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October and comrade Trotzky's Theory of Permanent Revolution.

By I. Stalin.

There are two peculiarities of the October revolution which must be fully understood before the inner purport and historical significance of this revolution can be comprehended. What are these peculiarities? In the first place the fact that in Russia the dictatorship of the proletariat came into existence as a power based upon the **alliance of the proletariat and the working peasantry**, the proletariat leading the masses of working peasantry. In the second place the fact that in Russia the dictatorship of the proletariat has maintained its position as result of **the victory of socialism in a country in which capitalism is but little developed**, whilst capitalism continues to exist in other countries possessing a highly developed capitalist system. Naturally this does not mean that the October revolution had no other features peculiar to itself. But for us precisely these two peculiarities are important, not only because they strikingly illustrate the essentials of the October revolution, but because they simultaneously reveal the opportunist nature of the theory of "permanent revolution."

Let us cast a brief glance at these peculiarities.

The question of the working masses of town and country petty bourgeoisie, the question of winning over these masses for the proletariat is the most important question of proletarian revolution. The fate of the revolution and the security of the proletarian dictatorship depend upon the question of who receives the support of these masses of small workers in town and country, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, in the struggle for possession of power, and upon the question of whether they become the reserves of the bourgeoisie or of the proletariat.

In France the revolutions in 1848 and 1871 failed chiefly for the reason that the peasant reserves were on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October revolution was victorious because it succeeded in depriving the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves and in winning over these reserves for the proletariat, and because the proletariat proved itself in this revolution to be the sole force leading the millions of workers of town and country.

Those who have not grasped this fact cannot comprehend the character of the October revolution, nor the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, nor the peculiarities of the internal politics of our proletarian power.

The dictatorship of the proletariat does not merely consist of a ruling upper stratum, "skilfully selected" by the careful hand of an "experienced strategist", and receiving "reasonable support" from this or that stratum of the population. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a class alliance between the proletariat and the working masses of the peasantry, with the object of overthrowing capital, or bringing about the final victory of socialism under such conditions that the leading force within this alliance is the proletariat.

It is thus not a question of a "slight" underestimation or "slight" overestimation of the revolutionary possibilities of the peasants' movement, as the diplomatic defenders of "permanent revolution" like to express themselves. It is a question of the nature of the new proletarian state which has originated as result of the October revolution. It is a question of the character of the proletarian power, of the principles of the proletarian dictatorship.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat" — says Lenin — "is the basic form of the class alliance between the proletariat, as vanguard of the workers, and the numerous non — proletarian working strata (petty bourgeoisie, small holders, peasantry, intelligenzia, etc.) or their majority — an alliance against capital, an alliance for the complete overthrow of capital, the complete crushing of the resistance of the bourgeoisie and their attempts at restoration, an alliance for the object of the final establishment and consolidation of socialism." (Lenin. Compl. works Russ. ed. vol. XVII. p. 240).

And further:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat, if we translate this scientific Latin historical philosophical expression into a simpler language, has the following meaning; there is only one particular class, and that is the city workers, the workers in industrial undertakings, which are capable of leading the whole mass of workers and exploited, in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, both during the period in which capital is being overthrown and during the struggle for the maintenance and consolidation of the victory, during the struggle for the creation of a new socialist state of society, and during

the whole struggle for the complete abolishment of classes." (Vol. XVI. p. 248).

This is the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

One of the peculiarities of the October revolution consists in the fact that it is a classic example of the execution of the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Many comrades are of the opinion that this theory is purely "Russian", applying to Russian actuality only. This is entirely wrong. When Lenin speaks of the working masses of non-proletarian classes which are to be led by the proletariat, he does not think of the Russian peasantry only, but at the same time of the working elements in the border districts of the Soviet Union, until recently colonies of Russia. Lenin emphasised unwearingly that the proletariat cannot be victorious without an alliance with the masses belonging to these various nationalities. In his article on the nationality question, and in his speeches at the Congresses of the Communist International, Lenin stated more than once that the victory of world revolution is impossible without a revolutionary alliance, without a revolutionary bloc of the proletariat of the more advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies. But what are the colonies other than equally oppressed masses of workers, mostly working peasantry? Who does not know that the question of the emancipation of the colonies is in all essentials nothing more nor less than the question of the emancipation of the working masses of the non-proletarian classes from the oppression and exploitation of financial capital?

But this means that the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is no "Russian" theory, but a theory adaptable to every country. Bolshevism is not a merely Russian phenomenon. "Bolshevism" says Lenin, "is a standard example of tactics for all."

These are the characteristic features of the first peculiarity of the October revolution.

What about comrade Trotzky's theory of "permanent revolution" as viewed from the standpoint of this peculiarity of the October revolution?

We shall not go back to the standpoint taken by comrade Trotzky in 1905, when he "simply" forgot the peasantry as revolutionary force, and issued the slogan: "Away with the Czar and up with the workers' government", that is, the slogan of revolution without the peasantry. Even comrade Radek, diplomatic defender of "permanent revolution" as he is, is now obliged to admit that in the year 1905 "permanent revolution", was a leap into nonentity, away from reality.

We shall not even go back to comrade Trotzky's standpoint during the war, 1915 for instance, when he, in his article on the "Struggle for Power", first assumes that "we are living in the epoch of imperialism", that imperialism does "not oppose the bourgeois nation to the old regime, but the proletariat to the bourgeois nation" and then comes to the conclusion that the revolutionary role played by the peasantry is bound to become of minor importance, and that the slogan of the confiscation of Russian land is no longer so important as it was. It will also be known to you that when Lenin replied to this article, he accused comrade Trotzky of the negation of the role played by the peasantry, and declared that "in reality Trotzky goes half way to meet the liberal labour politicians of Russia, who understand under the "negation" of the role played by the peasantry the aversion to arouse the peasants to revolution." ("Against the Current" p. 297.)

We shall rather refer to comrade Trotzky's later works on this question, works written at the period in which the proletarian dictatorship has already proved capable of maintaining its position, and at a time when comrade Trotzky had the possibility of testing his theory of "permanent revolution" in actual practice, and to improve his errors. Let us take the preface written in 1922 to his book "1905". In

his preface comrade Trotzky writes as follows on the "permanent revolution":

"It was just in the period between the 22. (9.) January and the October strike that the views of the present writer were formed on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia, views which have received the designation of "permanent revolution." This scientific designation expresses the idea that Russian revolution, confronted by immediate bourgeois aims, cannot be content after gaining these. The revolution cannot solve its first bourgeois tasks by any other means than the seizure of power by the proletariat. But after it has seized power, the proletariat cannot confine to the bourgeois framework of the revolution. On the contrary, the firm establishment of victory requires that the proletarian vanguard at once inaugurates its rule by energetic attacks upon not only feudal property, but bourgeois property as well. This means for the proletariat **hostile encounters** with every group of the bourgeoisie which has supported the proletariat at the beginning of its revolutionary struggle, and not only with these, but with the **broad masses of the peasantry** as well, whose support has enabled them to attain power. The contradictions existing for a workers' government in a backward country, with an overwhelmingly peasant population, can be solved on an international scale **only**, in the arena of the proletarian world revolution". (The emphasis is mine. I. St.).

Thus comrade Trotzky on his "permanent revolution".

Lenin speaks of the **alliance** between the proletariat and the working masses of the peasantry as the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotzky speaks of **hostile encounters** between the proletarian vanguard and "the broad masses of the peasantry".

Lenin speaks of the toiling and exploited masses being under the **leadership** of the proletariat. But Trotzky speaks of the "contradiction existing for a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population."

According to Lenin, the revolution finds its resources of power mainly in the masses of workers and peasants in Russia itself. But according to Trotzky the revolution can find its requisites forces **only** "in the arena of proletarian world revolution."

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat, according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power based upon the alliance of the proletariat and the working masses of the peasantry "for the purpose of the complete overthrow of capital, for the purpose of the final establishment and security of socialism."

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat, according to Trotzky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power hampered by "hostile encounters with the broad masses of the peasantry", and seeking for a solution of the contradictions of its position **only** in "the arena of proletarian world revolution."

In what does this theory of "permanent revolution" differ from the well known Menshevist theory of disavowal of the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Strictly speaking, in nothing!

There is no possibility of doubt. The "permanent revolution" is no mere underestimation of the revolutionary possibilities of the peasant movement; it is such a complete underestimation of the peasant movement that it is synonymous with the rejection of the Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The "permanent revolution" represented by comrade Trotzky is a variety of Menshevism.

This is the case of the first peculiarity of the October revolution.

What are the characteristic features of the second peculiarity of the October revolution?

After studying imperialism, especially during the war period, Lenin arrived at the law of the irregular and spasmodic political and economic development of the capitalist countries. According to this law, the development of the various enterprises, trusts, branches of industry, and of the various countries, does not proceed regularly, not in any previously ordained order, not in such a manner that any one trust, branch of industry, or entire country, advances during the whole time; whilst the other trusts or countries remain behind at regular intervals. The development is spasmodic, with interruptions in the progress of individual countries, and sudden advances in that of others. The result is that the countries failing to keep up the pace of any period endeavour, strictly in accordance with this law, to maintain their old positions, and the countries which have succeeded in getting a start of the others act equally in accordance with this law in seeking to conquer new positions, so that military conflicts become inevitable between the imperialist countries. This was for instance the case with Germany, which up to fifty years ago was backward in comparison with France or England. The same applies to Japan in comparison to Russia. And it is equally well known that at the beginning of the twentieth century Germany and Japan made such a mighty leap forwards that Germany succeeded in overtaking France, and could commence to supplant England in the markets of the world. The case was the same between Japan and Russia. There were the contradictions which led to the great war of 1914.

This law is based upon the following:

1. „Capitalism has developed into a world system of colonial oppression and financial throttling of the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe by a small number of „advanced“ countries. (See preface to French edition of „Imperialism.“)

2. „The division of this „spoil“ takes place among two or three mighty international world robbers, armed to the teeth (America, England, Japan), who drag the whole world into their quarrels over the division of their loot.“ (Ibid.)

3. The growth of inconsistencies within the international system of financial oppression, and the inevitability of military encounter, have rendered the world front of imperialism easily vulnerable to revolution, and a breach of this front in some countries is probable.

4. This breach will most probably be made at those points and in those countries where the chain of the imperialist front is weakest, that is, where the foundations of imperialism are on the least secure basis, and revolution can best develop.

5. Thus the victory of socialism is perfectly possible and probable in a country, even when this country is not far advanced in capitalist development, and other countries possessing higher capitalist development continue to be capitalist.

This, in a few words, is the principle of the Leninist theory of proletarian revolution. And what is the second peculiarity of the October revolution?

The second peculiarity of the October revolution consists in the fact that this revolution is a model example of the practical application of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution.

Those who do not comprehend this peculiarity of the October revolution will never grasp the international character of this revolution, nor its enormous international power, nor its peculiar foreign policy.

„The irregularity of economic and political development“ — wrote Lenin — „is an undeniable law of capitalism. From this it follows that a victory for socialism is at first possible in a few countries only, possibly only in one. The victorious proletariat of this country, after

expropriating the capitalists and organising its socialist production, would rise against the outside capitalist world, draw to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, bring about an insurrection in these countries against the capitalists, and, if necessary, even go to war against the exploiting classes and their states . . . „since „a free union of the nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less long and obstinate struggle between the socialist republics and the other states“. („Against the Current“, p. 125.)

The opportunists of all countries maintain that the proletarian revolution can only begin in industrially highly developed countries — if their theories allow that it is to begin at all. They maintain that a country's prospects of socialism are greater in proportion to the degree of development of its industry, and exclude the possibility of a victory of socialism in a simple country, and more over in that of weak capitalist development, as something entirely impossible. Even during the war Lenin opposed this opportunist theory by his theory of proletarian revolution, based upon the law of the irregularity of development in imperialist states, and showing the victory of socialism to be possible in a country whose capitalist development is comparatively weak.

The October revolution completely confirms the correctness of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution.

And now to the theory of „permanent revolution“ as viewed from the standpoint of the Leninist theory of proletarian revolution.

Let us take comrade Trotzky's pamphlet on „Our revolution“, written in 1906.

Comrade Trotzky writes:

„Without the direct state support of the European proletariat the Russian working class cannot retain power, or transform its temporary rule into a permanent socialist dictatorship. No one can doubt this for a moment.“ (Trotzky: „Our revolution“. Russian ed. p. 278.)

What does this quotation tell us? It tells us that it is impossible for socialism to be victorious in an individual country, in this case Russia; „without the direct state support of the European proletariat“, that is, before the seizure of state power by the European proletariat.

What has this „theory“ in common with Lenin's assertion on the possibility of victory for socialism „in an isolated capitalist country“.

It is evident that the theories have nothing in common.

We admit that comrade Trotzky published this pamphlet in 1906, when it was still difficult to determine the character of our revolution, and thus contains involuntary errors not entirely corresponding to comrade Trotzky's later views. Let us examine another of comrade Trotzky's pamphlets, his „Peace Programme“, published before the October revolution in 1917 and now reprinted (1924) in the book „1917“. In this pamphlet comrade Trotzky criticises Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution and of the possibility of socialism being victorious in an isolated country, and opposes this by the slogan of the „United States of Europe“. He maintains the victory of socialism in a single country to be impossible, and asserts that socialism can only be victorious when it gains the day in some of the chief European countries (England, Russia, Germany), which would then form the United States of Europe. Otherwise victory is totally impossible. He states openly that „a victorious revolution in Russia or in England, without revolution in Germany, or the reverse, is unimaginable“. (See „1917“, vol III/1 of comrade Trotzky's works, Russian ed. p. 89.)

Comrade Trotzky wrote:

„The sole historical objection with any pretensions to concreteness, against the slogan of the United States, was

formulated in the Swiss "Social Democrat" (the former central organ of the Bolsheviki. I. St.) in the following sentence: "The irregularity of economic and political development is an undeniable law of capitalism." From this the "Social Democrat" concludes that the victory of socialism in one country is possible, and that there is therefore no reason to make the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in every individual country dependent on the creation of the United States of Europe. That capitalist development is unequal in various countries is entirely incontestable, but this inequality is in itself very unequal. The capitalist levels of England, Austria, Germany, or France are not equally high. But in comparison to Africa or Asia all these countries represent capitalist "Europe", ripe for social revolution. That no country should postpone its struggle whilst waiting for the issue of the struggle in other countries, — this is an elementary idea whose repetition is useful and necessary, and prevents the idea of parallel international action from being substituted by the idea of waiting and of international passivity. We are not to wait for others, but begin our fight, and continue to fight on national ground, fully confident that our initiative will give the impetus to fight in the other countries. But should this not be the case, then it would be hopeless to suppose — and here both the experience of history and the theoretical consideration show it to be hopeless — that a revolutionary Russia for instance could hold its own against a conservative Europe, or a socialist Germany maintain itself if isolated in a capitalist world." (Ibid. p. 89/90.)

Thus we here again see this same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the chief countries of Europe, put forth as a rule opposing Lenin's revolutionary theory of the victory of socialism in a single country.

No-one denies that common endeavours of the proletariats or several countries are necessary in the interests of the complete safe guarding of the revolution from the danger of the restoration of the old order of things. No-one denies that the proletariat of Russia, without the support of the European proletariat, could not withstand a general attack upon the revolution, just as the revolutionary movement in the west could not have developed as rapidly as it has without the support which it has received from Russia since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. No-one denies that we need aid. But what are we to understand under the support of our revolution by the West European proletariat? Is the sympathy felt by the European workers for our revolution, their readiness to frustrate the intervention plans of the imperialists, not to be counted as a support, as a very great help? There is no doubt it is a great help. Without this aid, given not only by the European workers, but also by the colonial and dependent countries, it would have been much more difficult for the Russian proletariat to maintain its dictatorship. Have this sympathy and aid, combined with the power of our Red Army, and with the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to protect the socialist Fatherland with their bodies, proved strong enough to ward off the attacks of the imperialists, and to create the necessary prerequisites for serious constructive works? Yes, they have proved strong enough. Is this sympathy growing or waning? Without doubt it is growing. Are our conditions sufficiently favourable to enable us not alone to promote the organisation of socialist organisation at home, but at the same time to lend aid to the workers of Western Europe and to the oppressed peoples of the East? Yes. The seven years of the history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia demonstrate this most clearly. Can it be denied that there is now to be perceived an increase in the efficiency of Labour in Russia? No, this cannot be denied. What can then be the actual meaning of comrade Trotzky's declaration that a revolutionary Russia cannot maintain its position in face of a conservative Europe?

It can only mean one thing. Firstly, comrade Trotzky does not feel the inner power of our revolution; secondly, comrade Trotzky does not grasp the significance of that moral support afforded to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; and thirdly, comrade Trotzky does not realise the internal weakness now disintegrating imperialism.

Carried away by the criticism of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution, comrade Trotzky dealt himself an involuntary blow in his pamphlet on the "Peace Programme", published in 1917 and reprinted in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet is again out of date, perhaps its contents are no longer in accordance with comrade Trotzky's present views. Let us take comrade Trotzky's latest work, written after the victory of proletarian revolution in an isolated country, in Russia. Let us take for instance the epilogue written by comrade Trotzky in 1922 to the new edition of the "Peace Programme". Here we read:

"The assertion, repeated several times in the "Peace Programme", that the proletarian revolution cannot be completely victorious within national limits, will appear to many readers to be confuted by the almost five years of existence of our Soviet republic. The drawing of this conclusion is however not justified. The fact that this workers' state, in an isolated and backward country, has been able to maintain its position, demonstrates the mighty power of the proletariat, and shows us that the proletariat will be able to accomplish real miracles in countries more advanced, and possessing a higher degree of civilisation. But though we have maintained our position in a political and military sense, we have not succeeded in creating a socialist state of society. We have not even begun to do so.

So long as the bourgeoisie retains power in the other European states, we shall be forced to struggle against economic isolation by means of agreements with the capitalist world. But we may be fully convinced that at best these agreements may help us to heal, this of that economic wound, or to take this or that step forwards, but that a real advance of socialist economics in Russia will only be possible after the victory (the emphasis is mine. I. St.) of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe." (Trotzky's works. Russian ed. Vol. III/1. pp. 92/93.)

Thus comrade Trotzky, obviously sinning against reality in his obstinate attempt to save "permanent revolution" from final collapse. It appears that, however we may turn and twist, we have not only "not succeeded" in creating a socialist state of society, but have "not even begun to do so." It appears that many people set their hopes upon "agreements with the capitalist world", but that nothing good is likely to come of these agreements, since we, however we may twist and turn, cannot attain "a real advance of socialist economics" until the proletariat "in the most important countries of Europe" has been victorious.

Since the proletarian revolution has not yet been victorious in the West, the Russian revolution has thus only the "choice" between decay or degeneration into a bourgeois state.

It is not for nothing that comrade Trotzky has been speaking for two years of a "degeneration" of our Party.

It is not for nothing that comrade Trotzky last year prophesied the "ruin" of our country.

How can this strange "theory" be made to harmonise with Lenin's theory of "the victory of socialism in an isolated country?"

How can these strange "views" be made to harmonise with Lenin's views, his teaching that the new economic policy rendered it possible for us to "lay the foundation of socialist economics"?

How can this "permanent" hopelessness be for instance made to harmonise with the following words of Lenin's:

"Socialism is no longer a question of the remote future, or of some abstract representation, or of an ikon. We have retained our old bad opinion of the ikon. We have carried socialism into daily life, and here we must know our way thoroughly. This is our immediate task,

the work set us during this epoch. Permit me in conclusion to express my conviction that, however difficult this task may be, and however new it may be in comparison with former tasks, our mutual work will enable us so solve this problem — not to-morrow, but within a few years — that the Russia of the “Nep” will be transformed into a socialist Russia. (Lenin’s compl. works. Vol. XVIII/2. p. 108. Russ. ed.)

How can the “permanent” depression shown by comrade Trotzky be made to harmonise with the following words of Lenin’s:

“Is the power of the state over the whole of the large means of production, the state power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with many millions of the poorer peasantry, the guarantee that the leadership of the peasantry is in the hands of the proletariat — is all this not truly all that is necessary for developing the cooperative, and the cooperative alone, which we have hitherto treated as something of the petty trading nature, and which we are still justified to a certain extent in treating thus under the conditions of the new economic policy, into an entirely socialist state of society? This is not yet the socialist state of society itself, but it is everything which we require for the construction of that state of society.” (Lenin: On “Co-operation.”)

It is clear that there is no possibility of harmony here. The “permanent revolution” of comrade Trotzky is the negation of Lenin’s theory of proletarian revolution and vice versa — Lenin’s theory of proletarian revolution is the negation of the theory of “permanent revolution.”

Lack of faith in the power and vitality of our revolution, lack of faith in the power and creative faculties of the Russian proletariat — this is the foundation of the theory of “permanent revolution.”

In what does comrade Trotzky’s theory differ from the ordinary Menshevist theory that the victory of socialism is impossible in a single country, especially a “backward” country, unless accompanied by the victory of proletarian revolution in the most important countries of Europe?

Strictly speaking, in nohning!

Doubt is impossible. Comrade Trotzky’s theory of “permanent revolution” is a variation of Menshevism.

Our press has of late published some futile diplomatic attempts at showing the theory of “permanent revolution” to be compatible with Leninism. These diplomatists point out that this theory of course proved to be wrong in 1905. Comrade Trotzky’s error lay in venturing too far, and in

attempting to apply something which was not applicable to the conditions obtaining in 1905. But in October 1917, when the revolution was fully ripe, comrade Trotzky’s theory — so say these diplomatists — was eminently suitable for application. It is not difficult to guess that the greatest of these diplomatists is comrade Radek. Is it not agreeable for the ear to hear:

“The war created a chasm between the peasantry, striving for land and for peace, and the petty bourgeois parties. The war placed the peasantry under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the Bolshevik Party. What has become possible is not a dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class, leaning upon the peasantry. That which was brought forward against Lenin in 1905 by Trotzky and Rosa Luxemburg (that is, the “permanent revolution” I. St.) proved in actual fact to be a second stage of historical development.” (Pravda. No. 42. 21. Feb. 1924.)

Every word of this is wrong.

It is wrong that what has become possible since the war is “not a dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class, leaning upon the peasantry.” In reality the February revolution of the year 1917 was the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, in a peculiar connection with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is wrong that the theory of “permanent revolution”, which comrade Radek bashfully omits to mention, was brought forward in 1905 by Rosa Luxemburg and Trotzky. In reality this theory was brought forward by Parvus and Trotzky. Now, ten months later, comrade Radek considers it necessary to rail against Parvus on account of the “permanent revolution” (see his article on Parvus in the “Pravda”).

But justice demands that comrade Radek should protest equally against Parvus’ companion, comrade Trotzky.

It is wrong that the “permanent revolution”, thrust aside by the revolution of 1905, proved right in the “second stage of historical development”, that is, during the October revolution. The whole course of the October revolution, its whole development, demonstrated and proved the complete bankruptcy of the theory of “permanent revolution”, its complete incompatibility with the principles of Leninism.

The gaping chasm between the theory of “permanent revolution and Leninism cannot be bridged over by fine speeches or weak diplomacy.

The New Discussion.*)

By A. I. Rykov.

A certain discussion has recently been placed on the agenda of Party life. And this discussion has been connected with the name of comrade Trotzky. This is the fourth time that this has occurred since our October. The first discussion was on the peace of Brest Litovsk. The second was on the trade unions. The third was on the internal Party and economic policy pursued by the Party (during Lenin’s illness), and the fourth discussion is the present one.

Before October 1917 the Party was in a state of “permanent” discussion with comrade Trotzky, for up to the October revolution comrade Trotzky belonged to the hostile party of the Mensheviks.

*) The present article is a reprint of the introductory article written by comrade Rykov for the collective work “For Leninism.”

Every discussion which has come up since the October revolution has covered a wider ideological field of principles than the one preceding it. Whilst the first three discussions were in connection with questions of the actual policy of the Party, and general questions of principle only arose in so far as they were involved by questions of actual policy, the present discussion has no immediate relation to any individual question of present day policy, but calls upon the Party to discuss the question of Bolshevism in its entire historical development. For the historian of the future this fact — the repetition of the discussion in the ranks of the Party during a number of years in connection with one and the same name, that of Trotzky — will in itself suffice as evidence that comrade Trotzky has formed some constant “fundamental” source of differences of opinion within the Party. The discussion connected with the article written by

comrade Trotsky on the "Lessons of October" differs from all earlier debates in exposing the historically fundamental roots of this constant source of internal Party discussion.

The historical roots of the differences of opinion between the overwhelming majority of the Party and comrade Trotsky lie in the fact that comrade Trotsky developed and determined his political view of life as member of a party hostile to us, the Menshevik opportunist party. The Bolshevik party consolidated itself, and developed and determined as ideology in an inexorable struggle against the social revolutionists, against Menshevism, and against Trotskyism as one of the varieties of Menshevism. Many hoped that this "difference of origin" would not hinder comrade Trotsky's complete assimilation into the Party. And the Party has exerted every endeavour for this assimilation.

In every case the initiative of the discussions has proceeded from comrade Trotsky. Neither the Central Committee of the Party, nor any other group in the Party, nor the majority of the Party, have made any attack upon comrade Trotsky. The reverse has been the case. Comrade Trotsky has attacked the Central Committee and the majority of the Party. All the above mentioned discussions have been self-defensive actions on the part of the Central Committee and of the Party, warding off attacks made by comrade Trotsky on the political line of the Party.

The greatest tension was brought about by the discussion between the party and comrade Trotsky in the autumn of 1923, during the debate on the question of internal Party democracy and economic policy. At that time the question of the necessity of radical changes in the leadership of the Party was discussed with perfect openness. This necessity was based upon the statement that a severe internal Party and economic crisis had "brought the country to the verge of ruin", according to the wording of one of Trotsky's documents.

In the declaration made by the "46" on 15. October 1923 it is stated that:

"We are faced by an impending loss of stability of the chervonetz currency, which has undergone an elementary change into a fundamental currency even before the liquidation of the budget deficiency, and by a credit crisis, since the state bank will not be able to furnish finance industry and trade in industrial goods, nor the purchase of grain for export, without risking its own stability."

In the same document we read further:

"All these are the various elements of the economic, credit, and financial crisis under which we are already suffering. Unless extensive, well thought-out, systematic, and energetic measures are taken immediately, and unless there is a change in the present (end of 1923) lack of leadership, we are confronted by the possibility of an extremely severe economic convulsion, inevitably involving internal political complications and complete paralysis of our external activity and capacity for action. And that this last is of greater importance for us than ever is easily comprehensible to everyone. The fate of the world revolution and of the working classes of all countries are dependent upon it."

And at the close of this declaration of the "46" we find the following association made between the "crisis in the country" and a "crisis in the Party.":

"The economic crisis in Soviet Russia and the crisis in the fractional dictatorship of the Party will strike severe blows at the workers' dictatorship and the Russian Communist Party, unless the present situation is radically changed in the immediate future. The dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and its leader, the Russia CP, with such a burden upon their shoulders, enter the epoch of impending renewed international convulsions with but little prospect of anything but failure along the whole front of proletarian struggle."

Calculating upon Party democracy, comrade Trotsky and his adherents reckoned upon bringing about a regrouping of Party forces during the discussion at the end of 1923, to the end that the country might be saved from being convulsed by the economic crisis and the Party might be saved from disintegration. In his letter to the members of the Central Committee and of the Central Control Commission, dated 8. October 1923, comrade Trotsky wrote as follows:

"The Party democracy — at least within such limits as are imperative if the Party is not to be threatened with petrification and degeneration — must be accorded its rights. The ordinary members of the Party must express, within the confines of Party life, their ideas upon matters with which they are dissatisfied, and must be given the possibility — in accordance with the Party statutes and above all in accordance with the whole spirit of our Party — to create their organisatory apparatus. There must be a regrouping of Party forces." (The emphasis is mine. A. R.)

In his pamphlet "The New Course", also dating from the end of 1923, comrade Trotsky again returns to this hope. He writes:

"The ideologically organisatory regrouping, arising from the present moment of change, will in the end prove a blessing for both the mass of Party members and for the apparatus itself."

Now, after the lapse of a year, the Party can form a fair estimate of whether the prophecies made by the opposition with regard to the collapse of our currency, and with regard to the crisis in our industry, are right or not. The Party can now judge whether the opposition was right in condemning the policy pursued by the Central Committee of the Party, that policy which has opened up the agrarian market to our industry, and secured the stability of our currency. The hindrances and difficulties of the present moment are in all important essentials connected with relations towards the peasantry. But how much greater dimensions would these difficulties have assumed by now, had the views of the opposition been accepted, permeated as these are by entire lack of comprehension and underestimation of the importance of the peasant question in the policy of our Party and in the development of our economics! The prophecies of the opposition have proved false, and their recipes entirely useless.

After the failure of the exceedingly violent attack made upon the Central Committee and on the majority of the Party by the opposition in the autumn of 1923, it might have been thought that there was no basis upon which to renew this attack in the autumn of 1924. No state economic commission has enacted that a discussion shall take place, exactly according to calendar, in the autumn or each year. But nevertheless the discussion arose again, with the like object of an "ideologically organisatory regrouping", since "the history of our Party before our October merely represented a period of preparation."

It must be admitted that the Party itself had given cause for such an attitude to be adopted. Up to the very last present discussion the question of the Menshevik opportunist deviation of comrade Trotsky with regard to the distinction of the ideological basis of his activity from the ideology of the Communist Party has never been raised on a single occasion. This fact can naturally be explained by the great desire of the Party for the unhindered assimilation of comrade Trotsky, and the hope of the Party that in October comrade Trotsky had come over to us without the whole of that specifically Trotskyist ideological luggage which he had accumulated during the many years of his obstinate struggle against Bolshevism.

Was this discussion necessary or was it not? It need not be said that it would have been better had there been

no such discussion. But this would only have been possible had the hopes of the Party been realised, and comrade Trotzky had renounced the Trotzkyism of the period preceding October on entering the Party, and accepting a highly responsible position in it. But the collapse of these hopes, so long cherished by the Party, and enabling it to cooperate on such friendly terms with comrade Trotzky, is naturally adequate reason for extensive discussion among the members of the Party.

It has already become sufficiently obvious that we witness a remarkable attempt on the part of comrade Trotzky to force upon our Party his former political programme. This attempt is made by a politician who was never the leader of any mass party organisation until the time of his entry into the Communist Party. In the ranks of the Menshevik party comrade Trotzky did not by any means play such a role as he plays in ours, and such people as Martov, Axelrod, and Dan made use of his political and literary talents for the purpose of attacks against the Bolsheviks, keeping at the same time the leadership of the Menshevik party in their own hands. The recently published correspondence of Martov shows him to have written, as late as 12. May 1912, that Trotzky "has not only landed in the camp of the liquidatory bloc", but is at the same time obliged to adopt "the most quarrelsome possible attitude towards Lenin."

During the period in which comrade Trotzky pursued a political activity, semi-independent with relation to the Mensheviks and the liquidators, he was unable to organise any organisation of his own possessing any influence. Up to October 1917 Trotzkyism did not represent any political current in the working class, but solely the ideology of one individual, comrade Trotzky. At no time during the whole history of the labour movement up to October 1917 were there any considerable strata of the working class infected by Trotzkyism. The "current" of Trotzkyism was represented by comrade Trotzky alone.

And we must admit that it presupposes a mighty distortion of proportions if we are to believe that after

October 1917, when the Party of the Bolsheviks had attained political victory and exercised international influence, at this precise moment the Party should prove to be an organisation ready to be permeated with that Trotzkyism which had up to then encountered continual defeat in the history of the labour movement. Although the discussion of questions of actual politics referring to the trade unions and to internal Party democracy enabled comrade Trotzky to gather around him small groups of followers, in this fundamental question of Bolshevism and Trotzkyism he has remained completely isolated, although he had conducted the whole work for the alteration of the ideology of the Party, clinging to an episode out of the time of the October revolution.

How is this to be explained? By the fact that in course of time it has become more and more evident to the Party that the various attacks made by comrade Trotzky and Trotzkyism on the majority of the Party are all part of a number of stages in the general campaign of Trotzkyism for supplanting the Bolshevik ideology in the Bolshevik Party.

Comrade Trotzky has based his attack on the ideology of Bolshevism upon an error committed by a number of comrades, including myself, during the events of October. Our error consisted in the fact that we did not turn rapidly enough from the yesterday of the Bolshevik Party to its tomorrow. This error must and can be corrected, our activity of that time can and must be criticised but it would be monstrous to assume that a mistake made by individual Bolsheviks within the Bolshevik Party could be a sufficient reason for turning from Bolshevism to Trotzkyism. But comrade Trotzky is trying to make use of our error for precisely this purpose. When and other comrades take part in the present controversy against comrade Trotzky, it is not with any idea of concealing the error made by us during the October period, but for the purpose of giving him no possibility of further increasing this error by an attempt at revising the fundamental principles of Leninism.

The "Lessons of October" and the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

By V. Kolarov.

I.

What are the "Lessons of October" Imparted by Comrade Trotzky to the European Communist Parties, and what are the Lessons learnt these Parties from the "October"?

In the preface of his book "1917" comrade Trotzky calls upon the Comintern, in a very convincing manner, to take some steps towards a thorough consideration of the "Lessons of October". Leaders of the European Communist Parties who do not make a critical and perfectly concrete study of the history of the October revolution are compared to a general who prepares for a fresh war, under present conditions, without first studying the strategic, tactical, and technical experiences won in the last imperialist war. Such a general would condemn his army to a defeat in the future. (See Trotzky's Works, Russian ed., Vol. I. p. XIV.)

It was only last year that the Comintern suffered severe defeats in Bulgaria and Germany. Comrade Trotzky points out clearly that part of the blame for these defeats is to be attributed to the lack of "theoretical assimilation of the lessons of October" on the part of the Party leaders. Thus "last year brought us once more face to face with the tasks

of proletarian revolution. It is high time that the whole of the documents are collected, the whole material published and a commencement made to study it!" (XIII.)

Comrade Trotzky apparently finds in the October lessons material for the furtherance of revolutionary training among the young and inexperienced Communist Parties. But in reality it is the errors and deficiencies of these young and inexperienced Communist Parties which are used for gaining lessons as to how to improve — the old and experienced Russian CP. According to this, what we have most to fear is not so much and not only the lack of experienced leaders in the European Communist Parties, or the existence of social democratic remnants, defects which have led to the great errors committed by these parties, as for instance the severe defeats in Bulgaria and Germany last year, but rather the — unreliability of the leaders of the Russian CP, and of the Comintern. Comrade Trotzky makes the leading Russian comrades to a great degree, it not entirely, responsible for last year's defeats, and his book aims a fresh attack against the leaders of the Russian CP, with regard to the policy of the Comintern. First the German CP, and then the Bulgarian, have declared categorically that their defeats of last year had nothing whatever to do with any "short-

comings" on the part of the leading Russian comrades, and they protest energetically against their errors being used as a means setting up a front within the Russian CP.

II.

The Defeat of the Bulgarian CP, the Explanation of this Defeat as Given by Comrade Trotzky, and the True Explanation.

Comrade Trotzky complains that up to now "neither the Bulgarian nor even the German experience has been made the subject of a sufficiently comprehensive and concrete judgment." (p. XII.)

Were this assertion correct, it would be a serious accusation against the Comintern. We maintain however, although we confine ourselves here to the Bulgarian events only, that this assertion is not in accordance with the truth. Not only has the Bulgarian CP, thought forced into illegality, made the causes of the defeat clear to the masses with sufficient comprehensiveness and concreteness, and has drawn the necessary conclusions from the lessons of the experience, but the Bulgarian question has formed the theme of a number of exhaustive international discussions.

Thus the Communist Balkans Federation devoted a series of sessions to this question, participated in by representatives from the most important sections of the Comintern. At these meetings, detailed resolutions were passed. In February 1924 the question was discussed in the ECCI, in the presence of representatives of every current existing at that time in the CP, of Bulgaria. This discussion was taken part in by comrades Zinoviev, Bucharin, Radek, Miljutin, Clara Zetkin, Terraccini, etc. The resolution passed was exhaustive in every respect. The question was last the subject of consultation in a special commission appointed by the V. World Congress. It is possible to be in disagreement with the judgment of these international consultations, but it is not possible to assert that the matter has "not been made the subject of a sufficiently comprehensive and concrete judgment."

Let us investigate the explanation which comrade Trotzky has found for the double defeat of the Bulgarian CP, last year:

He writes as follows:

"Last year we suffered two cruel defeats in Bulgaria: In the first place the Party, owing to influences of a doctrinal and fatalistic character, failed to make use of a uniquely favourable moment for revolutionary action (the peasant insurrection after the overthrow of Zankov in June); and after this the Party, anxious to redeem this error, plunged into the September rising without having made the necessary political and organisational preparations." (p. XII.)

It is true that we suffered two severe defeats in Bulgaria. But comrade Trotzky's explanation is only partially correct. The reader feels impelled to ask: If the Party refused to take action at a "uniquely favourable moment" (the peasant insurrection), this means that it is entirely incapable of taking up an armed fight. But how is it then possible to explain the fact that three months later the Party plunges into an insurrection under the most unfavourable possible circumstances? If the Party had the courage to venture a rising in September, despite the lack of "political and organisational preparations", this proves that it is by no means incapable of fighting. In this case it remains unexplained why the Party maintained a passive attitude in June, when the situation imposed upon it the duty of heading the "peasant insurrection."

We can only find a satisfactory explanation of the defeats of the Bulgarian CP, if we follow the development of this Party from social-democracy to communism.

The old Party of the "Narrow Minded" came to the Comintern collectively, without any split or internal convulsion.

And this was not all; at the same time they extended their influence over almost the whole Bulgarian proletariat. Thanks to their years of desperate struggle against opportunism they succeeded in not only purifying themselves of all opportunist elements, but in almost completely undermining the influence exercised by the Bulgarian reformists on the working masses. This is worthy of all recognition. In all other capitalist countries the Comintern has to struggle against the pernicious influence of a more or less powerful social democracy; in Bulgaria it is almost entirely relieved from this trouble.

The Bulgarian Party attained this success by means of tactics which comrade Trotzky, in the year 1910, regarded as much too implacable and sectarian; his opinion of these tactics was that they threatened to transform the Party into a "socialist" seminary. Instead of carrying on unceasing war against opportunism, comrade Trotzky followed the example of Huysmans and Legien in advising the Party , to cooperate with the opportunist Party of the "Broad Minded", and to unite with them. (See comrade Trotzky's article in Nos. 15/16 of the "Sozialdemokrat" 17 (30) September 1910. "In the Balkans and about the Balkans.")

The affiliation of the Party to the Comintern did not however yet signify that it had developed into a really Bolshevik Party. Although it had always formed part of the Left wing of the II. International, and went over to the side of the Zimmerwald Left at the time of the Stockholm Conference (summer 1917); and although it had accepted without reservation the slogans of the October revolution, still it could not undergo a complete transformation without any transition, and free itself entirely from the whole of its social democratic past.

Consider the circumstances! In this small, petty bourgeois, agrarian country, far behind in everything pertaining to economics, it had become a dogma of the proletarian Party that its road to social revolution was in the track of the social democracy of the great capitalist states, which were to lead the way. It was not until after the great war, and after the October revolution, that it realised that the course of historical development would perhaps accord it the role of forerunner of revolution in the Balkans, and even in Central Europe. The Bulgarian Party first accustomed itself to this idea theoretically, and it has proved a difficult task for the Party to relearn its tasks, and to adapt itself in every respect to the solution of its new problems.

It must of course be remembered that the Party was always closely connected with the Russian social democracy, and was greatly under its mighty influence. But this influence was mainly shown with regard to Marxist theory, since the practical tasks falling to the Party were essentially different. The Bulgarian Party was faced by tasks more resembling those of the West European parties. Thus it was rather the great parties of the countries of Western Europe which served as teachers to the Bulgarian Party in matters relating to politics and organisation. After the historical treachery of the II. International, the Party remained faithful to international socialism, and after the February revolution it found a new teacher in Bolshevism.

Among the Russian comrades the Bulgarian Party found quite a different standpoint with regard to the agrarian question to that familiar to the Party in its social democratic past. But after it had called upon the peasants, for 20 years, to join its ranks in the name of the future interests of the proletariat, it was not easy to approach the fresh task of calling upon the peasantry in the name of their actual petty bourgeois interests.

The transition from social democratic propaganda among the masses of the peasantry to the Bolshevik leadership of the political struggles of the peasantry, is very difficult and complicated. The Party has devoted itself energetically to learning this new art, and has attained really great success. Last year's events have however proved it to be still inadequately prepared.

In April of the year 1922, when the alliance of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie with the Wrangel people, against the agrarian government, became strikingly apparent, and

a mighty movement among the people set in, headed by the Communist Party, the Central Committee of the Party passed the following resolution:

"Any attempt at a coup d'état on the part of the bourgeoisie, even though directed against the agrarian government, is an immediate threat against the Communist Party. The seizure of power by the bourgeois parties implies a great danger for the revolutionary movement. For this reason the Communist Party will resist by force of arms any attempt at seizure of power on the part of the bourgeoisie, and will do this in order to protect itself and the revolutionary movement. Although at the present time there is no possibility of a political agreement between the CP, and the Peasants' Federation, a technical cooperation between them is none the less permissible."

At that time there was no thought of "neutrality". The mass movement allowed the Party to adopt the right attitude. The Party was mobilised more than once on the authority of this resolution at critical moments.

In June 1923 there was no movement among the people. After Stambulinsky's brilliant electoral victory, the masses of the peasantry went on quietly cultivating their fields. The bourgeoisie proved to be completely demoralised. Stambulinsky prepared an attack upon the Communists. The Party organised against this campaign, and knew nothing of the impending upheaval. Suddenly, on 9. June, it awakened under the rule of Zankov. The streets of the capital were filled with the triumphant shouts of the petty bourgeois and petty bourgeois intelligentsia. The Peasants' League was as little prepared for the coup. Under these circumstances the CP, of the Party vacillated, and, feeling the pressure of the masses, and without actually assuring itself of the manner in which the masses of the peasantry would react upon the event came to the false conclusion that they would not fight. The CC, completely ignored the role of the Party as revolutionary vanguard, underestimated its mighty authority over the masses, and issued the unhappy declaration of "Neutrality of the Party in the struggle between the bourgeoisies of the town and country."

The result was a severe defeat for the Party and a cheap victory for the bourgeoisie. On a similar occasion, one year earlier, the Party would have come to a more correct decision, a mass movement still existing. But a year later, after the movement had ebbed and the enemy advanced conjointly, it "left the track". It is clear that the Party was still lacking in capability to accommodate itself rapidly to a new situation, and to decide on rapid action. The habits gained during long years of social democratic propaganda were not yet overcome.

Comrade Trotsky finds this moment "uniquely favourable" for action on the part of the Party. The truth is that the moment was chosen by the enemy, and well chosen. The error committed by the Party was a grave one. This the Party did not admit immediately after the event: the Party Committee unanimously declared the standpoint of the CC, to have been correct. It was not until after the September rising that the most responsible members of the CC, admitted the error, in October 1923 comrade Blagojevic made the following declaration:

"On 9. June the Party committed a tactical error. The causes were twofold:

a) Incorrect information received from the information service, which sent false intelligence to the CC, that there was no danger, and

b) the Party was convinced that the Stambulinsky government had completely forfeited the confidence of the masses, and considered that the Party would be compromised by supporting this government in a common struggle against the bourgeoisie.

When this question was brought before the Party Committee before the 9. June, I was prevented by illness

from taking part in the sessions of the Committee, and did not learn the motive of its decision until after the 9. June. In any case there was a technical mistake committed with regard to 9. June, but it is to be chiefly ascribed to the consequence of the above mentioned causes. Under such circumstances it is absolutely necessary to acknowledge the error."

Comrade Kabatschiev, the political secretary of the Party, expressed the same thought in the following words, immediately after the events of September:

"The tactical error committed by the Party on 9. June must be acknowledged. The Party underestimated the difference between the Peasants' League and the bourgeoisie. On 9. June the Party should have plunged decidedly into the struggle, and should have fought with the Peasants' League against the bourgeoisie, under the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government. And if it had proved impossible to attain this, then the Party should have been ready to help the agrarian party to maintain its position, and to demand more concessions from it.

But the error began before the 9. June. Despite its conflict with the Peasants' League government, the Party should have given this government fullest support in its struggle against the bourgeoisie. Although the Party had theoretically recognised the power of the bourgeoisie and the danger threatened by it, in actual practice it underestimated this danger, and devoted itself solely to the legal and electoral struggles, without making sufficient serious preparation for preventing the coup d'état. Thus the events of the 9. June took the Party by surprise, and found it unprepared.

But the Party rapidly drew correct conclusions from the experience of the 9. June, and found the right path. The acknowledgement of the tactical error of the 9. June brought about unity with the International and removed any cause of split within the Party."

The further events brought us rapidly to the September defeat. With reference to this defeat comrade Trotsky writes:

"The Party, anxious to retrieve this error, plunged into the September rising without having made the necessary political and organisatory preparations."

This gives the impression that the Party, in its anxiety to make good the error committed, rushed thoughtlessly into an armed struggle, without having adequately secured the success of this struggle by suitable measures.

But every source of information shows the cause of the September insurrection to be very different. The events of September were solely the result of the bloody provocations of the White Guard government. Even the European bourgeois press acknowledged this. It suffices to quote the following extract from an article published in the newspaper "Mir" (one of the most influential organs of the Bulgarian government) on September 7th. 1923, that is, five days before the event:

"Precisely at this juncture communism must be cleared out of Bulgaria. Now it is passing through a crisis, is unarmed, and is merely preparing for crime. To let the present favourable moment slip by means committing an unpardonable error, and one which cannot be made good but at a great sacrifice."

The White Guard government (around which all the bourgeois parties gathered, including the social democrats) could not be sure of the firm establishment of their power or success at the coming election so long as the giant of communism still stood fast as organisation centre for the working masses of town and country. An attack upon the Party

was a vital necessity for the bourgeoisie, and the moment was favourable. Thus the September insurrection was brought about.

At this time the Communist Party had no idea of retrieving former errors. If the Party was not to repeat its error of June, and this time with disastrous results; if it was not to allow itself to be annihilated without a struggle, and leave the fighting masses without support and leadership, it had but one choice. Let comrade Trotzky tell us clearly whether the Party, even though conscious of being insufficiently prepared politically and organisatorically, should have plunged into the insurrection or not under these circumstances? The Party is of the opinion that it acted rightly. And after the rising the masses showed their approval of the standpoint of the Party by their deeds. The Comintern has also been unanimous in expressing the same opinion. If comrade Trotzky thinks differently, he will have to bring forward very convincing arguments before the world will share his viewpoint.

It is true the Party was not ready to deal a decisive blow at that time. It was preparing itself politically and in its organisation, in view of the impending danger. It had learnt many lessons from the experience gained in June. But it was not yet able to be thoroughly prepared. Besides this, the time was too short. It was not until the insurrection had commenced that a number of errors were discovered, hitherto disregarded by the Party.

This is not to be wondered at. It is not possible to compare the revolutionary activity of a Party which has originated and developed in social democratic legality with such a tried and tested Party as that of the Russian Bolsheviks, which had passed through a long revolutionary struggle, and experienced three revolutions. It is true that the Bulgarian Party had already experienced many mass actions and serious collisions with the organs of power, but this was their first attempt at an armed insurrection. The strategy of the best of generals does not suffice to gain the victory in an insurrection; in addition the experience of the Party and of the masses is necessary.

III.

The Comintern and the Events in Bulgaria.

Comrade Trotzky, basing his assertions upon certain parallels (the events in Bulgaria and the Russian October) and certain analogies the errors committed by the Bulgarian CP, during these events and the errors of some Russian comrades during the October revolution), makes certain Russian comrades responsible to a great extent for the Bulgarian defeat. Viewed in the light of the actual facts, the real truth will however be found to be as follows:

1. When the news of the White Guard coup d'état reached Moscow, very member of the ECCI expected the Bulgarian Party to take action against the White Guard party. But as soon as unchecked reports were received, showing that the Party had declared its "neutrality" and the workers' fight in the town of Plevna was broken off, the following warning was sent to the CC, of the Bulgarian CP, in the name of the ECCI:

"Moscow. 14. June. 1923

To the CC of the Communist Party of Bulgaria,
Sofia.

We are disquieted by news that you are hampering the fight against the new government at Plevna. Is this news true? In so far as we can judge the situation from here, it demands energetic action, even in cooperation with Stambulsky. Otherwise the present government will be strengthened and will destroy the Communist Party. Consider the situation seriously, consider the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks at the time of the Kornilov rising, and act firmly!

Zinoviev, Kolarov."

The ECCI could obviously not impart definite instructions to the Party. It was too far from the scene of the events, and had not necessary information at its disposal.

Comrade Trotzky finds an analogy between the Bulgarian events and the Russian October. The ECCI compared the situation in Bulgaria in June with the Kornilov days. This analogy is doubtless correct.

2. Comrade Zinoviev, in his closing speech held before the Enlarged Executive on 15. June 1923 on the Bulgarian, events spoke as follows:

"Should these news prove true (that the Party had remained "neutral"), it is a very grave error. We should have formed an alliance even with the abominable Stambulsky. The Bolsheviks did not refuse to join Kerensky against Kornilov. . . . Here we are far from the scene of battle, from here we can issue no directions, but we draw the attention of the Bulgarian Party to the danger."

3. Comrade Radek, reporting on 23. June, on behalf of the presidium of the ECCI, on the same conference of the Enlarged Executive, spoke on "the coup d'état in Bulgaria and the CP" in precisely the same spirit as this first telegram from Zinoviev and Kolarov.

4. On the motion of comrade Radek, the ECCI issued an appeal: "To the Bulgarian workers and peasants", again in the same spirit as the decisions of the presidium of the ECCI.

In this appeal the ECCI assumed that the masses were continuing their struggle against the White Guard upheaval, and called upon them to carry on the fight.

This appeal, accepted on 23. June, did not become known to the Party — through the governmental papers — until the middle of July, by which time the revolutionary movement was long since liquidated, and the practical object of the appeal destroyed. But it at least served the purpose of energetically drawing attention to the great error made by the Party.

5. Comrade Zinoviev was commissioned by the ECCI on 2. July 1923 to send on "Open letter" to the CC of the Party. Here he pointed out the grave mistake committed by the Party, rejected with the utmost decision the "neutrality theory", and emphasised the great detriment which this theory may cause to the Comintern:

"In our opinion" — thus the letter closes — "our first duty is as follows:

1. Acknowledge the error which you have committed by setting up the neutrality theory, and admit this openly to the Party,

2. Prepare yourselves energetically for a period of illegality for the Party. It is evident that the Party will be forced into illegality, if this has not already been done.

3. Prepare the way for an understanding with the peasant elements, including the fugitive leaders of the Stambulsky Party."

6. The present writer left Moscow for Bulgaria on 17. June. He arrived on 24. June. I was not empowered by the ECCI to begin an insurrection at once. I was familiar with the standpoint of the ECCI with reference to the tactics of the Party — it was my own standpoint as well — but that was all. I came in my capacity of responsible functionary of the Bulgarian CP., in order to help the Party to correct its line in accordance with my views. When I arrived on the spot, I found that the movement called forth by the coup d'état was already liquidated.

These are the facts. Their import is evident. The ECCI endeavoured to exercise an influence upon the CC of the Party, and to correct the wrong standpoint of the Party. In consequence of the great distance and the rapid decline of the movement, this endeavour was not successful at first. But the ECCI did much towards bringing the Party to full con-

sciousness of its error, and towards enabling it to avoid errors in the future.

Events have shown the later actions of the Party to have been on right lines. The Party began to grow stronger, despite frightful persecution, despite shootings, despite all sort of sacrifices. The Party was steeled. The Party became stronger still. Even the elections, held under the reign of White Terror, show that the masses are with us.

The CP of Bulgaria and its leaders undertake full responsibility for the whole of their decisions, and for all their actions and omissions during last year's events in Bulgaria. And they express their fraternal thanks to the leaders of the Comintern, who have helped the Party to recognise their error, to redress their line, and to close up their ranks again; their thanks are due to those who have taught them the real „Lessons of October.“

Preface to the book "Lenin on Trotzky and Trotzism".

Preface to the book of the same title which will appear in a few days.

By M. Olminsky. (Moscow.)

Three years ago I received the following letter from Comrade Trotzky:

“Dear Michael Stepanovitsch,

I must apologise for the delay in my answer. I have been overburdened with work this week. You enquire about the publication of my letters to Tcheidse. I do not think that the moment would be suitable as the time for this matter has not yet come. The letters were written under the impressions and requirements of the moment, and the tone was in accordance. The present readers would not understand this tone, would not be able to make the necessary historical corrections and would only arrive at false interpretations. The party documents and the foreign Marxist publications must first arrive from abroad. There is in other countries a large number of letters of all those who took part in the “scuffle”. You surely do not mean to print them immediately? This would create entirely superfluous difficulties, for there are scarcely two old emigrants in the Party who have not violently abused one another under the influence of the ideological fight, of the temporary embitterment etc.

Write explanations to my letters? But this would mean having to relate in what points my opinion differed at that time from that of the Bolsheviks. I have spoken briefly about it in the introduction to my brochure “Results and Prospects”. I see no necessity to repeat my remarks because of the casual discovery of letters in the papers of the police department. I must add that a review of the fight of the fractions might even now give occasion for a polemic, for — I confess with a clear conscience — I by no means believe that I was always in the wrong in my differences of opinion with the Bolsheviks. I was wrong — and that completely — in my estimate of the Menshevik fraction, for I overestimated its revolutionary possibilities and hoped that it would be possible to isolate and annihilate its right wing.

This fundamental mistake however resulted from the fact that I approached both fractions — the Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks — from the point of view of the idea of permanent revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat, whereas both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were at that time in favour of the bourgeois revolution and the democratic republic. I thought that the differences of opinion between the two fractions were not so deep-rooted and hoped (which hope I expressed more than once in letters and reports) that the progress of the revolution itself would bring both parties to an attitude favouring the permanent revolution and the conquest of power by the working class, as actually occurred to a certain extent in 1905. (Comrade Lenin's preface to Kautsky's article on the driving forces of the Russian revolution and the whole tendency of the paper “Natschalo”, i. e. “Beginning”.)

I believe that my estimate of the driving forces of the revolution was decidedly right, but that the conclusions which

I drew as to both fractions, were decidedly wrong. Thanks to its uncompromising attitude, Bolshevism alone concentrated in its ranks the actual revolutionary elements both of the old intelligencia and of the advanced groups of the working class. This quick change from the revolutionary democratic to the revolutionary socialist position was only possible thanks to the circumstance that Bolshevism succeeded in creating this organisation welded on a revolutionary basis.

Even now I could divide my polemic articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: the one is dedicated to the analysis of the internal forces of the revolution and its perspectives (theoretical Polish organ by Rosa Luxemburg, “Neue Zeit”), and the other to the valuation of the fractions of Russian social democracy, its fights etc. I could publish the articles of the first category even now without alterations, as they concur in every detail with the attitude of our Party beginning with the year 1917. The articles of the second category obviously miss the mark and it would not be worth while to publish them anew. The two letters I sent refer to the articles of the second category, their publication would be ill-timed. Let us leave it to someone to do so in ten years' time, if interest in them should then awaken.

Dec. 6th 1921.

With Communist greetings

L. Trotzky.

Much might be said about this letter. I will only deal with one side of it at present. Comrade Trotzky's letters to Tcheidse were, as the reader can see, not the result of a momentary mood of their author, but one of the stages of the political fight between the Bolsheviks and the liquidators (i. e. the compromisers). At that time, the Bolsheviks published the newspaper “Pravda” which was managed by Comrade Lenin, and the liquidators (compromisers) the newspaper “Lutsch” (“the Ray”). Comrade Trotzky was one of the founders and inspirers of the compromising paper, which fought against both the “Pravda” and the revolutionary forms of the Labour movement.

To put this fight on a level with the foreign “scuffle” (even if only in inverted commas) only means that, to Comrade Trotzky even the Party only seems an object for the sake of which the “leaders” scuffle. As Comrade Trotzky pictures the matter, it is not the leaders who serve the movement and the Party, but the Party and the revolutionary Labour movement seemed to be the result of the initiative or the intrigues of leaders. To put it briefly — I say it straight out — a hardly disguised contempt for the Party filters through the short letter to me with only a very casual provocation.

Is this a mere chance? In the book on the year 1917, the reader sees how this revolutionary year was reflected in Comrade Trotzky's eyes: again almost nothing but “leaders” and a minimum about the Party.

But whence this contempt for the Party? We know that the Mensheviks were compromisers the whole time, whereas

the Bolsheviks fought against compromise. But Comrade Trotsky? He then associated with the one, now he associates with the other, that is, he was outside both and went from one camp to the other. Which way Comrade Trotsky will turn in the future is up to the present undiscernable; but we must be prepared for him to turn.

The present book gives as far as possible a summary of what Comrade Lenin said and wrote about Trotsky. The summary is incomplete, for everything that Comrade Lenin said about the Mensheviks and about the right wing of the Men-

sheviki — the liquidators — applies of course also to Comrade Trotsky. On the other hand everything that was written in the organs which appeared under Comrade Lenin's editorship, even if written by other authors, expressed Comrade Lenin's opinion, for he never passed a single article with which he was not in agreement.

In order to be on one's guard as to Comrade Trotsky's girations, one must "study" Comrade Trotsky not only in his collected works, but also in what he did not find it necessary to include in his collected works.

Was Lenin Really the Leader of the Proletariat and of the Revolution?

By L. Kamenev.

The Party owes Comrade Olminsky the warmest thanks for the publication of Comrade Trotsky's letter in the "Pravda" of Dec. 9th 1924. Special thanks are due to Comrade Olminsky from those members of the Party who still harboured doubts as to the correctness of the Party's attitude to Comrade Trotsky's latest attacks. May these doubters and vacillators read Comrade Trotsky's letter over and over again! We are convinced that it will relieve them once for all from their doubts and vacillations.

What did we actually assert on the occasion of Comrade Trotsky's last attacks?

1. Comrade Trotsky holds the view that in the fundamental questions of the revolution, in the estimation and prevision of its character, its development and its driving forces, he, Trotsky, remained in the right, and not the Bolshevik party, not Lenin's teachings, not Lenin.

2. Comrade Trotsky holds the view that in order to lead the proletariat to October and to victory in October, Bolshevism (= Leninism) had to "veer round", take a right about turn in its views and renounce what it had taught for the past 15 years.

3. Comrade Trotsky preaches — more or less openly — that in these fundamental questions the Party came to him, to Trotsky, took its stand on the basis of his theory of the revolution, and that since the year 1917 its policy "coincided" with this theory.

4. Comrade Trotsky takes for granted that his theory of the driving forces of the revolution which has been repeatedly unmasked by Lenin as a semi-Menshevik theory, based on an under-estimation of the part played by the peasantry, must continue in the future to determine the practical policy of the party.

5. Comrade Trotsky calls himself a "Leninist", without however being one, for, under the form of Leninism, he actually preaches the substitution of Trotskism for Leninism.

The letter was written by Comrade Trotsky in Dec. 1921, thus at a time when Comrade Trotsky could weigh his words perfectly, calmly and in cold blood, independently of any difference of opinion with the Party. What then does he write? "I by no means believe," writes Comrade Trotsky, "that in my differences of opinion with the Bolsheviks I was altogether in the wrong". Trotsky admits that he was wrong in his estimate of the Menshevik fraction. He continues however: "I believe that my estimate of the driving forces of the revolution was absolutely right." In order to emphasise still more his unshakeable conviction that in the ten years' fight against Leninism, he and not Lenin, was right in the fundamental questions of the revolution, Trotsky continues: "the articles of the first category (i. e. his polemical articles against the Bolsheviks from 1905—1916, "L. K."), which are dedicated to

the analysis of the internal forces of the revolution and their perspectives, I might have published even now without improvements." This is clear enough. But it does not satisfy Comrade Trotsky.

How, as a matter of fact, is it possible that Comrade Trotsky, having joined the Bolshevik party, could publish anew his articles against the Bolsheviks "without improvements"? Comrade Trotsky answers: "as they concur in every detail with the attitude of our Party beginning with the year 1917". It could hardly be said more plainly. The attitude of the Bolsheviks in the revolution corresponds "in every detail" to Trotsky's articles against the Bolsheviks before the revolution. As, owing to this "concurrence" Comrade Trotsky did not need to make any improvement in his articles, it was obviously Lenin who had to make the improvements.

Comrade Trotsky would have found it difficult to express his bold claim to replace Lenin in the quality of leader of the proletariat and of the revolution more clearly and comprehensible or in a more telling way. In order to be a real leader of the working class in three revolutions, one must at least have a correct conception of the driving forces of the revolution and of its prospects. This then Lenin did not possess until 1917, until that moment when his attitude "concurred" with that conception which Trotsky had developed for 12 years against Lenin. This is how Trotsky puts it.

Comrade Trotsky's claim, to undermine, to tear to pieces and to disintegrate Leninism, in order to set himself up as the creator of the only right theory of revolution, is so evident, in this battle, the ridiculousness of this claim is so clear and, when all is said, has such an undiguised personal character, that, after the publication of Comrade Trotsky's letter, it is not worth quarrelling about it.

It is, however, worth while to transfer oneself in thought into those times when Comrade Trotsky's letter was written, by which he acknowledges where he is in the wrong. He was in the wrong — he confesses — in his estimate of the Menshevik fraction "in that I over-estimated its revolutionary possibilities and hoped that it would be possible to isolate and annihilate its right wing". "I thought that the differences of opinion between the two fractions were not so deep-rooted and hoped that the progress of the revolution itself would bring both fractions to adopt an attitude..."

As we see, Comrade Trotsky over-estimated the revolutionary possibilities of the Mensheviks and under-estimated the revolutionary possibilities of the Bolsheviks. This over-estimating of the Mensheviks and under-estimating of the Bolsheviks on the part of Comrade Trotsky continued from 1914—1917. "This fundamental mistake", says Comrade Trotsky in his letter, "resulted however from the fact, that I approached both fractions, the Bolshevik as well as the Menshevik, from the point of view of the idea of permanent revolution". Comrade

Trotsky probably thinks that in this way he paid "the point of did not notice that he has — unintentionally — literally destroyed it.

If we are to believe Comrade Trotsky, he used "the point of view of the permanent revolution" towards both fractions and — when one remembers that thanks to it he helped the Mensheviks for ten years against the Bolsheviks, one must involuntarily say: Comrade Trotsky's experience has shown, just as twice two is four, that this "point of view" is of no value. But Trotsky himself, instead of drawing this conclusion from his ten years of sad experience, writes: "My estimation of the driving forces of the revolution was undoubtedly right." This is indeed remarkable! Comrade Trotsky estimated everything in the revolution correctly, with the exception of one trifle: The part played by the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, their fundamental differences of opinion, their fight and the historical and class significance of this fight.

It would be a sin to pass over in silence another "revelation" in Comrade Trotsky's letter. Since the differences between Menshevism and Leninism in the fundamental questions of the revolution were not so deep, how came Leninism to be at the head of the revolution? Comrade Trotsky answers: Because, **"thanks to its uncompromising attitude, Bolshevism alone (in distinction from Menshevism L. K.) concentrated in its ranks the actual revolutionary elements and created an organisation, welded on a revolutionary basis"**. In other words: the theory was somewhat better with the Leninist Bolsheviks than with the Mensheviks, and from the point of view of the "permanent revolution", it had as little value for the revolutionary proletariat, as the Menshevik theory, but ... the Leninists succeeded "in concentrating in their ranks the actual revolutionary elements and in creating an organisation".

Up to now we believed that the Leninists, and only the Leninists, concentrated the actual revolutionary elements of the proletariat in their ranks, **just because they possessed a correct theory**, that they created and welded together the proletarian organisation, **just because they constructed and welded it together round a definite programme and similar tactics**, which justified themselves in all stages of the three revolutions. In judging thus, we remain Marxists. But this Marxist judgement is of no value "from the point of view of the idea of the permanent revolution". Indeed "from the point of view" of this idea, the Bolsheviks had "no correct theory" until 1917, and their programme and tactics, though they were "irreconcilable", are not justified but disproved by history. And Comrade Trotsky had to maintain "from the point of view of the idea of the permanent revolution" that the Bolsheviks and **only the Bolsheviks** "concentrated in their ranks the actual revolutionary elements" and "created an organisation welded on a revolutionary basis", round about ... an incorrect theory of the revolution and a programme and tactics not justified by history.

This is perhaps very simple "from the point of view of the idea of the permanent revolution", but from the point of view of Marxism it has absolutely no value, besides which the following question remains undecided: why did Trotsky, who, contrary to Lenin's example, had, as early as 12 years before 1917 both an "absolutely correct theory" and a "completely" justified programme of the revolution, not succeed in concentrating the actual revolutionary elements of the proletariat round "the idea of the permanent revolution", nor in creating round this idea "a united organisation".

One thing is clear: neither can the revolution be understood, nor the history of the Party explained, nor its policy viewed from the permanent revolution" a great compliment, but he

directed from the "point of view of the idea of the permanent revolution".

We put at the head of our remarks the question: was Lenin really the leader of the proletariat and the revolution? We have asked this question because the whole point of Comrade Trotsky's attack comes to the assertion that **up to the year 1917**, Lenin's answers to the fundamental questions of the revolution were incorrect, but that **after the year 1917** Lenin answered them from a **Trotskyian** point of view. Lenin and the Bolshevik party are inseparable. Leninism and Bolshevism are one and the same thing. Comrade Trotsky's attack comes in the end to the assertion that in the main questions of policy, the Party was right only then and in so far as its line of thought corresponded in these questions to Comrade Trotsky's line of thought.

Comrade Trotsky's letter, published by Comrade Olminsky, completely confirms the fact that in 1921 he held the same point of view. With a clearness which leaves nothing to be desired, this letter denies the role of Lenin and Leninism in the historical preparation for the proletarian revolution of 1917, asserts the correctness of Trotskyism **as opposed to Leninism**, proclaims the absolute correctness of the idea of the permanent revolution and declares that Comrade Trotsky does not need to introduce any improvements into his articles against Lenin written in the ten years before the revolution, which concern the fundamental questions of the revolution.

We might have overlooked these ridiculous claims if, yes, if these claims had confined themselves to past history, but Comrade Trotsky proceeds further. The substitution of Trotskyism for Leninism in the past is necessary in order to bring forward the claim to "teach" the party today and tomorrow. In order to make this theory the guiding principle of the Party policy and of the Communist International today and tomorrow, it is necessary to justify the theory of the permanent revolution in the past, and to prove both its correctness and the collapse of the Leninist theory in the past.

Comrade Trotsky is no historian; neither are we. The dispute as to whether Lenin or Trotsky was in the right yesterday, is a dispute as to whether the revolution of tomorrow shall be made in Lenin's or in Trotsky's way; Trotsky maintains that Lenin was only able to become the leader of October because he had accepted Trotsky's "permanent revolution". We maintain that Lenin was only able to become the leader of October and to take over the dictatorship of the proletariat because he thrust Trotsky with his permanent under-estimation of the peasantry from him.

This is the essential nature of the dispute. The theory of the permanent revolution, which is opposed to Leninism, condemns its adherents to constant transitions from despair to adventures. In its practical effect it leads to a disruption of the alliance between the workers and the peasantry: it is entirely built up on an under-estimation of the peasantry, on an under-estimation of the significance for the proletariat of the alliance with the peasantry, on the theoretical and practical disregard of the peasantry. The path of Lenin, of Leninism, of the Leninists is: alliance with the peasantry, the greatest regard for the peasantry, the most careful study of the forms of co-operation between the workers and the peasants, strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat and strengthening of the confidence of the peasantry in the workers.

This is Lenin's way. This is also the way of the Party. Only this path will lead us to final victory.

Comrade Trotsky's letter demonstrates that he has carefully chosen and chooses for the future a different path from that of Lenin.

The Lessons of October.

By N. Krupskaja.

Two years ago Vladimir Ilytsch, speaking at a plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet, said that now we were treading the path of practical work, that we were no longer treating socialism as an ikon merely to be described in glowing colours. "We must take the right road," he said, "it is necessary to submit everything to the test; the masses and the whole population must test our methods and say: Yes, this order of things is better than the old one". This is the task which we have set ourselves.

Our Party, a small group in comparison to the total population, took up this task. This small group undertook to change everything, and it did change everything. That this is no Utopia, but a reality in which we live, has been demonstrated. We have all seen that it has been done. We had to do it in such a way that the great majority of working proletarians and peasants had to admit: "It is not you who praise yourselves, but we who praise you. We tell you that you have attained so much better results that no reasonable human being would ever think of returning to the old order."

The Party works continually and unwearyingly. In 1924 the fact of the Lenin Recruitment showed us that the working masses regard the Russian CP as their Party. This is an important point. This is a real and permanent achievement, and in itself no small praise. Out in the country we are praised already for many things, though these things are as yet but little. Our Party devotes much attention to the peasantry, and not only to the whole peasantry, but to the poorer and middle strata. The Party is working for the improvement of the subordinate Soviet apparatus; it aids the village nuclei in their work, and hopes to attain much. The Party accomplishes a large amount of practical work of every description, comprising an enormous field of activity, and guides the carriage of history along the road pointed out by Lenin.

The Party has devoted itself seriously to the accomplishment of practical work. Under our conditions this is an extremely difficult task, and for this reason the Party is so hostile to any discussion. For this reason comrade Trotzky's speech on the last barricade seemed so strange to the XIII. Party Conference. And for this reason great indignation has been aroused by comrade Trotzky's latest "literary" efforts.

I do not know whether comrade Trotzky has actually committed all the deadly sins of which he is accused, — the exaggerations of controversy are inevitable. Comrade Trotzky need not complain about this. He did not come into the world yesterday, and he knows that an article written in the tone of the "Lessons of October" is bound to call forth the same tone in the ensuing controversy. But this is not the question. The question is that comrade Trotzky calls upon us to study the "Lessons of October", but does not lay down the right lines for this study. He proposes that we study the rôle played by this or that person in October, the rôle played by this or that tendency in the Central Committee, etc. But this is what we must **not** study.

The first thing which we must study is the international situation as it existed in October, and the relations of class forces in Russia at that time.

Does comrade Trotzky call upon us to study this? No. And yet the victory would have been impossible without a profound analysis of the historical moment, without a calculation of the actual relations of forces. The application of the revolutionary dialectics of Marxism to the concrete conditions of a given moment, the correct estimation of this moment, not only from the standpoint of the given country, but on an international scale, is the most important feature of Leninism. The international experience of the last decade is the best confirmation of the correctness of this Leninist process. This is what we must teach the Communist Parties of all countries, and this is what our youth must learn from the study of October.

But comrade Trotzky overlooks this question. When he speaks of Bulgaria or Germany, he occupies himself but little with the correct estimation of the moment. If we regard events through comrade Trotzky's spectacles, it appears exceedingly simple to guide events. Marxist analysis was never comrade Trotzky's strong point.

This is the reason why he so underestimates the rôle played by the peasantry. Much has already been said about this.

We must further study the **Party** during October. Trotzky says a great deal about the Party, but for him the Party is the staff of leaders, the heads. But those who really wish to study October must study the Party as it was in October. The Party was a living organism, in which the CC ("the staff") was not cut off from the Party, in which the members of the lowest Party organisations were in daily contact with the members of the CC. Comrades Sverdlov and Stalin knew perfectly well what was going on in every district in Petrograd, in every province, and in the army. And Lenin knew all this as well, though living illegally. He was kept well informed, and received letters about everything which occurred in the life of the organisation. And Lenin did not only kne how to listen, he also knew very well how to read between the lines. The victory was made possible by precisely the fact that there was a close contact between the CC and the collective organisation.

A Party whose upper stratum had lost contact with the organisation would never have been victorious. All Communist Parties must impress this upon themselves, and organise themselves accordingly.

Where the Party is so organised, where the staff knows the will of the collective organisation — and not merely from the resolutions — and works in harmony with this will, the vacillations or errors of individual members of the staff do not possess the decisive significance ascribed to them by comrade Trotzky. When history confronts the Party with an entirely new and hitherto unexampled emergency, it is only natural that the situation is not uniformly estimated by everyone, and then it is the task of the organisation to find the right common line.

Lenin invariably attached enormous importance to the collective organisation of the Party. His relations to the Party Conferences were based upon this. At every Party Conference he brought forward everything which he had thought out since the last Party Conference. He held himself to be chiefly responsible to the Party Conference, to the organisation as a whole. In cases of differences of opinion he appealed to the Party Conference (for instance in the question of the Brest peace).

Trotzky does not recognise the part played by the Party as a whole, as an organisation cast in one piece. For him the Party is synonymous with the staff. Let us take an example: "What is the Bolshevisation of the Communist Parties? — he asks in the "Lessons of October." **It consists in so educating the Parties, and so choosing their leaders, that they do not go off the tracks when their October comes.**

This is a purely "administrative" and utterly superficial standpoint. Yes, the personalities of the leaders is a point of the utmost importance. Yes, it is necessary that the most gifted, the best, the firmest in character of our members are selected for our staff; but it is not merely a question of their personal capacities, but a question of whether the staff is closely bound up with the whole organisation.

There is another factor thanks to which we have accomplished our victory in October, and that is the correct estimation of the rôle and importance of the masses. If you will read all that Lenin wrote on the rôle played by the masses in the revolution and in the development of socialism, you will see that Lenin's estimation of the part played by the masses is one of the cornerstones of Leninism. For Lenin the

masses are never a means, but the decisive factor. If the Party is to lead millions, it must be in close contact with these millions, it must be able to comprehend the life, the sorrows, and aspirations of the masses. Béla Kun relates that when he began to speak to Lenin about a revolutionary war against Germany, Lenin replied: "I know that you are not a mere chatterbox — take a journey to the front to-morrow and see whether the soldiers are ready for a revolutionary war." Béla Kun took the journey to the front, and saw that Lenin was in the right.

We do not find any appeal for the study of this side of the October revolution in the "Lessons of October". On the contrary. When forming his estimate of the German events, comrade Trotzky underestimates the passivity of the masses.

A certain Syrkin has put a very foolish interpretation on John Reed's book. Many people are of the opinion that we should not put John Reed's book into the hands of young people. It contains inaccuracies and legends. The history of the Party is not to be learnt from Reed. Why then did Lenin recommend this book so warmly? Because in the case of John Reed's book this question is not the main point. The book gives us an excellent and artistic description of the psychology and trends of feeling among the masses of the soldiery and the workers who accomplished the October revolution, and of the clumsiness of the bourgeoisie and its servants. John Reed enables even the youngest communist to grasp the spirit of revolution much more rapidly than the perusal of dozens of protocols and resolutions. It does not suffice for our youth to merely know the history of the Party, it is of equal importance that they feel the pulse of the October revolution. How can our youth become communists if they know nothing more than Party conditions in their narrower import, and do not feel what war and revolution had been?

Comrade Trotzky approaches the study of October from the wrong side. The incorrect estimate of October is only one step removed from a wrong estimate of actuality, and from the wrong estimate of a number of phenomena of immense actual significance. The wrong estimate of actuality leads to wrong decisions and actions. Anyone can comprehend this. What has happened cannot be undone. Since the "Lessons of October" have seen the light of day, they must be fully discussed in the press and in the Party organisation. This must be done in a form accessible to every member of the Party.

Our Party has now greatly increased in numbers. Broad masses of workers are joining the Party, and these workers are insufficiently enlightened on the questions raised by comrade Trotzky. Things perfectly clear to an old Bolshevik, who has fought determinedly for the Leninist line, are not clear to the young Party member. The Leninist must learn, above all, not to say that: "The discussion of this question disturbs us in our learning." On the contrary, the discussion of this question will enable us to gain an even profounder comprehension of Leninism.

Comrade Trotzky devoted the whole of his powers to the fight for the Soviet power during the decisive years of the revolution. He held out heroically in his difficult and responsible position. He worked with unexampled energy, and accomplished wonders in the interests of the safeguarding of the victory of the revolution. The Party will not forget this.

But the achievements of October have not yet been fully consummated. We must continue to work determinedly for their fulfilment. And here it would be dangerous and disastrous to deviate from the historically tested path of Leninism. And when such a comrade as Trotzky treads, even unconsciously, the path of revision of Leninism, then the Party must make a pronouncement.

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