

T H E B U L L E T I N

OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

STALIN'S ATOMIC BOMB

G. MARLEN

THE TITO TRAP

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ARTHUR BURKE

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* STALIN'S ATOMIC EXPLOSION *

1. The Former "Concession" Policy of the Bourgeoisie.

The ideological atmosphere surrounding the relation between the world bourgeoisie and the Kremlin Dictator has undergone many changes in recent history. At Yalta and Teheran the spokesmen of the imperialists agreed to turn over Poland, half of Korea, Manchuria and other extremely important territories to Stalin, in full knowledge from previous experience that he would incorporate everything given him into his territorial, economic and political system. During the American-Stalin march into Germany, orders were issued by the top command of the United States forces to allow the Russian troops to enter Berlin first. For some "mysterious" reason the Western imperialists agreed to the expansion of Stalin's domain in Europe and Asia.

Shortly after the liquidation of the war situation in Europe and the Far East, a furious cry arose from official quarters in England and America and on the pages of the bourgeois press charging Stalin with aggression. The demands were launched for a get tough with Russia policy.

What, then, was the meaning of the previous extremely soft policy of allowing Stalin to occupy half of Europe, Sakhalin, Kuriles Islands, half of Korea and of opening to him the gates into China proper by agreeing to his occupation of Manchuria? Stalin's gargantuan land appetite and his tactics of crushing oppositions and centralizing power in his hands could have been no surprise to the Western imperialists. They had seen Stalin divide Poland with Hitler, attack Finland, seize and absorb Lithuania, Esthonia and Latvia. Stalin had wiped out the capitalists and landlords of those countries and incorporated them into his system. This was a living history that illumined the nature of Stalin's occupation of countries. What could they have expected Stalin to do in the Balkans, in the Far East and Eastern Germany once his troops were in control? There can be no divided view on this question: they agreed to Stalin's occupation keenly conscious of what the results would be. Did Stalin, perhaps, blackmail them to follow this soft policy? Although Stalin held up his head high after Stalingrad, his forces had been badly decimated by the Nazi power and a large part of Russian industry shattered; while on the other hand, the military machine and economy of the Western imperialists was hardly dented, and besides, they possessed the most terrible force in the history of war- the Atomic secret. During the Nazi onslaught, Stalin faced the main weight of the invading forces and was in pressing need of military supplies. He was in no position to blackmail his "allies." If any side was, it was the Western imperialists. And yet they, without an official dissenting voice, followed an "appeasement" policy and handed over enormous territories to Stalin. Why?

2. Two Contradictory Forms in World Economy.

To unravel the policy of the Western imperialists one must trace it back to its true roots.

On November 7, 1917 the Bolsheviki seized power in Russia and overthrew private property in land, industry and commerce and established a pattern of State ownership, control and direction of economic processes. The bourgeoisie of the world, resting on private methods of production and distribution, attempted to overthrow the Bolsheviki but failed.

The Bolshevik leadership dropped the pledge made to the masses before the overthrow of the Russian capitalists of no negotiations with any bourgeois power and adopted the policy of compromise and "peace" with the world bourgeoisie

The bourgeoisie reciprocated with a similar policy (Brest-Litovsk, Locarno, numerous other pacts and "guarantees" against war, including the Stalin-Hitler Pact) but the gulf in the basic forms of the two economic systems could not be bridged by paper pacts and the conflict inherent in the division could be only temporarily postponed.

While industry in Russia was expanding even though under a vicious centralism and at the expense of the material needs of the Russian masses, capitalism particularly its Central European sector, was passing from one cycle of crisis into another, each more severe than the preceding one. Finally, the German bourgeoisie, backed by the financial assistance of other capitalist countries, effected a political stabilization through the formation of the Nazi regime and captured the imagination of the backward and even some advanced workers and petty-bourgeoisie on the basis of Hitler's anti-semitic Greater-Germany platform. The successful shift of power from the bourgeois democratic to the Nazi regime was facilitated by the political policy of Stalin. Stalin's organizations deliberately blinded the German workers to the Nazi danger, and even went to the extent of political collaboration with them. (Prussian Referendum, August 1931) Stalin's lieutenants specifically tried to dispel the growing uneasiness of the radical German workers over the threat posed by the Nazi tide:

"Nothing would be more fatal than an opportunist overestimation of Hitlerist Fascism." (Speech at the Plenum of the Communist Party of Germany by Ernst Thaelmann, Feb. 19, 1932)

It might also be noted that when Hitler was put in power Stalin carried out negotiations with the German banks for credits.

The establishment of the Nazi regime was also facilitated by German Social Democracy which stood passively by, with some of its leaders (Severing, etc.) even voicing allegiance to Hitler.

German economy, though alleviated by influx of gold from the British, French and American bourgeoisie, was not cured by the change of political regime. The German sector of capitalism could be stabilized only by expansion of the German sphere of economic power, and this involved the general task of world capitalism, the need to reestablish international unity of economy based on private, not on State, ownership of industry and commerce. The political stabilization of the German State afforded an opportunity for a new attempt to smash the State form of economy in Russia. The Munich Accord was the first major public manifestation of this policy of the international bourgeoisie.

3. The Bourgeoisie Prepares A Mighty War Engine

The immediate technical problem of capitalism was to equip the Nazi regime with a war machine strong enough to achieve the desired end. The world ruling bourgeois powers recognized that the German resources alone would have been insufficient for so gigantic an undertaking. The European Continent had to be turned over to the German industrialists who were building the Nazi war machine. Prior to Munich the turning over of various territories to their agent, Hitler, ("appeasement" tactic) met with mounting unrest among the masses in bourgeois-democratic countries. The guise of "appeasement" had to be discarded and the same policy had to be carried out under a new cloak which would sooth the anti-Nazi temper of the masses. When Poland was next on the list, the British imperialists finally "declared war" but saw to it that the Nazi attack on Poland was not molested. On the West border of Germany there ensued a long period of "Sitzkrieg"

or "phoney war" as it became known in history.

The next step in attaching the economy of Europe to the German industrialists, who really operated with capital borrowed from the Western imperialists, was carried out in a spectacular fashion. The gates of France were opened for the Nazi troops who occupied Verdun and other fortresses without meeting even a token resistance from the French generals. Through the same method Norway and the Balkans passed under the German control, and when the Nazi military might was brought to the peak of strength the real war, that of Nazi Germany against Stalin-ruled Russia, opened with a terrific drive on an immense front stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

4. The Failure of the Nazi Army

It was firmly believed by many top bourgeois experts in military science that within a few weeks the Stalin Government and the state economy upon which it rested would be eliminated by the Nazi avalanche. History proved that despite the fact that the bourgeoisie had fused all the technical means of capitalist Europe to equip the Nazi war engine, the economic and military preparations proved insufficient to measure up to the task. The first Nazi drive in 1941, which had been counted on to be decisive, came to a letdown and a partial retreat of the Nazis. The second campaign in 1942 was executed only on the southern part of the long front. The attempt bogged down and then collapsed at Stalingrad.

Throughout the two years of this titanic struggle, Stalin's "allies" and the Nazis marched several times back and forth in the Libyan desert in a series of stage-managed "battles." This see-saw was arranged in the desert to give the Nazis an absolutely free hand in the momentous struggle in Russia. Stalin was not fooled and during this whole period kept up a cry for the "Second Front."

Following the defeat of the Nazis at Stalingrad and the decisive turn of the military tables in Russia, the imperialists realized that not only had their plan of smashing Russia failed, but that the Nazis would be faced with the problem of a rebellious Europe. So the "allies" landed in Europe and there began a sham war in reverse- reoccupation by the "allied" troops of the mightiest fortresses of France and Belgium without a battle and wholesale surrender of enormous Nazi armies. The Nazi failure in Russia was a severe blow to international capital. The solution of the problem created for the world bourgeoisie by the Bolshevik Revolution was pushed again into the future.

5. The Old Problem In A New Setting

The Nazi fiasco taught the western imperialists an important lesson. If they had imagined that the 1918-21 capitalist intervention in Russia ended in failure because of meagerness of military forces, they knew now that even an extraordinarily powerful war machine was inadequate without a spirited support of the masses. The Nazi army was composed of robots held together by terror, not of men moved by an inner feeling of duty and positive purpose implanted in them before marching. The very fact that Hitler, without any ideological changes in his Army, abruptly broke his "friendship" with the Kremlin and ordered his armored divisions to dash across the Russian lines, shows that the Nazi army was a mere soulless mechanism.

To create a possibility of success the bourgeoisie required not only a mighty engine of war but spirited troops imbued with the desire to attack and destroy "Communism" and the enthusiastic support of the masses for this task. However, at the time of the termination of the Nazi adventure the masses everywhere,

and particularly in France and Italy, two key countries in the event of war between Stalin and his "allies," were not only enthused over the Stalin victory but by the million flocked to join his political organizations. Under these circumstances immediate war against Stalin was out of the question. However, if Stalin could appear in a role of a new world aggressor, a change in the psychology of the masses might be achieved. Hence the "concessions" at Yalta, Teheran and Potsdam and the tempestuous opening period of the "diplomatic" or "cold war."

6. The Setback In The Ideological Field

All signs in the early stage of the "diplomatic war" seemed to indicate that it would move along at a roaring pace toward its logical culmination. Instead there developed a zigzag course with considerable intervals of relative calm.

Some anti-Stalin sentiment began to show here and there, but on the whole it became clear that the masses in England and the United States had no desire for war with Russia, while the masses in France and Italy drew closer to Stalin. Whether or not the imperialists were conscious of the fact, Stalin's strength consisted not merely in the fact that his Army broke the back of the Nazi machine in Russia but in the magical deception that the Bolshevik Revolution launched a true movement of liberation of the toiling masses, and that Stalin led the Russian toilers to Socialism. It was this major deception that all opponents of Stalin, the bourgeoisie and the various opportunist "anti-Stalin" currents within the working class, were unable to cope with. The "cold war" did not heat the atmosphere to any high degree and the bourgeoisie developed the more even tactic of following painfully the unfolding of the drama of Stalin's tyranny behind the "Iron Curtain" and on this basis endeavored to facilitate an anti-Stalin turn of mind among the masses. At the same time the Western imperialists felt secure militarily because of the possession of the atomic bomb and supposed lack of it in Russia.

7. Stalin Produces An Atomic Explosion

When on September 23, 1949 President Truman announced that "an atomic explosion occurred in the USSR" a sickening feeling of insecurity must have gripped the bourgeoisie as well as the masses, although outwardly no sign of uneasiness could be detected. However, the realization that a tremendous change in the military balance of strength has taken place was registered in many bourgeois publications.

"When America exploded the first atomic bomb, the Soviet government reacted in two conflicting ways. Publicly it scoffed at such unimportant news. Privately it launched a tremendous - and successful - effort to match our achievement.

"Now the Soviet bomb has exploded, and we are reacting in precisely the same way. Publicly we are shrugging our shoulders with feigned indifference. Privately we are likely to undertake new actions, at home and abroad, whose end results our government itself cannot calculate today... Our plan of holding Europe by an all-out atomic bombardment of Russia may be useless, once the Russians are able to carry out a counter bombardment of Europe or America." (New Republic, Oct. 3, 1949)

Everybody had known that Stalin's scientists worked on the atomic energy project, but the experts did not expect he would get into the possession of the secret of making the bomb before 1952. And by then, it had been hoped, matters would be settled with Stalin.

The possession of the bomb by Stalin has not eliminated the contra-

diction in the two forms of economy, nor the political state of the world as it emerged out of the war situation. Stalin certainly will not change his policy. He will go on absorbing the territories he had occupied with the consent of his former "allies" and will strain the resources of Russia and of his satellites to increase his military strength. Nor can the Western imperialists reconcile themselves with Stalin's obvious intention to make his control over Poland, Eastern Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, North Korea and almost half of China permanent. Their efforts must be eventually directed towards driving the Stalin gang out of all these "bait" territories and finally out of Leningrad, Moscow, Caucasus and Siberia. Thus both sides are heading toward what might well be destruction of parts of Europe and Asia, and considerable devastation of the United States. The military men of the bourgeoisie no longer speak with confidence of the prospect of a quick and easy victory. On October 7, 1949, a few days after the news about Stalin's atomic explosion, Admiral A.W. Radford in testimony before Congress stated that there was "no cheap easy way to win a war." Atomic war would be more costly to the masses than all the previous wars put together. The New York Times commented editorially on October 9, 1949: "The A-bomb is not just another man-killer. It is a weapon of terrific implications which we devoutly hope will never have to be used. Its use would be almost an act of desperation since the effect at best would be to win a victory whose results would themselves be horrible and of long duration."

Was the destruction of the civilian population of Hiroshima "an act of desperation?" Would the American imperialists hesitate to drop the bomb on Moscow or Leningrad? Hardly. And for that matter, neither would Stalin have qualms of conscience in sending his planes to blow up New York or Washington.

If the Western imperialists proved by destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki that they are capable of killing directly thousands of school children, patients in hospitals, doctors, nurses, mothers with their infants, helpless aged, with one terrible blow, Stalin proved that he was equally capable of perpetrating such "heroic" deeds, albeit, thus far, through indirect, treacherous methods.

8. Forces That Block The Way Out For The World Tilling Masses

Since every existing political tendency today officially takes the stand against war, one would conclude that the danger of war is more imaginary than real. Thinking people, however, as a result of observation of previous wars, know that most of the "opposition" to war is sheer humbug and a great deal of this "opposition" is either self-delusion or a conscious cover up for preparations for war. The Stalin bureaucrats, protesting the war policy of the bourgeoisie, conceal the truth about "concessions" he had received from the representatives of the bourgeois powers, Churchill and Roosevelt. Stalin knows that the bourgeoisie will never, no matter how high the stack of his atomic bombs may grow, allow him to keep the territories which they had agreed he should occupy. On the other hand, he will never relinquish these lands even at the threat of atomic destruction of the world. Consequently, people who approve and defend Stalin's grip on the territories "ceded" to him at Yalta, Teheran and Potsdam, and people that back the bourgeoisie in its aim to press Stalin to give up the "concessions" are attaching themselves to the powers that are furthering the march toward an appalling catastrophe.

The Communist Parties recruit supporters to Stalin's war aims which are, thus far, confined to retaining what he had received from Churchill and Roosevelt, and grab more of China while the grabbing is not apparently opposed by the Western imperialists; and the Socialist Parties and Labor Parties gather the anti-Stalin masses around the bourgeois governments. These political forces within the working class, under the guise of fighting for the preservation of

peace and for displacing capitalism with Socialism, in reality are misleading virtually the entire population of the planet toward the very catastrophe which they say they are seeking to prevent.

Within the workers' camp there are political tendencies claiming opposition to both Stalin and Social Democracy. The most influential of these tendencies is represented by the Trotsky movement consisting in the main of the Cannon and the Shachtman sectors. The Cannon Socialist Workers Party, pretending independence, is politically a branch of the Russian bureaucracy, and actually ties its followers to Stalin. The central position which makes the SWP a Stalin-supporting organization is "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" disguised under the correct phrases of struggle for the destruction of the Stalinist bureaucracy. In connection with the atomic bomb the Cannon leadership points only to one culprit, the Western imperialists:

"Control of this new titanic force for good or evil is indeed the crucial question for all humanity. But it is not a question of whether this force is to be controlled through the imperialist-dominated United Nations. It is whether the international working class can wrest control of atomic energy away from the monopolists and profiteers.

"Humankind is faced with a choice of life and death. Only world socialism—the international planned and cooperative economy of the free and equal—can snatch the atom bomb from the hands of the imperialist warmakers and destroyers. Truman's announcement of the atomic explosion in the USSR is an alarm signal for the workers of America and the world—either international socialism or atomic annihilation." (The Militant, October 3, 1949 p. 1)

The Cannon leadership glosses over the fact that in Stalin's hands the A-bomb is just as deadly to mankind as it is in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Stalin is merely on the other side of the situation involving him and the Western imperialists, but he is as much a warmaker and destroyer as they are, and his demagogy among the international working class occupies a far more important key position. There will be instead of world socialism, ruin and desolation if the A-bomb remains in the hands of both the bourgeoisie and Stalin! By implication the Cannon leadership approves the Stalinist A-bomb, centering its objection only on the bourgeois A-bomb.

The Shachtman policy of finding a way from the present terrible pass is to build "an independent union of the countries of Western Europe." Such organization presumably, would prevent the American and British imperialists and Stalin from plunging the world into a war! And who is Shachtman's choice for building such a "union?" No less than the loyal supporter of British imperialism, Mr. Bevin! As Foreign Minister of "His Majesty's Government, Bevin has proven a bitter and effective campaigner against Stalin in the interests of world imperialism:

"Only if the European peoples find a way of expressing themselves independently of these forces will they be able to avoid being swept into a war from which they have nothing to gain and everything to lose.

"Such a way, Comrade Shachtman pointed out, would be the formation of an independent union of the countries of Western Europe. By combining their economic, political and intellectual resources, he felt, they could represent a force strong enough to free themselves from both imperialisms. Such a union, he added, must not allow outworn bourgeois nationalistic institutions to stand in the way of the tremendous social progress it would make possible.

"In this connection it is a crime, the speaker said, that the leadership for

such a union is being taken by representatives of reaction like Churchill and not by leaders of the labor movement like Bevin. Shachtman cited this as only one of the many opportunities for social leadership that have been missed by the official labor leadership in the Western European countries." (Labor Action, Oct. 10, 1949 p. 1)

The lines of division of work between Cannon and Shachtman are obvious: Cannon ties his followers to the Stalin bureaucracy; Shachtman attaches his to the British and American bourgeoisie.

9. The Key Elements In Developing The Struggle Against The Forces of War.

There is no other social force that can prevent war than the working class leading the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeoisie. This class together with the rest of mankind is split up organizationally into numerous groups but politically it is divided between two camps, one led by Stalin, the other by the Western imperialists. Under these circumstances to keep repeating the old cliché that Socialism will eliminate ills including war becomes an opiate because the Stalinist and Social-Democratic bureaucracies use this very cliché to win the confidence of the workers. Superficial "criticism" of the policies of Stalin and Social Democracy, as practised by the Trotsky leaders, is not only useless but, as the history of the last three decades teaches, is misleading and harmful because it leaves the criminal character of Stalin and Social-Democracy unexposed.

Historically the Stalin movement is of decisive importance because it corrals those workers who want to repeat the Bolshevik Revolution on a world scale, not realizing that the Bolshevik Revolution set up a bureaucratic system of power. This is the case in France and Italy, where millions of workers parted from the Social-Democratic betrayers and fell into the trap of Stalinist betrayers. Stalin has kept his bureaucrats from leading these masses to the overthrow of capitalism in those countries because he feared that the movement might get out of his hands. Even in the Balkans, premature withdrawal of his Russian Army could imperil his control, as the Tito development proved. Only when Stalin is sure that the control of the movement will remain in his hands, does he order his followers to take over power as in China.

To break away the Stalinist workers from their bureaucratic leaders, and therefore forestall the danger of atomic suicide of mankind, it is necessary to explode the lie that the October Revolution introduced workers democracy. There was never workers democracy in Bolshevik Russia. Stalin was made dictator of the entire South Russia as early as Spring 1918! Bureaucratic dictators do not arise out of proletarian-democratic soil. There is an authentic decree, signed by Lenin, establishing the Stalin dictatorship. Since the regime at that time (1918) was under the guidance of the Lenin-Trotsky team, Trotsky's share of responsibility is obvious. In January 1923 after Stalin had acquired enormous personal power, Lenin wrote his famous letter, the popularly called Testament, in which he reversed his previous policy on Stalin and urged his removal from power. Trotsky and other leaders conspired with Stalin to hide the Testament from the workers, and in 1925 Trotsky openly before the entire world, declared that all talk about Lenin's "Testament" was a lie. These incriminating facts, and a thousand more, are either concealed and denied by the Trotsky leaders of all persuasions or are circumvented with "explanations." The Trotsky leaders thus cover up the roots and essence of Stalin's power. (See our pamphlet, The Trotsky School of Falsification, Parts 1 and 11.)

The workers who follow Cannon and Shachtman represent the lever in the task of wrenching the broader advanced stratum from the grip of the Stalin bureaucracy. These workers, subjectively, have broken not only with capitalism but

also with the Kremlin and the Socialist bureaucracy. To win them from the continuous objective support to the Kremlin (Cannon) and to Social-Democracy (Shachtman), it is necessary to unfold before their mind the political panorama of the distant and the near past of the Trotsky leadership, to expose the bureaucratic clique fights within the American Communist Party between the Lovestone-Wolfe gang and the Foster Cannon alliance for control of the organization; to bring to their knowledge the horse-deals Cannon and Shachtman, after becoming Trotskyites, made with shady trade union bureaucrats, with Browder's stooges, with various "progressive" fakery, with political adventurers like Múste; to expose their conscious betrayal of the masses in the Civil War in Spain, to make unmistakably clear the treacherous politics of the Cannon and Shachtman leadership who, like a cancer that goes down into the grave with its victim, will rather perish in the ruins of atomic warfare than permit their own unmasking and their consequent political extermination.

10. The Workers League For A Revolutionary Party.

The group which calls itself the WLRP originated through a subjective and organizational break first with Stalin's and later with his Trotskyist supporters. However, objectively the group, originally under its scientifically incorrect name (Leninist League), despite all the good intentions of its members, remained for a long time in the net of Stalin. It was only through the process of painstaking research and self-enlightenment in cumulative sequence that the group was able to extricate itself also objectively from the Stalin orbit. The steady progress was achieved through open and frank changes of views from those proven false by the investigation to those substantiated as correct by material evidence. Everything was subjected to criticism. Hero-worship was cast off, the name "Leninist" was discarded when it became clear that Lenin's policies were bureaucratic and Russian nationalist not only after October but even before 1917 (examples: article defending bureaucratic centralism in 1903, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", Selected Works Vol II p.405; article "On The National Pride of the Great Russians, Collected Works Vol XVIII p.99, etc.) And even Marx and Engels were brought under scrutiny, and much that developed in the Social Democratic and Bolshevik movement was traced to Marx' tactics. It became abundantly plain that blind, religious attitude towards leaders is a millstone around the neck of the proletariat.

The WLRP accepts only those ideas and theories the validity of which has been tested in the crucible of history. It rejects the slogan of support to the Stalin-ruled State whether this support is conditional, unconditional or so-called revolutionary. It rejects entanglement with or support to any and every tendency which in one way or another unholds the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The WLRP rejects such entrapping schemes as "an independent union of the countries of Western Europe" offered by Shachtman or "United States of the World" delusion, for in a situation where there is more than one State, social, economic and political strife and military contests are inevitable, whether the States are "united" as was very recently Tito's Yugoslavia and Stalin's USSR, or divided, as most of them are and only can be. Instead of the reactionary proposals of maintaining a multi-State system of society, the WLRP advances the position of establishing ONE WORLD STATE to replace the Stalin and bourgeois states. This state will establish one system of economy, without bureaucrats and without private owners of industry, under workers' control democratically administering all economy and state. This state can materialize only if the proletariat goes over to this position and struggles against any multi-State program whether the bourgeois "United States of the World" or the Stalin-Trotsky so-called "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics."

In reply to the physical Atomic bomb possessed by Stalin and the bourgeoisie - the WLRP advances a political atomic bomb of exposure to win the proletariat for the program of a single World Democratic Workers State to build the long-overdue Socialist Society!

George Harlen

THE TITO TRAP

With the advent of the "Tito rebellion" the Trotsky leaders have adapted themselves to this new element in the world situation. Tito is the leader of a "party" tremendously larger than the whole "Fourth International." But, still more important, Tito is the leader of a state, an army, an economy, a police force. Taught by Trotskyism, in its "French Turn," its trade union horse trades, its "Labour to Power," its French "CP-SP-CGT to power" manoeuvres to regard numbers, rather than proletarian clarity, as the criterion of success, the advanced anti-Stalin worker, disgusted by the effects of Stalinism, seeks to clutch at any straw as a form of seeming "opposition" to Stalinism.

The Trotskyist leadership seeks to condition the workers under its influence to a Tito orientation. On July 13, 1948 the International Secretariat of the Fourth International addressed "An Open Letter to the Congress Central Committee and Members of the Yugoslav Communist Party." (My italics, Ed.). The very first word of this letter is significant: "Comrades." However, on July 5, 1948, before the bureaucrat Tito was openly attacked by the Cominform bureaucrats, the Militant, USA organ of the Fourth International, wrote:

shady

"Tito knows no other school of politics than Stalinism. The hands of this/ adventurer drip with the blood of hundreds of Yugoslav Trotskyists and other militants whom he murdered during the civil war in Yugoslavia. He began his service as a purger of Stalin's political opponents as far back as 1928.... Everywhere his specialty was purging Trotskyists.' It was precisely in this capacity as an unquestioning and willing tool of the GPU that Tito was permitted to rise to the top."

Yet just eight days later the top flunkies of this "shady adventurer," this "murderer of Trotskyists," this "willing tool of the GPU," and the "willing tool" himself (a member of the Congress and a member of the Central Committee) become ---- "comrades."

But, it may be argued, the situation was changed by the "Tito rebellion" becoming known at large. There are several considerations with regard to this. The first is that the correct statements with regard to the role of Tito did not "suffer a sea change into something rich and strange" by Trotskyist slught-of-hand. But still more irrefutable proof exists that at least the American Trotskyist leadership knew what they were doing. In the Militant of July 19, 1948, three weeks after the emergence into public of the "Tito rebellion," one week after the open letter to the "comrades," the following appears:

"Tito and Stalin want the workers to choose between them----Regardless of what Tito and Stalin want, the workers will surely reject this trap of choosing between the type of gold braid worn in Belgrade as against the type Stalin prefers in the Kremlin." (My italics, Ed.).

Let us recapitulate at this point. Before the Cominform openly attacked Tito the Trotsky leaders recognized publicly that he was a GPU murderer who "knows no other school of politics than Stalinism." After the Cominform blast, this same leadership characterized the fight between Stalin and Tito as a scrap between rival bureaucrats and warned the workers of the Tito trap. In the interim they salute Tito and his stooges as "comrades."

But, again it may be argued, that we are making too much of the superscription of the letter, that it is the content that is decisive. Apart from the fact that it is somewhat "strange" to address "shady adventurers," "bureaucrats," "willing GPU tools" and "murderers of Trotskyists" as "comrades," we will not further dwell on this point, but will examine this letter in more detail. In this connection we wish to state that the whole letter is published in the August 1948 number of the Fourth International, we urge all readers of this article to read it in full. After stating the shock which was caused by the public about-face of the Stalinists the letter continues:

"The servility with which most of the leadership of the Communist parties have carried out the orders handed down from above is surpassed only by their evident dishonesty. Your party is accused of 'lack of democracy.'"

It is significant that the authors of this letter use quotes around "lack of democracy." The intention is obvious, to imply the absurdity and "dishonesty" of such a charge, without saying so in so many words and thereby exposing the authors to confrontation with their own previous words. Nowhere in this document is the real lack of democracy in Tito's party brought out. Already the Trotsky leadership begins to pull its followers into what it characterized later as the "trap." A little further down, after telling the Tito bureaucrats in a "comradely" though somewhat patronizing tone of the bureaucratic nature of the Cominform and the Russian Communist Party (remember this is addressed to the top flunkies of the man who "began his service as a purger of Stalin's political opponents as far back as 1928" according to The Militant of eight days before) the Trotsky leaders note:

"The evil you have suddenly discovered, however, has existed for a long time."

Now, just what was this "suddenly discovered evil"? We can do no better than refer to the already quoted Militant of the very next week. The "evil" was the desire of the Russian bureaucrats to subordinate the Yugoslav bureaucrats!

Continuing, as if they were talking to misguided but subjectively revolutionary workers instead of to hardened bureaucrats "knowing no other school than Stalinism," the letter launches into a long explanation of the "degeneration" of the Russian bureaucrats. We have exposed elsewhere this explanation which is nothing else than a Trotsky concoction covering up his own role in the Stalinist development. After several paragraphs of this nature we come to the decisive, the political section of the letter, under the subheading: "What Road Will You Follow". This section should be examined very carefully for it is here that the "Tito trap" is really sprung:

"Comrades (sic-Ed.), your Congress which is about to meet, the delegates which will compose it, and the thousands of communist members whom they will represent, find themselves on this day following the Cominform resolution against your party, confronting decisions of truly historical import. Three roads are open to you and you must choose one of them." (Italics mine, Ed.).

Let us dwell on this a moment. The delegates to the Tito Congress, the bureaucrats greeting Tito with the same Byzantine adulation that their Russian counterparts give to Stalin are told that three roads are open to them. What are these roads?

"The first road---to maintain a complete monolithic unity with the policies and ideology of the Russian Communist Party."

"A second road will certainly be suggested (sic Ed.), consisting essentially of retiring into Yugoslavia, repelling the attacks and the eventual violence and provocations of the Cominform and its agents, and attempting to build 'socialism' in your own country, while concluding trade relations with the powers of Eastern Europe as well as with those of the imperialist West. We will not conceal from you, Comrades, that we consider this second road just as pernicious as the first."

This was and is the only road that national bureaucrats in a country where the bourgeoisie has been expropriated and political power usurped from the proletariat, could follow. We have already shown above that the Trotsky leadership knew this. But there is even more definite proof. The Trotsky leaders were familiar with the reply of the Central Committee ^{of} the Yugoslav Communist Party to the Cominform blast (June 29, 1948). They were familiar with the fact that the whole leit-motiv of Tito's reply was his demand for a partnership in the Stalinist bloc and not merely a puppet's role. They were familiar with the words of Tito's Central Committee which were as follows:

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia considered and still considers that Yugoslav relationships towards the Soviet Union must be exclusively founded on a basis of confidence and sincerity----

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party asserts that not one of its leaders considers that Yugoslavia in its struggle for construction of socialism and safeguarding of independence does not need help of countries of peoples democracy and the Soviet Union and only men who have lost all touch of reality could assert anything like it." (Italics mine-Ed.).

So, knowing the nature of the bureaucrats to whom they were talking, knowing not only that it was impossible for them to follow any but the second road but also that they had already indicated in terms that even an avowed capitalist organ could understand that they had chosen the second road (New York Times editorial of June 30, 1948 on page 24), their only alternative to submission to Stalin, the Trotsky authors of the letter presented the fictitious alternative of a third road:

"The third road---socialist revolution---class struggle---Soviet democracy---workers and peasants militia---complete sovereignty of the factory committees---genuine workers' control of production."

Now the "Tito trap" is sprung. (Throughout we have put Tito trap in quotes to constantly recall the reader's attention to the fact that it is quoted from the Militant article of June 19, 1948). By stating that such a "third road" is possible for the Yugoslav bureaucrats, despite the fact that the Trotsky leaders are bound to know that such a possibility is excluded by historical materialism ("being determines consciousness"), the Trotsky leaders directly pull the unwary workers into the "trap" for which they had conditioned them by their previous betrayals. This is on a par with the spreading of the illusion that the Labour Party of Britain can bring about Socialism, that the colonial bourgeoisie wages some sort of anti-imperialist struggle, etc. In a word, it is like telling the armament manufacturers that they ought to stop turning out bombs and cannon or exhorting the proprietors of bawdy houses on the advantages of chastity.

Why? It is not ignorance, as we have already shown from their own statements. What, then, was the purpose of the "Open Letter to the Comrades of the Congress and the Central Committee"? The authors of the letter themselves let the cat out of the bag:

"Millions of workers throughout the world are today profoundly disgusted with the policies and methods used by the present leaders of the Cominform. Unwilling to pass over into the imperialist camp in any guise whatever, they vainly seek a new pole of attraction, a new political leadership. Only the vanguard of this ^{has} mass at this time found the road toward our organization, the Fourth International. You can become the mobilization point for this mass of revolutionary workers and thus, with a single blow, completely change the present condition of paralysis within the world working-class movement, the stranglehold of the agents of Washington and of the degenerated Russian bureaucracy

And what will "we" do?

"Today it (the "Fourth International" Ed.) has sections in 35 different countries on all continents"--chant the salesmen of Trotskyism to make the deal attractive, "----Today it is launching in all countries a vast campaign protesting against the bureaucratic measures which the Cominform has taken against you." And then the promise "----Tomorrow it will make your documents known in 20 different languages."

Let us translate the above into ordinary political language: Dear Comrade Tito. We know that you are a nationalist bureaucrat with a family quarrel with Stalin. We know that you have murdered our party comrades and that you are as afraid of proletarian revolution as is Stalin. We know that your only choice is either submission to Stalin or the "second road." As a matter of fact we know that the "second road" is your only practical choice because the Cominform is out for your blood. And you understand that quite well. We know that you represent a trap for the revolutionary-minded workers. But we are in a fix. We need a mobilization point and you are it. You need an international machine. We have thirty five parties and we are already lining the boys up for you and, tomorrow, will print your stuff in twenty languages. But, what is most important, continue the hucksters, here is the giant jackpot. To show you what good fellows we are, in advance, and without your paying a cent, we have already instilled in the heads of our followers the illusion

that you could take a third road, a r-r-revolutionary road.

Tito, of course, can not consider any overtures from the Trotskyites. He had already gained from the Open Letter all that he could possibly gain politically and could only lose by an Open Letter of his own. In addition he was astute enough to know that organizationally he had nothing to look forward to in the "Fourth International." Instead he counted on the centripetal tendencies of the nationalist bureaucrats in the Russian satellite countries and the tendency of workers revolting against Russianism to gravitate in his direction. A symptomatic indication of the latter was shown early this year when a split-off from the SED (German Stalinist Party), the "Free Communist Party of Germany" initiated its life by sending greetings to Tito. In addition Tito, compelled to seek imperialist aid due to a combination of his non-revolutionary base and the Stalinist blockade, refrained from forming an open Tito centre in order not to openly give a handle to those elements in the imperialist countries who oppose economic aid to Yugoslavia.

But the silence of Tito did not deter the Trotsky bureaucrats from continued support. As late as September 12, 1949, the Militant reported a speech of Michael Bartell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Mayor of New York, in which he said:

"The banner of revolt has been raised in Belgrade by Tito, a man who supported Stalin against Trotsky---Tito is no Trotskyist, but we are not neutral in this fight, for regardless of Tito's personal motives, the power behind his revolt springs from the desire of the Yugoslav masses for genuine socialist freedom." (Speech of August 24, 1949).

The line of the Schachtman Trotskyites, the Independent Socialist League, is a more subtle line of support to the bloody butcher of Belgrade. They commenced in September 1948, in their magazine The New Internationalist with an exposure of the contradictions and fakery of the official Fourth International, the organ of the Cannon Trotskyites. But the orientation of Schachtman on Anglo-American imperialism as the lesser evil to Russia forced him as in the case of Germany, Trieste, and Poland, to some support of Yugoslavia inasmuch as Tito was being forced objectively into a position of unwilling reliance on imperialism. Having exposed the Stalin-oriented Fourth International for its inconsistencies and downright dishonesty, Schachtman was precluded from following the same line. But in Labor Action of September 12, 1949, the ISL leadership squared the circle by an interesting tour de force in an article entitled "Three Lines on Tito; Footnotes on Politics":

"To support Tito as against Moscow's drive to crush Yugoslav national independence is one thing. To whitewash him is another. Independent Socialists were quite willing to give military support even to a hangman like Chiang Kai-shek as against Japan's pre-World War II assaults on China's national independence. But we are not prepared to gild totalitarian dictators merely because of a new line up in the imperialist cold war."

It is difficult to say which is more repulsive to an honest proletarian revolutionary, the attempt of the official Trotskyists to paint Tito as a potential revolutionist as a justification for support, or the cynical implication of

the ISL leadership that they will support Tito's national bureaucratic oppression and exploitation of the Yugoslav toilers without benefit of guilt.

What should be the position of a real revolutionist with regard to the Tito trap? We submit that the only political tendency presenting a correct revolutionary line on this question has been our own. From the very beginning we pointed out that the "Tito rebellion" was the rebellion of a bureaucrat pushed into a corner and fighting for his bureaucratic life, for the "right" of the Tito bureaucratic usurpers to exploit and oppress the Yugoslav masses without sharing with the Russian bureaucracy. We pointed out that any support to Tito was support to counter-revolution and this has been confirmed by history.

BRITISH TROTSKYITES ENTER THE LABOUR PARTY!

The Revolutionary Communist Party (British Section of the 4th International) no longer exists. At their Whitsun Conference it was decided by a majority vote of 18 to 8 to dissolve the British Trotsky organisation and instruct the members to enter the Labour Party individually. Both factions, the pro-entry ^{and} ~~anti-entry~~ faction are dissolved, with no voice yet raised by the minority against this dissolution. As advanced workers are aware, this Trotskyite tactic of dissolving, and entering the Social Democracy is no new phenomenon. The best known example of this is "The French Turn" when Leon Trotsky led his followers back into the ranks of the Second International in the period 1934-6. Trotsky's own prejudgement of such a course can be seen from the following:

"Is it possible to reform or renew the Second International, pre-~~ved~~aded by crimes and treacheries? The War and all post-war events answer: 'No!'... Social Democracy is devoted body and soul to the bourgeois regime." (The Militant, March 31, 1934.)

In spite of this knowledge Trotsky had no hesitation twelve months later in liquidating what he claimed to be the independent working class force into a tail of the Social Democracy.

Trotskyism being a branch of Stalinism marks its course within the working class movement with a pattern of ultra-right and ultra-left zig-zags, similar to those of Stalinism.

In the case of the present entry of the British Trotskyites there is not the same direct relationship as set forth above. Over a long period Haston and the other leaders of the British Trotskyites have advanced the policy of "Labour to power." Since the election of 1945 they have given support to the Labour Government at every stage of its programme. Practically every issue of the Socialist Appeal proves this contention but we give below some characteristic examples:

"Every Labour worker knows what would have been the disastrous consequences had the Tories come to power... They (the Labour Government - A.P., T.F.H.) have carried out the programme of nationalisation of coal, railways, gas, electricity and the nationalisation of steel ^{is being} projected for the coming sessions of Parliament. All these have been opposed by the Tories." (Socialist Appeal, March 1948).

To measure the "progress" of "these progressive steps" we can read the Liberal News Chronicle for June 23rd, 1949, where it is reported that the National Coal Board in 1948, second year of nationalisation made a profit of £1,700,000. Actual operating profit made by the collieries last year was £16.2 million but the board had to pay out £12½ million in interim income payments to former owners and a further £3,136,836 in interest payments. A very "progressive step" -- for the coal owners. Yet, the Trotsky leaders told the workers: "On January 1st the Railway industry became nationalised. This event is welcomed by the railway workers and the entire trade union movement... The Nationalisation of transport undoubtedly constitutes a progressive step." (Socialist Appeal, January 1948).

The constant repetition in the pages of the Socialist Appeal of their line of support to the Labour Government by the Trotsky leaders had the effect of confusing many of the Trotsky workers into belief of the myth that the Labor Government was beginning a social revolution. Easton's Political Bureau majority developed this in the form that the workers were tightly anchored to the Labour Party and that therefore the R.C.P. should be dissolved and its members individually enter the L.P.

This met with considerable opposition among the more advanced Trotsky workers. Even the vote at the conference shows that a considerable portion of the membership was opposed to entry despite the fact that the majority had control of their press and organisation, and also despite the fact that little time or opportunity was given for pre-conference discussion of the decision to enter.

The reaction to the Conference decision is strikingly shown in Glasgow where several Trotskyite workers have not only declared their opposition to entry but have also stated that they intended to re-examine the whole question as a tendency. That it is not only a question of entry but still more a question of the basically opportunist line of the British Trotskyite leadership is shown by the latter's equally vigorous support of the Stalinist rape of Czechoslovakia.

The British members of the W.L.R.P. are contacting rank and file Trotskyists and are trying to help them clarify their position. In this struggle of a section of the Trotsky workers to break with their leadership and seek the road to the building of a genuine world revolutionary party we are convinced that they will find their main weapon in the line of the W.L.R.P. Advanced Trotsky workers in Britain have arrived at similar political conclusions to ours. This shows the R.C.P. members and members of the W.L.R.P. Those comrades in Britain desiring either material for this discussion or further contact with a representative of the WLRP should address themselves to C.P. Stanton, 10 Raeberry Street, Glasgow, Scotland.

Arthur Priest
Thomas Harden

(England)

BRITISH TROTSKYITES GREET STALINIST ENSLAVEMENT OF
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Under front page headlines of "Capitalists Routed in Czechoslovakia" the March 1948 Socialist Appeal (official organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party; British Trotskyites) greeted the Stalinist coup in Czechoslovakia. The article which was written by Jock Easton, General Secretary of the R.C.P., stated:

"As we go to press, the crisis in Czechoslovakia is coming to a close. Benes has capitulated and accepted the full demands of Gottwald, the leader of the Communist Party. This completes the nationalisation of the means of production of the country, with the exception of petty enterprise, and constitutes an important victory for the working class." (My emphasis, A.P.).

The article goes on to describe the "shattered hopes of the imperialists" resulting from the Czechoslovak events. Easton draws attention to the Stalinist tactics which preceded the coup; the appointment by the Stalinist Minister of the Interior of Stalinists to key positions in the police force and all the other familiar infiltration methods employed by the Russian bureaucracy. The article continues:

"But, according to all reports, other than from Stalinist sources, it seemed that at the forthcoming elections scheduled to take place in April (1948, A.P.), the Stalinists would not have gained support and, in fact, might have lost. Faced with this possibility, which would have undoubtedly strengthened the hands of capitalist reaction, the Stalinists discovered a 'plot' and went on the offensive." (Ibid., My emphasis, A.P.)

The object of the British Trotskyite leaders to represent the rape of the Czechoslovak workers by the Stalinist forces as a victory for the working class over the capitalist reaction is obvious from the above quotations. Easton greets the victory of the Stalinists over capitalist reaction but has nothing to say of the victory of the counter revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy which now ties the Czech workers under its vicious bonds. He continues:

"When it seemed that President Benes was hesitating about signing the demands of Gottwald, and when this hesitation gave courage to the middle class and gave rise to the possibility of street fighting, the Stalinists organized strike action, called the workers onto the streets, and armed the workers militia. A hundred thousand workers marched through the streets of Prague, brushing aside the much smaller demonstration of students." (Ibid., My emphasis, A.P.).

The scarcely veiled admiration of the Trotsky leaders towards Stalin's successful Czechoslovak manoeuvres is obvious. The fact that the Czech workers have been handed over to the most vicious, counter revolutionary ruling clique in all history is welcomed in this article by Jock Easton as "an important victory for the working class." Easton's line is an attempt to tie the subjectively honest Trotsky workers into support of the Stalinist bureaucracy's rape of the Czechoslovak workers. To add color, Easton paints a picture of "revolutionary" events brought about by the counter revolutionary Stalinists.

"Although the movement was engineered from above, and while the Stalinists had complete control from beginning to end, it is apparent that the masses were drawn into the movement and enthusiastically followed the lead given. Any resistance on the part of the supporters of capitalism, would not only have been crushed by the army and the police but would have met the full weight of the organised mass of the working class." (Ibid.).

By high-lighting the support gained by the Stalinists from the workers Easton seeks to represent the Czechoslovak Stalinist bureaucrats as the leaders of a popular mass movement. Nowhere does he draw attention to the Stalinist tactic of using the class consciousness of the workers for the counter revolutionary aims of the bureaucracy. By representing Gottwald as the leader of a popular uprising of the Czech workers, Easton seeks to tie the subjectively anti-Stalin workers back to support of Stalin. It is significant that Easton adorns his article, which is in essence but a eulogy of the Stalinist Czechoslovak coup, with a photograph of the Stalinist murderer Gottwald. Easton continues:

"To complete the movement, Committees of Action were brought into being in the factories and were called on to prevent any sabotage by the capitalist management and to assist the carrying out of the process of nationalization." (Ibid.)

Easton speaks of Stalinist controlled "Councils of Action" as operating in the interests of the workers. By deliberately failing to point out the anti-working class role of Stalinist-dominated "Councils of Action," Easton seeks to whitewash their role in the enslavement of the Czechoslovak workers under Stalin's yoke.

"As an aftermath of the movement in the cities, it is reported that '100,000 Communist peasants are to meet to demand land reform.' Thus, the movement in the cities to complete the abolition of private enterprise was followed by a movement among the poor peasantry to complete the revolution on the land." (Ibid.).

An honest advanced worker might expect some outline of the role of Stalin's bearocracy in the subjection of the peasantry but no -- and in case the British Trotskyite workers should think that Easton's support of Stalin's tactics only applies to Czechoslovakia -- he hastens to assure them:

"Faced with a similar situation in Britain, class conscious workers would obviously throw themselves whole-heartedly behind the nationalising of the new sections of industry. They would participate in the Committees of Action to purge the industries of managers and directors hostile to purge the industries of managers and directors hostile to socialisation" (Ibid.)

Note the subtle introduction of the word "socialisation" as distinct from nationalisation."

In case this poisonous line should taste unpalatable to the advanced workers who are hostile to Stalinism, Easton rushes to sugar the bitter pill.

"At the same time, they (the class conscious workers referred to in the above quote, A.P.) would fight against any attempt to limit the democracy of the workers from above; fight every attempt to eliminate working class opposition to Stalinist policies and intimidation." (Ibid.)

"After greeting the advance of Stalinist slavery over the Czech and Slovak workers, Haston goes on to state that the British workers should support such a Stalinist maneuver should it take place in Britain. Haston knows that the victory of such Stalinist tactics whether in Czechoslovakia or in Britain means the stifling of the class conscious workers, means the literal murder of the advanced guard, means the introduction of the most vicious form of tyranny known to history. While declaring his solidarity with the introduction of Stalinist control Haston hypocritically calls for a fight against the destruction of democracy under the very system he calls on the workers to support.

"BEWARE OF THE G.P.U."

"To prevent a similar development in Czechoslovakia to that which has taken place in Russia, where the G.P.U. is the supreme ruler, with the monstrous frame-up trials of old Communists as part of the process of destroying all opposition, the Czech workers must exercise tremendous vigilance to guard and extend their traditions and practices of workers' democracy. The abolition of the setting up of workers' courts and a public security force under direct workers' control, will be an essential task. The officers' corps and the existing police force will have to be destroyed. Unless the workers tenaciously fight against all encroachments from above it is inevitable that the future activities of the Stalinists will crush political life in Czechoslovakia in the same totalitarian vice as in Russia. In the final analysis, this will depend upon the resistance of the Czech workers themselves and the assistance they get from workers from the rest of the world. The revolutionary Communist Party urges the British workers to weep no tears over the rout of the remnants of Czech capitalism. On the contrary, they must push forward the expropriation of the capitalists at home. But whilst rejoicing at the victory over the capitalists, they must have no illusions as to their future under Stalinism. They must vigilantly intervene at every threat against the Czech Social Democrats, Trotskyists and other sections of the working class movement." (Ibid., Emphasis in original, A.P.)

After handing over the Czech workers to Stalin, Haston states that they must "exercise tremendous vigilance" to guard their "democracy." To call for the abolition of the G.P.U.; the formation of workers courts under workers' control is blatant hypocrisy. Haston knows that once the Czech workers are in Stalin's grip nothing short of a political overthrow of Stalin's rule and its replacement by a revolutionary democratic proletarian rule can bring about their liberty. Haston knew what would happen to the Czech workers when Stalin moved to tighten his grip in Czechoslovakia. The problem was to make this bitter pill palatable to the revolutionary workers whom Haston is addressing. Clearly playing on their anti-capitalist sentiments, Haston focuses attention on the fact that the Czech capitalist forces have been routed. Naturally, this fact is bound to strike a responsive chord among the Trotsky workers.

While Stalin's murdering hirelings hound the workers of Czechoslovakia, build their slave camps and destroy every vestige of personal and political freedom -- Haston says that the "Revolutionary Communist Party" "urges the British workers to shed no tears over the rout of the remnants of Czech capitalism." But whilst "rejoicing at the victory over the capitalists" they must "vigilantly intervene" at every threat against the Czech Social Democrats, etc.

Haston's glib promises are intended to counteract any misgivings the Trotskyite workers might have about the terrible consequences that will inevitably ensue from Stalin's rule. By speaking of solidarity and "working class intervention"

to protect Czech. liberty, Haston spreads the myth that the Czech. workers can be saved by such empty abstractions without being preceded by an overthrow of Stalinism and capitalism. In this way Haston seeks to cover up his open support of Stalinism and by talking of protecting Czech workers liberty by "intervention" (this so-called intervention against Stalinism is deliberately left without context), Haston pushes the poison that Stalinism can be stopped without the revolutionary action against all phases of Stalinist rule. Haston's real line of open support to Stalin's rule stands exposed.

Ted Grant, leading British Trotskyite, in the April 1948 issue of the Socialist Appeal, returned to the theme of support to the Stalinists in Czechoslovakia.

"For weeks the capitalist class of the world has been whimpering about the measures taken against the capitalists in Czechoslovakia. The methods used by the Stalinists have been compared to the technique of Hitler. Their propaganda is saturated through and through with capitalist hypocrisy."

Grant, like Haston, drew attention to the mass support gained by the Stalinists. Basing his line on the "nationalisation" of Czech industry Grant says:

"The workers could not but support the measures." "The peasants were solidly behind the reforms." "These are the progressive features supported by the Trotskyists." "They are the necessary economic foundation for a workers state." (Ibid.)

Grant admits that:

"Having used the pressure of the workers against the capitalist class, the Stalinists will dispense with all the elements of workers control." (Ibid.)

When Jock Haston in the March 1948 Socialist Appeal greeted the Stalinist coup in Czechoslovakia as "an important victory for the working class" he made much of the so-called Councils of Action which were to assist in the process of nationalisation. Writing one month later Ted Grant changes the tune:

"The Czech authorities (i.e. the Stalinists, A.P.) have made a fundamental distinction between the Action Committees set up by the workers and peasants and those appointed by the political parties from above. Although they are called by the same name there is a vast difference between the two. The Action Committees of the National Front appoints all the officials of the different parties, which is a caricature of democracy. They have made it clear that the Action Committees will not play the role which the Soviets or Workers Committees played in the Russian Revolution in 1917." (Ibid.)

Grant, Haston and all the other Trotsky leaders know full well, as they knew BEFORE the Czech events, that under Stalinism the role of workers and peasants Action Committees would be farcical. This fact did not, and does not prevent the Trotsky leaders greeting the Stalinist grip on the Czechoslovak workers as "an important victory for the working class." After drawing attention to some of the abominations of the Russian state apparatus and comparing them with the more democratic ideals of the advanced workers, Grant says:

"Czechoslovakia under Stalinist leadership will develop in the same direction. There will not be a process of the withering away of the state, but a strengthening of the state apparatus and the A.P.U. All the rights which the workers still possess will be strangled and an uncontrolled bureaucracy will ride roughshod over the masses as in Russia." (Ibid.)

So much for the "important victory for the working class." Grant hurries to end on a note of optimism: "In the long run, the Czech workers will not tolerate a tyrannous officialdom. Experience will teach them that Stalinism is not Communism. They will recognize the need to overthrow the bureaucracy with its police apparatus and establish their own direct control of industry and the state in a workers' democracy as outlined by Karl Marx." (Ibid.)

Grant and Easton and the other Trotsky leaders serve their master Stalin well. By defending and applauding the rape of the Czech workers as "an important victory for the working class" and covering up the bureaucratic stranglehold of the Stalinstate by talk of "In the long run" some-time-never the Stalinists will be overthrown by the Czech workers, the Trotsky leaders seek to lead the advanced workers breaking with Stalinism back to support of the rotten Russian Nationalistic bureaucracy.

The May 1948 Socialist Appeal contained a news item on the Stalinist "elections" in Czechoslovakia. After pointing out the crooked character of these "elections" the S.A. stated: "Thus the election becomes a farce, a totalitarian plebiscite." Surely by any libertarian standards a crooked election is a violation of democracy? A violation of liberty? Easton promised in the March 1948 Socialist Appeal "vigilant intervention" from the British workers at any attempt to violate the democracy of the Czech workers. We can search the May 1948 S.A. in vain for any call to the British workers from the R.C.P. to intervene in the violation of democracy represented by false elections in Czechoslovakia. No further comment on Czechoslovak affairs appears in the pages of the Socialist Appeal until the mid-October 1948 issue when Bill Hunter wrote on the introduction of the Stalinist legal system into Czechoslovakia:

"CZECH LAW CRIME TO TELL THE TRUTH. A new law for the 'defence of the People's Republic' has been unanimously approved by the Czech Parliament. It makes any form of opposition to the government a crime and provides for the establishment of Labour Camps, that is, Concentration Camps. For agitating against the Republic or its 'People's democratic system,' or allowing such agitation, sentences can be given from three months to three years." (Ibid. emphasis in original, A.P.)

In the above quoted article Bill Hunter leaves in cold storage the former greeting of Easton to the Stalinist coup in Czechoslovakia. Criticising the Stalinist Daily Worker's lack of comment on this issue, Hunter gives absolutely no comment himself but is content with a factual account of the destruction of democracy caused by the introduction of the Stalinist legal system into Czechoslovakia. Where is Easton's promised "intervention" at the violation of Czech democracy represented by the introduction of the totalitarian Stalinist legal system? This, like all the "revolutionary words of the Trotsky leaders is but a cover up for their real policy of support to Stalinism.

Continuing the sorry story, the March 1949 S.A. draws attention to the falling living standards in Czechoslovakia, and says:

"The anniversary of Czech coup shows a steady tendency to develop on lines made familiar by the regime in Moscow. While the repressive machinery has become tighter and tighter, the rights of the workers have been curtailed. Concentration camps and forced labor loom in the background for the refractory."

This is the state about which Easton urged the British workers to "weep no tears over the rout of the remnants of Czech capitalism." "Faced with a similar situation in Britain" Easton would urge the British workers to support Stalinist introduction of the slave camp and forced labor.

An honest revolutionary tells the workers that the only solution to Czechoslovakia is linked up and is part of the struggle to prevent the oncoming war. An honest revolutionary says "Neither Stalin nor the Imperialists but World Revolution is the only answer to the problems confronting the world working class."

The handing over of Czechoslovakia to Stalin at the close of world war 2 was part of the Imperialists scheme to represent Stalin as a new "Hitler" over-running Europe, and so prepare the ground for the coming war against Russia. Every political tendency in the world today supports one or the other of the two main contending camps -- either Stalinism or Imperialism. The British Trotskyite leaders have a foot in both camps. Their support of "Labour to Power" in the 1945 General Election and their subsequent support of the Labour Party nationalisation fraud -- brand them as supporters of the British Labour Government which is a capitalist government with all the imperialist trimmings. The 'Socialist Appeal' regularly shows the strong links which also tie the Trotsky leaders to the Stalinist system. The "revolutionary" phraseology of the British Trotsky leaders seeks only to tie the advanced workers back into support of Stalinism and Imperialism and the Third World War.

The only tendency in the world today which stands solid against Stalinism, and against Imperialism, against War, against opportunism and chauvinism in all its forms -- is the Workers League for a Revolutionary Party. Advanced workers of all lands join with us forming the World Party of Workers Revolution.

Arthur Priest
England
May 1949

NOTES FROM BRITAIN ON THE DOCKER' STRIKE
AND THE FORMER RCP (TROTSKYITES)

On Monday, July 11, 1949, at the request of the Labour Government a state of emergency was proclaimed by the King of England in connection with the strike of the London dockers. The seriousness of this can be understood when it is remembered that the last time a similar move was resorted to in "peacetime" was in 1925, the year of the British General Strike. Under the declaration of emergency extraordinary powers are vested in the government. It may seize and hold persons and documents without warrant and without time limit. It may proceed to act as it pleases to break the strike without having to pay any attention to the laws usually hampering it. These "emergency powers" were set up by the Tory government during the recent war situation of 1939-45 and are now used by the Labor government. Even before this the Labour Government had sent troops on to the docks to unload the struck ships.

In the streets of London on the day of the proclamation of emergency many observers noted and pointed out the almost physical impression of tension. The lines were tightly drawn. On the one hand the strikers were supported by the Smithfield meat porters who resolved not to handle any products which had been unloaded by blackleg labor or by the forces. The French and Italian dockers declared their support and willingness to engage in sympathetic action. On the other hand, all the forces of the ruling class from the legal watchdog of the British capitalists, Sir Hartley Sharcross, who emphasized the fact that he was not speaking as a member of the Labour Party, but as the spokesman of the British State, to the Archbishop of Canterbury joined in the demand that the strikers go back to work.

What is behind this sudden crisis in the affairs of Britain, for it is a crisis? Taking advantage of what little is left for them in the situation the Labour Party bureaucrats have, one and all, joined in the cry that the strike coincides with the Stalinist endeavor to break the Marshall Plan and there is a considerable probability that the allegation in Parliament that a Stalinist agent came over from Canada to help the strike spread is correct. Nevertheless the fact remains that the CP has very little strength among the dockers, and all indications are to the effect that the strike was more of a spontaneous character.

What is most significant that the strike could have been averted or settled by the Labour Government on the basis of not insisting on the dockers unloading the two struck ships. But Atlee and Co. preferred not to do this; they preferred to openly line up with the dockowners, to use the dockowners' own arguments about sacredness of contracts, and to ask the King to proclaim an emergency. Thus, as the strikers pointed out, the strike was transformed into a lockout. The Labour Government and trade union bureaucrats, who howl about the shortage of food, in Parliament, in the trade unions, and in every issue of the infamous Daily Herald, are themselves responsible. It is interesting to note in the parliamentary debates that the Conservatives, commencing with Anthony Eden, endorse the blacklegging of the Labour Government and only complain about things coming to such a pass.

Faced with the fact that the use of troops for blacklegging only spread the strike the Labour Government had a state of emergency proclaimed in which any striker or any person urging strike or aiding it may be arrested without warrant and imprisoned without trial. This from the Social Democratic blacklegging pot who only two weeks ago was calling the Stalinist kettle black for equally loathsome scabbing performed by the lackeys of the Kremlin in Berlin.

Hardly a day passed without Atlee or some other Labour stooge of the bosses saying over the wireless that the strikers were meddling with something that was none of their affair. Nationalism of the worst sort was used as an argument against the strike. And always the litany that the Communists were behind it all. This had two results, one intended, the other probably not. The first was the whipping up of war spirit against Russia. The unintended result was that the Stalinists have gained a certain amount of sympathy and prestige both at the docks and elsewhere.

What is the role of the Stalinists in the strike? Significantly enough, they deny that they are responsible when it would seem logical that they would claim credit if they could. But it can not be denied that they have acquired prestige as a result of the attack of the Labour Government, as a further result of which they will be put in a still more strategic position to head the movement in order to behead it. The whole history of the British Labour movement from the times of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee to the present confirms the thesis that any reliance on Stalinist trade union leadership is reliance on a blacklegging force.

But the British workers do not have to make a lengthy survey of history in order to find out the blackleg role of Stalinism. It is only two weeks ago that the Berlin tram strike was liquidated by a united front of the four military commanders of Berlin after the members of the Stalinist party had been formed into blackleg and murder gangs against the strikers, as narrated elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin.

In this situation in which, only three weeks ago a member of the Workers League for a Revolutionary Party could concretely expose the German Stalinists as strikebreakers from the platform of the Glasgow Workers' Open Forum without any of the members of the CPGB who were present daring to resent this epithet of blackleg; in this situation in which the Social Democratic members of the Labour Government join the Berlin Stalinists in the rogues' gallery lineup of scabherders; in this situation in which the two principal agents of reaction in the workers' ranks are capable of being exposed in all their criminality, what are the leaders of the Revolutionary Communist Party (British Trotskyists) doing? Why, one could almost believe in the old Greek Ananke. For with the irony of a Sophoclean fate, the "swan song" of Easton and Co. appeared almost on the very day of the proclamation of emergency by the Labour Government. In the last, a "special" number of the Socialist Appeal dated July 1949, and issued two or three days before the Labour Government proclaimed emergency, the Trotskyist leader, Jock Easton announced the dissolution of the RCP, its decision to enter the Labour Party on the basis of individual leadership, and the liquidation of its organ, On the eve of the extension of the dock strike outside of and against the Labour Governments, outside of and

against the Labour Government, outside of and against the Labour Party (even though unfortunately with utter lack of political clarity), the Trotsky leaders write:

"There is dissatisfaction among wide sections of the working class with the policy of the Labour Government. They reflect this, however, not by seeking for a new and more revolutionary organisation, but by striving to exert pressure through their established mass political organisation -- the Labour Party. They see no alternative in small Left-wing groupings outside that Party. The perspective for Socialists must therefore be to join the ranks of the politically conscious workers inside the Labour Party and try to orientate its policy along truly Socialist lines."

A little later on we are treated to another gem in the form of:

"An offensive against capitalism is above all necessary to secure a decisive victory for Labour at the forthcoming General Election and to effectively combat Tory reaction."

Hardly was the printer's ink dry on this effusion when the tramp of the troops at the docks was succeeded by the voice of "Labour's" Atlee reading the proclamation of emergency to the applause of the Tory reaction. Nor is this all. Not content with liquidating their own "revolutionary party," folding up their paper, and slinking into the Party of the Labour strikebreakers, Haston uses this document also in an effort to tie the workers to Stalinism. After the usual "criticism," without which the Trotsky leadership could not play its role, the usual support in action to Stalinism is given in the following words:

"The Communist Party offers no alternative to Socialist workers. Its policy is not determined by the needs and interests of the working class, but by the requirements of Russian foreign policy. In Russia there has come into being a nationalist bureaucracy which utilises its own position, not in the interests of Socialism, but to defend its own privileges. To this end it manipulates the policies of the various Communist Parties, including the British Communist Party, which change their policies to suit the needs of Russian foreign policy. Wherever Stalinism is in power it introduces a police state, deprives the workers of the right to strike, the right to free speech and press, the right to vote for candidates of their own choosing; eliminating political opposition from the working class by means of the firing squad and concentration camp." (Emphasis ours, AP-TFH).

So far the criticism. With the exception of the very important fact that the policies of the Communist Parties are determined not only by the necessities of Russian foreign policy today, but are always determined by the necessity of preventing revolution anywhere, with this exception, the indictment is correct. But what follows immediately?

"Labour workers must nevertheless never forget that the Russian Revolution was a working class revolution. It abolished landlordism, financial and industrial capitalism. It created the pre-conditions for a planned economy. Despite the deprivations of Stalinism these fundamental economic conditions still remain. The economic base of Russia is historically progressive, and therefore should be defended by Socialist workers from the attacks of capitalism as well as from the plunder of the Russian bureaucracy, which has fattened on this nationalized economy." (First underscoring Haston's, other ours, AP-TFH).

Here is once more the old familiar support. The indictment charges that "wherever" Stalinism rules it is a regime of suppression and oppression of the workers, of complete deprivation of rights. of "firing squad and concentration camps." Conclusion? Defend this regime of oppression and exploitation because it rests on a substitution of workers bureaucrats for capitalists and that is "historically progressive."

By such ignorant or knavish support to Stalinism on a world scale, the Trotskyist leadership lulls the dock workers into betrayal by the Stalinists, to whom they have already been turned by the attacks of the bureaucrats of the Labour Party, into whose ranks the Trotskyites have just dissolved themselves at the very time that the dock workers want to break with the Atlees and the Bevins and have not yet completely come under the leadership of the Pollits and the Gallachers.

At such a time it is obvious what the honest Trotskyite worker should do. Fortunate in no longer being subject to the "discipline" of Haston and Co., he should join hands with us of the WLRP in building a party that will stand a completely clear and independent of capitalism with its Labour Party and Stalinism and its Communist Party, that will rally the workers today and every day for the struggle against both these monsters, and for world socialism with democratic rule by the toilers. To do this the Trotskyite workers must re-evaluate their whole political past. If this is done now the Trotskyite workers can form an honorable and important section of the really revolutionary working class, can help in preventing the betrayal of such struggles as the dockers' strike. If they do not, then they must each individually accept responsibility for such a document as the July 1949 Socialist Appeal. In either case, there is now palpably no other political home in Britain for the revolutionary worker than the WLRP. All desiring further political or organizational information along this line should contact C.P. Stanton, 10 Raeberry St. Glasgow.

Arthur Priest
Thomas F. Harden

England
July 14, 1949

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION
CANNON CARRIES ON

Every revolutionary-minded worker is aware of the effective use of deception made by the class enemy as an integral aspect of class rule. Within the ranks of the working class the use of falsehood serves as a method of politics by all sorts of movements pursuing reactionary purposes. Strangely enough, many political minded workers attached to reactionary organizations are able to detect deceptions in opponent organizations but not in their own. The Trotsky-minded workers are frequently able to show up lies of the Stalin and Social Democratic leaders. Yet these workers are unaware of the fact that their own leaders distort the truth in many ways. One such method involves the use of portraits or obituaries of various Stalinist leaders penned on appropriate occasions by the Trotsky writers.

A good illustration was Trotsky's description of the motivations prompting Zinoviev and Kamenev, the ill-fated henchmen of Stalin. Here were two treacherous self-seeking bureaucrats who together with Stalin organized a criminal conspiracy to gather power in their own hands against the interests of the Russian and world masses. Trotsky knew of their criminal machinations from first hand experience while he was one of the top leaders in Russia and so testified many times. As a matter of fact, when Stalin moved to push Zinoviev and Kamenev out of the ruling circle in 1925-26, the latter approached Trotsky and freely admitted their participation in the criminal Stalinist machinations:

"Comrade Zinoviev said: 'We must acknowledge what happened. It was a struggle for power. The trick was to combine old difference of opinion with new questions. For this "Trotskyism" was invented...'" (Leon Trotsky, The Suppressed Testament of Lenin, p. 44-My emp.-A.B.)

This admission of criminality did not stop Trotsky from writing the following about the political bandits Zinoviev and Kamenev shortly after Stalin applied stronger measures against them:

"Zinoviev and Kamenev tried to play tricks with history. Of course, they were motivated, first of all, by solicitude for the Soviet Union, for the unity of the party, and not at all for their personal welfare." (L. Trotsky, The Expulsion of Zinoviev, p.61-62, My emp.A.B.)

Another of Stalin's contemptible servants, Karl Radek, eagerly dispensed Stalinist poison as a Stalinist journalist and did his job effectively. So putrid did Radek become that he even turned informer for the G.P.U. (See "The Case of Leon Trotsky, pp.105-6). Yet after Radek's downfall in the macabre Moscow Trials, Trotsky saw fit to whitewash his past as well, as other Stalinist bureaucrats involved:

"No matter what one's attitude towards the defendants at the Moscow trials, no matter how one judges their conduct in the clutches of the G.P.U. all of them -- Zinoviev, Kamenev, Smirnov, Piatakov, Radek, Rykov, Bukharin, and many others -- have by the whole course of their lives proved their disinterested devotion to the Russian people and their struggle for liberation." (L. Trotsky, Socialist Appeal, March 28, 1938, My emp.-A.B.).

This practise of shielding Stalinist bureaucrats was part of the Trotsky political system.

Shortly before Trotsky was murdered by a G.P.U. agent, the American Trotskyists split. Two of the original American Trotskyite leaders, Shachtman and Abern, organized their own group and separated from Cannon. At the discussion around the time of the division, Abern, in particular, came in for a lot of attention from Cannon. Cannon lashed out at what he called "Abernism" as an incurable disease which he claimed poisoned the American Trotsky movement from its foundations:

"Almost since the beginning of the Trotskyist movement in this country, more than eleven years ago, its normal development and functioning has been impeded by an internal disease which poisoned the blood stream of the party organism. The name of this disease is Abernism. The characteristics of Abernism, as they have been consistently and uninterruptedly manifested for more than ten years, are: clique politics; ceaseless dissemination of gossip and complaints about the party regime; subordination of principled questions to organizational and personal considerations; unprincipled combinationism in every faction fight; and ideological treachery." (James P. Cannon, The Struggle For a Proletarian Party, p. 35).

In this section of his attack, Cannon goes on to show up Shachtman and Burnham, who were then allied with Abern in the struggle against Cannon's leadership. Citing effectively from previous documents by Shachtman and Burnham in the period when they were fighting Abern, Cannon makes the point that the whitewash of Abern in 1940 by Shachtman-Burnham was patently dishonest.

Some nine years passed, and on April 28, 1949 Abern died. The Cannon Trotskyites saw fit to run a memorial article on Abern which contained a eulogy of his "work" and ended on the following note:

"The May Day meeting of the Socialist Workers Party of New York, held on the same day as his funeral, rose and stood in silence in honor of his memory." ("Martin Abern Dead. Heart Attack Victim, The Militant, May 9, 1949, p.2).

The Trotsky workers were asked to "honor" the memory of one of their leaders indicted as an unprincipled combinationist, one guilty of "ideological treachery," of whom Cannon noted among other things: "The indefensible record of Abern is written in the history of our party." (op.cit., p.36, My emp.A.B).

The hypocrisy of Cannon and Co. in giving a clean bill of health to Abern in 1949 is a continuation of the methods Trotsky used in shielding former Stalinist partners of his. The truth about Abern is that he had been knee-deep in Stalinist politics along with Cannon and Shachtman in the American Communist Party until 1928, a past never repudiated but defended, and continued along the same road until his death.

A proletarian revolutionist will always honor a sincere fighter against capitalist oppression and opportunist reaction. But the leaders who misled the proletariat, a revolutionary worker can have nothing but contempt.

Arthur Burke
July 1949