went for bitter necessity; everything else had to wait. Even the buildings in the Kremlin got their first coat of paint this year.

I was riding on a Moscow street car one day soon after my arrival, with a comrade who had once been in America and who now holds a responsible position in the Soviet government. I spoke of the good appearance and condition of the car; it had just been newly painted, and looked very pretty. They know more about blending colors than we do; and they care more about it, too. He told me that the Moscow street car system had been greatly improved during the past year. The number of cars in operation had been greatly increased, the trackage extended and a fairly reliable schedule main-

tained. The Moscow street car workers were very proud of their achievement; especially so, because the improvement in the service had brought with it a corresponding improvement in their own living conditions.

The famous Genoa Conference was still alive at that time; the conference which Lloyd George called to settle the problems of Europe, but which didn't succeed in settling anything except the career of Lloyd George. France and Belgium, you will remember, were demanding that the property in Russia, which had been confiscated by the revolution, should be restored to the original foreign owners. Russia had not yet given her final answer, and I asked my friend in the street car what he thought it would be.

He said, "Most of the big industrial plants in Russia, and even a part of the railroad system, belonged to foreign capitalists before the revolution. Russia was practically a colony of European capitalism."

"Do you know," he asked me, "who used to own the street car system in Moscow—it belonged to the poor Belgian capitalists, and they are trying to get it back at Genoa."

I asked him what chance the poor Belgian capitalists had to get their street cars back. He answered, "No chance at all."

He told me that as soon as the demand became known the Moscow street car workers—as well as the workers in the other important industries—called meetings and passed resolutions to this effect: "The foreign capitalists tried for four years to take these industries away from us by armed force, and they couldn't succeed. Now, we are certainly not going to let them talk us out of them at the diplomatic table."

Before I went to Russia I had read much about the impending collapse of the Soviet government. A story of this kind used to appear on an average of about once a week in the *New York Times* and other capitalist newspapers; and no doubt you have all read them. Here lately the capitalist press has dropped that story and the Socialist Party and the I.W.W. papers have taken it up. I spent seven months in Russia, and I assure you that I looked diligently for the signs of this famous "collapse," but I couldn't find it. On the contrary, the more I investigated, the more I saw of the attitude of the Russian workers, the more I became convinced that the Soviet government under the control of the Communist Party, is firmer and stronger now than at any period in its history.

* * *

Economic Reconstruction

Politically, the Soviet regime greatly strengthened itself in the past year. And economic progress went hand in hand with political improvement. Much of this economic progress, and its reflection in the field of politics, was due to the timely introduction of the New Economic Policy, or, as they say in Russia, the "Nep."

Early in 1921 it became evident that some of the drastic economic measures taken by the Soviet government, under the pressure of political and military necessity, could not be adhered to. The backward social and industrial development of Russia, together with the failure of the European proletariat to succeed in making a revolution, compelled the Soviet government to make a retreat on the economic field.

The Soviet government had been forced to adopt many of these extreme economic measures by political and military necessity. But Lenin did not hesitate to say that they had been going too fast. The economic development of Russia did not permit the direct transition to a system of pure socialist eco-

nomy.

When this frank and obvious statement was made by Lenin the yellow socialists of the Second International, as well as some so-called "Marxians" of this country who have been against the Russian revolution because it wasn't made according to their blue-print, found much satisfaction. They say: "Ha! Ha! We told you so. The Bolshevik revolution was a mistake!" Their conclusions are that the workers of Russia should give up the political power and go back to capitalism.

But the Bolsheviks are practical people. They have made the revolution once and they don't intend to go back and do it over again. They say: "No, the revolution was not a mistake, and we will not go back to capitalism. We will make a retreat on the economic field, but we will keep the political power in the hands of the proletariat and use that as a lever to develop our industry to the point where it can serve as a base for a system of socialist economy. And if we can't find anything in the books to support this procedure, we'll write a book of our own."

There are people who say that Russia has gone back to capitalism, but that is not true. In Russia they say, "It is neither capitalism nor communism, it is 'Nep'!" Trotsky described the present situation in Russia as follows:

"The workers control the government. The Workers' Government has control of industry and is carrying on this industry according to the methods of the capitalist market, of capitalist calculation." I think that is the best concise definition of the Nep.

* * *

Before the revolution the Russian peasant had the landlord on his back. Today the landlord system is done away with; there is not one landlord left in the whole of Russia. All that the peasant produces, above his tax in kind of approximately ten per cent, is his own, to do with as he sees fit. The result is a very friendly attitude toward the Soviet government.

1922 marked the beginning of a general revival in trade industry. The revolution inherited from the old regime an industrial system that was poorly developed, inefficiently managed and badly demoralized by the strain of the imperialist war. The long civil war, the interventions and the blockade dealt still heavier blows to Russian industry and almost brought it to complete ruin.

To try to do anything with it seemed a hopeless task. Agents of other governments, industrial experts, went to Russia, investigated her industries and reported that they couldn't be revived without assistance from the outside. It was reports of this kind that bolstered up the hope of European and American capitalists, and their political agents, that the Soviet government was certain to fall.

These gentlemen reckoned without the Russian working class and the Communist Party that leads and inspires it.

In the revolution and the war which followed it for more than four years, the Communist Party dared the "impossible"—and accomplished it. The same courage and determination characterize its attack on the problem of industry. Seval Zimmand told me a story of a meeting which he had an opportunity to attend in the Ural industrial district. It was a conference of engineers, factory managers and trade union leaders presided over by Bogdanoff, the Commissar of the Supreme Council of Public Economy. After discussing all features of the situation with the engineers and managers, and hearing their reports, Bogdanoff said, "I know that it is hard to improve the industries in the Ural. But the industries

of the Ural can be improved and the industries of the Ural must be improved."

There, in one word, is a definition of the Communist Party of Russia—the party of **MUST!** While others say, "It is impossible," and, "We had better wait," or, "It can't be done," the Communist Party says, "It must be done!"—and the Communists go ahead and do it.

Russian industry, on the whole, in 1922 registered a general increase of production of more than 100 per cent. This brought the standard of production up to 25 per cent of the pre-war condition. This condition is bad enough, but the Russian workers lived through a worse one, and they have begun to make headway.

The wages of the Russian workers kept pace with the improvement of production, increasing in just about the same proportion. Wages are not yet up to the pre-war standard. The Russian shoe workers today get 33.3 per cent of pre-war wages. The metal workers 42.9 per cent, the textile workers 42.1 per cent and the wood workers 57.9 per cent. Wages vary according to the conditions of the various industries. The foodstuff industry is pretty well on its feet and the bakery workers get 81.9 per cent of pre-war wages, while the tobacco industry pays 13.1 per cent. These figures do not tell the whole story. Because the workers, under the Soviet government, get many special privileges such as cheap rent, food at cost, etc.

The Russian worker, after five years of the revolution, is not as well off materially today as he was under the Czar. But his condition is now steadily improving and the political and spiritual gains of the revolution are beyond calculation. There is no sentiment among the workers for a return to the old regime. To those who measure everything in terms of concrete, immediate material gains, and who ask the Russian workers what they have to show for their five years of revolution, they answer: "The revolution is not over yet."

Trotsky pointed out at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International that the French standard of living, ten years after the great revolution which smashed the feudal system and opened the way for the development of the capitalist mode of production, was far below that which prevailed immediately before the revolution. Revolutions destroy before they can build anew; and in this destruction the people suffer. But the destructive phase of the Russian revolution is already past and in five more years, at the present rate of progress, there is no doubt that the material conditions of the Russian workers, as well as their spiritual, intellectual and political conditions will be far better than ever before.

Trade Unionism in Russia

Practically all the workers employed in both state and private undertakings are organized into the Russian trade unions. These trade unions are organized according to the industrial form; there is but one union for each industry.

The trade unions have played a great part in the revolution. During the period of "war communism" they were closely united to the apparatus and took upon themselves a number of government responsibilities. But under the New Economic Policy they have completely separated from the State machinery and have reorganized as independent bodies, having for their main functions the defense of the interests of the workers in the factories.

Strikes were never prohibited by law under the Soviet government, but during the period of the civil war the Trade

Union Congress voluntarily decided to forego that method of struggle. Under the New Economic Policy, however, the right to strike has been reaffirmed. Strikes are discouraged and do not occur very often. Boards of conciliation, courts of arbitration and mutual agreements are first resorted to, and as a rule all controversies are settled by these means.

I never saw a strike in Soviet Russia and never heard of one taking place while I was there. But comrade Melnitchansky, the head of the Moscow trade unions, told me of a few that had occurred under his jurisdiction. In those cases all the methods and forms of industrial warfare familiar to European and American labor movements automatically developed, such as strike committees, pickets, strike benefits, etc. There had been rare cases, he told me, when unscrupulous employers had tried to operate the struck plant by means of ignorant peasants recruited from the villages. The government gave no favor to this "freedom of contract" so popular with our own government. And a visit from the pickets usually sufficed to convince the strikebreakers that they had better go back where they came from. I asked comrade Melnitchansky if they had encountered any strike injunctions. He laughed and answered, "My dear comrade, you must understand that this is not America!"

I attended the Fifth All-Russian Trade Union Congress. It is analogous to the national convention of the American Federation of Labor, but it was quite a different looking delegation from the sleek, fat, over-dressed "men of labor" who meet once a year under the chairmanship of Gompers.

I saw something at that Congress that never yet happened in America. Zinoviev and Rykov came to the Congress to make a report on behalf of the government. I thought how natural it was, in a country ruled by the workers, for the government to report to the trade unions. It is just as natural as it is in America for the government to report to the Chamber of Commerce. The same principle applies. Governments have the habit of reporting to those whom they really represent. The old proverb says, "Tell me whose bread you eat and I'll tell you whose song you sing."

The Soviet government is a labor government and it makes no secret of the fact that it is partial to the working class. It doesn't pretend to be fair or neutral. They frankly call the government a dictatorship. "It's just like your own government in America," they told me, "only it is a dictatorship of a different class."

"Otherwise the two governments are much alike," they said. "They are both dictatorships. But there is another difference. The Russian government says it is a dictatorship and makes no camouflage about it. The government of the United States pretends to be fair and democratic, to represent both the workers and the capitalists, but whenever you have a big strike the government soon shows whom it belongs to."

The Workers and the Red Army

Between the trade unions and the Red Army there is a close and fraternal unity that does not prevail between the labor movement and the army of any other country in Europe. The trade unionists regard the Red soldiers as the protectors and defenders of the labor movement, and they treat them with the highest honor.

There is a reason for this attitude. When some of the industrial districts of Russia fell into the hands of the counter-revolutionary armies the first thing the White Guards did, after dissolving the soviets, was to break up the trade unions,

shooting or jailing the leaders. And when the Red Army reconquered those territories, the trade unions were immediately reorganized under the protection of its bayonets. This is the reason for the brotherly solidarity between the unions and the army.

The Red Army is a new factor in the international situation, and a very important one. The diplomats cannot meet today to partition off the earth without asking, "What will the Red Army do?" The Red soldier is present at all the councils of the war makers. He puts his fist on the table and says, "I am in on the war game in Europe from now on!"

The Red Army is something new under the sun, a proletarian army, made up exclusively of workers and peasants, with most of its officers drawn from the working class. It proved its mettle in the long and successful struggle against the interventionist armies. It has a morale, spirit and discipline unknown to the military history of Europe. There is not an army on the continent of Europe that, man for man, can stand up against it.

The Red Army is a powerful military machine, but that is not all. It is a school, the greatest on earth. The great bulk of its soldiers come from the peasantry; and 80 per cent of the Russian peasants are illiterate. But in the Red Army they are all taught to read and write. Last May Day they celebrated the liquidation of illiteracy in the Red Army. Trotsky made the statement that on that day there was not a soldier in the army who was not able to read and write. The Russian Bolsheviks have taken an instrument of destruction and utilized it for a great constructive purpose.

I visited some Red Army camps and learned something about the spirit of the soldiers at first hand. I had read something about it and wished to check up on what I had read. I asked Trotsky about it and he said, "Go to the camps and see the soldiers themselves. Then you will understand it." I asked him why the Red soldier has a different attitude toward the government from that of the other soldiers of Europe, and he answered, "The attitude of the Red soldier toward the Soviet government is determined by the attitude of the Soviet government toward the Red soldier."

That is the secret of it. That is the reason for the intense loyalty of the Red soldier which the old school militarists cannot understand. The Red soldier is respected and honored in time of peace as well as in war. He is not heroized as he marches off to battle and then chased up a back alley when he comes home. He is not given a medal when he is needed and refused a job or a handout when the war is over. In the working-class society of Russia the Red soldier has a place of dignity and honor. In Russia the soldiers and the workers are the real "people of importance."

I saw another phase of the educational work of the army in one of the camps. It was a moving picture show attended by about two thousand soldiers. It was a moving picture of large-scale grain farming in Canada. Most of the soldiers in the audience were peasant lads. They had come from the villages and their idea of agriculture was founded on the primitive, individualistic methods they had always known.

They drank in that picture very eagerly. As I watched them I saw another picture. I saw those peasant lads going back home when their service in the army would be ended, with their newly acquired knowledge and their vision of the great world outside their little villages, telling their friends and their old folks of the great farming machinery which the city worker will manufacture for the peasants and which will

be the means of developing large-scale communal farming instead of small-scale individual farming; and which will transform the individualist peasant of today into the communist peasant of tomorrow.

I found the Red soldiers pretty well informed as to what is going on in the world. They spoke of the prospects of revolution in Germany with the air of men who had read and talked much about it. That is part of their education, Trotsky keeps them fully informed about international developments; and there are special communist detachments in all regiments who carry on a constant propaganda for internationalism.

Capitalist journalists write a great deal about the intense national patriotism of the Red Army. These stories are usually written by journalists who sit around in Moscow hotels and cook up stories about it, and, as a rule, they are very far from the truth. As a matter of fact, the main effort of Communist propaganda in the army is to overcome tendencies toward Russian national patriotism and to develop a patriotism to the international proletariat. Since the army quit singing "God Save the Czar" it has had no national official hymn. The official air played in the Red Army is "The International." Internationalism is the watchword.

This was impressed upon us very vividly by a speech we heard at the graduation exercises of the school of Red Cavalry commanders at Moscow. A number of international delegates attended those exercises and spent the entire day with the young students who were just finishing their studies. For several hours we watched them perform hair-raising feats on horseback and late in the afternoon we had dinner with them in the mess hall. After dinner the delegates from the various countries each spoke a few words of greeting to the graduates and then they put up one of the graduates to respond.

"Comrades," he said, "we greet you as comrades and brothers in the same army with us. We do not want you to think of us as soldiers of Russia, but as soldiers of the international proletariat. Our army is a working-class army and the working class of the world is our country. We will be very glad when the workers of Europe rise in revolt and call on us for assistance; and when that day comes they will find us ready."

The Workers and Internationalism

It is not only the Red soldiers in Russia who are internationalists. Internationalism permeates the entire working class. When the Russian workers rose in revolt five years ago and struck the blow that destroyed Russian capitalism they were confident that the workers throughout Europe would follow their example. They have been waiting five years for the international revolution and they still believe it is coming. Nothing has been able to shake that faith. They believe in the workers of Europe as they believe in the sun.

Ah, the faith of those Russian workers! It is so strong that it communicates itself to others. All of us who saw and felt it came away with our own faith surer and stronger. One afternoon I heard a band playing in the street outside the hotel where I was living. I looked out the window and saw a big parade marching with banners flying. I took a Russian comrade with me and we followed the parade. It was a demonstration of the bakery workers of Moscow for the bakers of Bulgaria who were out on a general strike. And those bakery workers of Moscow, from their meager wages, raised a fund to send to their comrades in far away Bulgaria to cheer them on in the fight.

On the fifth anniversary of the revolution the delegates of the Communist parties and Red trade unions were the guests of the proletariat of Petrograd. A great throng of workers met us at the station. We symbolized to them the international labor movement and they gave us a warm and generous welcome. Red Army troops were drawn up before the station, the streets in all directions were packed with workers who had come to greet us, and from every building and post flew banners, proclaiming the fifth anniversary of the Russian revolution and hailing the international revolution.

That day we saw a demonstration of the workers of Petrograd. I shall never forget it. They had built a special reviewing stand for us before the Uritsky Palace and we stood there and watched them march by in detachments according to the factories where they worked. They carried the same old banners which they had carried five years before, many of them torn by the bullets that flew during the decisive battle.

I never saw before such an outpouring of people, nor such enthusiasm. The parade commenced at 11 o'clock in the morning. Hour after hour we saw them come in wide streams across the square. The afternoon wore away and turned to dusk. It was six o'clock and we grew tired of standing and had to leave; and still the workers of Petrograd were coming by the thousands, carrying their revolutionary banners and singing "The International." All the workers of Petrograd marched that day to show their solidarity with the international proletariat and to prove to us that they still believe in the revolution they made five years before.

The next day, as though to show us that the Russian revolution and the International has not only spirit and solidarity on its side, but military power also, they let us see a parade of the Red Army.

It was a cheering and inspiring sight to see the Red soldiers on the march with their rifles over their shoulders and their bayonets shining in the sun. They marched in perfect step, with heads erect, the picture of physical prowess. As they passed the reviewing stand they all shouted, "Long Live the Communist International!" and we shouted back, "Long Live the Red Army!"

In the reviewing stand that day were delegates of the Communist parties of other countries; and beside us sat the diplomats of foreign governments in Russia. It is the custom to invite them whenever there is a parade of the Red Army. They say that when the diplomats see the Red soldiers march, it cools their enthusiasm for another war against Soviet Russia.

Before we left Petrograd we made a pilgrimage to the Field of Mars, where in one great grave are buried the victims of the November revolution. Five years before it was the scene of desperate battle. The air was torn by rifle-fire and the cries of those Petrograd workers who had risen in revolt and staked their lives on the issue. On the 7th of November, five years before, the workers of Petrograd fought there the battle of the human race and of the future. Many of them fell, never to rise again.

We stood there, with heads uncovered, in a cold, drizzling rain. The once noisy battlefield was quiet. There was no sound but the soft music of the Funeral Hymn of the Revolution, and the very ground, once spattered with the blood of our heroic dead, was banked high with flowers, placed there in gratitude and love by the delegates of the Communist Parties and Red trade unions of all lands.

Those Petrograd workers put their lives in the scale.

They had lived lives of misery and oppression, but they were possessed by a daring vision of the future when the lives of all men will be better and fairer. They were the heralds of a new day in the world when there will be no more masters and no more slaves, and they gave their lives to hasten on that day.

Those Petrograd workers struck the blow which shattered the capitalist regime in Russia and put the working class in power. But they did more than that, because the Russian revolution did not stop in Russia. It found its way over the borders. It broke through the blockade and spread all over the earth. The Russian revolution was the beginning of the international revolution.

Wherever there is a group of militant workers anywhere in the world, there is the Russian revolution. The Russian revolution is in the heart of every rebel worker the world over. The Russian revolution is in this room.

Comrade Trotsky told us, just before we left Moscow, that the best way we can help Soviet Russia is to build a bigger trade union movement and a stronger party of our own. Recognition by other governments will be of some temporary value; but the real recognition Soviet Russia wants is the recognition of the working class. When she gets that she will not need the recognition of capitalist governments. Then she can refuse to recognize them!

For, after all, Soviet Russia is not a "country." Soviet Russia is a part of the world labor movement. Soviet Russia is a strike—the greatest strike in all history. When the working class of Europe and America join that strike it will be the end of capitalism.

The Status of the "Jacson" Trial

A sensational story in the September 14 *New Leader* of New York, reporting that the murderer of Leon Trotsky had been sentenced to 23 years in prison "after a secret trial," has received wide credence. But the story is false, including its identification of the murderer, "Jacson," and a "Russian named Turkov."

Under Mexican penal procedure, a trial proceeds very differently than in the United States. The prisoner's trial begins 48 hours after his arrest and may continue for one year, during which time both prosecution and defense present the evidence and witnesses each considers necessary. There is no jury; the court is composed of three judges. After the year of investigation has elapsed, the trial is closed and prosecution and defense present their conclusions, being allowed considerable time to do so when the court record is long, as it is in this case.

The GPU has of course employed every conceivable stratagem to prevent the sentencing of "Jacson." At the last moment when the defense should have presented its conclusions, it suddenly charged the court with "partiality" and appealed to the higher courts. Thereby the defense gained a month and a half of delay. The higher court upheld the lower, at the end of September, and ordered the defense to present its conclusions immediately.

There remain now the refutations by the defense and the prosecution of the opposing arguments and then the decision and sentencing. Barring new delays, the sentence should be handed down by December. The prosecution is asking (there is no death sentence for murder in Mexico) a sentence of 23 years.

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