

1928

The
**TROTSKY
OPPOSITION**

Its significance
for **AMERICAN
WORKERS**

By
Bertram D. Wolfe

35c



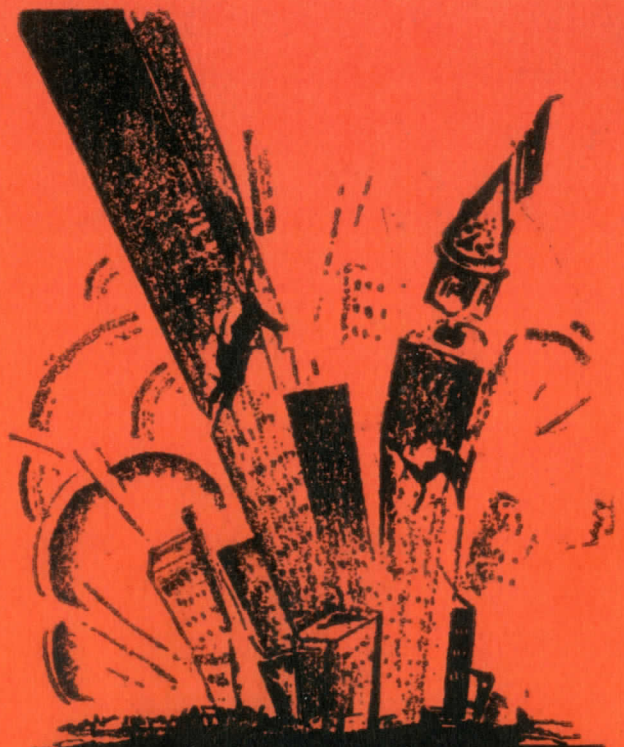
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ERRATA

P. 2. (facing fly-leaf), last line. "50c" should be "20."

P. 5. Table of Contents. No. 9. "The Question of the Chinese Opposition" should be "The Question of the Chinese Revolution."

P. 22. Line 26, last word. "the" should be "an."

Line 27, first word. "first" should be "important."

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We take the occasion of the publication of No. 5 of the Workers Library to express our gratitude to Comrades BERTHA and SAMUEL RUBIN of Minneapolis, Minn., who, together with a group of other comrades and sympathizers, have made it possible for the Workers Library Publishers to carry on its work.

The Trotsky Opposition

Its Significance for American Workers

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

CHAPTER I.

LEADERS AND CONTROVERSIES

The differences in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are of such character that they involve the course and future of that Party and the country which it guides. They also involve the policy and the fate of the Communist International, leader of the world working class.

Many workers approach the controversy from the standpoint of personal feelings, of sentimental attachment to this or that leader and find it very difficult for these reasons to see the fundamental political questions involved. Therefore, it is necessary to say a word about the role of personalities and leaders in a revolutionary movement.

Revolutionary movements involve swift and rapid change. He who today is followed, tomorrow may be without a following. He who today is loved, tomorrow may be fought. The history of all revolutions is full of examples of rapid change, the failure of certain persons to keep pace with that change, and the rapidity and remorselessness with which history sweeps them aside.

There is the example of Plechanoff, founder of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, Marxist theoretician, and leader of that movement for many years, and yet when the time came that he failed to lead aright, then history swept by him and the masses rejected his leadership.

There was the case of Kautsky. Today it is easy for the conscious worker to see that he is an enemy of the working class. But when Kautsky first began to lead in the wrong

direction, it was hard for many workers blinded by personal attachment and by sentiment to believe that one who had done so much and served so long could become a renegade.

So, too, many politically backward workers find it hard to think clearly about Trotsky and Zinoviev. They use the methods of hero-worship rather than the methods of political analysis. It is hard for them to believe that Trotsky and Zinoviev have come to represent a tendency hostile to the interests of the working class, as it was hard for admirers of Kautsky to believe that of him in 1914, or for admirers of Plechanoff to believe it of him when he ceased to lead in the right direction.

Therefore, in considering the controversy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, it is necessary for workers to strip themselves of personal prejudices in favor of one or another individual and to examine closely the political questions involved and the tendencies that each individual represents. We must see beyond persons to politics, beyond eloquence and blinding phrases to their content, beyond the subjective intentions of individuals to the actual objective direction in which they are leading.

Nor is it sufficient to note that Zinoviev and Trotsky still swear loyalty to Leninism, while they are attacking the principles that it represents. The revision of Marxism by Bernstein and other revisionists was carried on under the slogan of "saving Marxism" precisely as the present revision of Leninism by the Opposition is carried on under the slogan of restoring the principles of "true Leninism." In short, neither words nor personalities are to be considered, but the direction in which the proposals of the Opposition would lead the working class of the Soviet Union and of the world.

CONTROVERSIES IN CAPITALIST PARTIES

A word about faction fights. Controversies concerning policies occur in all parties. This is true of capitalist parties as well as working class parties. In the Republican Party (limiting ourselves to recent times) we have had the La Follette-Coolidge controversy and the Roosevelt-Taft contro-

versy. Now we have the faction called the Progressive Bloc. The same is true of the Democratic Party. The Smith-McAdoo fight of 1924 will serve as an example.

To the superficial observer these appear to be merely personal struggles for leadership. But even in the capitalist parties, this is not so. They represent political differences on program, due primarily to two things:

1. The necessity of a party's changing its program to meet changing conditions.

2. The class composition of the capitalist parties. (For example, the Republican Party is a party of big business, but it has a large Western farmer and petty-bourgeois following which exerts pressure for the incorporation of their own interests in the program.)

DIFFERENCES IN A WORKERS' PARTY

A Communist Party is far more homogeneous in its class character than the Republican or the Democratic Party. Nevertheless, even the working class is not homogeneous. There are various strata or layers in the working class. There are skilled workers and unskilled workers. There are recently declassed elements from other classes, who have become a part of the labor movement.

A working class party does not operate in a vacuum, but operates in a world in which other classes exist. Some elements of a working class party are more responsive to the pressure of the viewpoint of other classes than are other elements. Sometimes by reading the capitalist press, sometimes by association with members of other classes, sometimes from members of one's family or from friends, sometimes by contact with the bureaucracy of the trade unions and even while in struggle against it—in short, in all sorts of ways some members of the working class parties are affected by and express the pressure of other sections of the population upon their method of thinking. They thus bring into the working class party the viewpoints of other classes, although they genuinely believe that they are expressing the working class viewpoint.

Many workers believe that if Lenin were alive, there would not now be such a controversy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This is not so. The history of the German labor movement while Marx was its leader and the history of the Russian labor movement while Lenin was its leader are full of records of such controversies.

MARX AND HIS OPPONENTS

Thus, while Marx was alive, than whom no man had more authority in the revolutionary movement of his day, there were continuous controversies between the tendency that he represented and contrary tendencies. One need only mention the bitter controversy between Marx and Bakunin, between Marx and Proudhon, between Marx and Lasalle, between Engels and Duhring, or, after the death of Marx, between the Revisionists and the Marxists, to see that the whole history of the movement that built up the Second International was a history of such controversies about fundamental political differences. We know now that these differences represented differences of class viewpoint, but to many of the workers of that day, the differences were incomprehensible, and Marx was accused of having a reckless love for controversy.

LENIN'S CONTROVERSIES

The same is true of the development of the Russian revolutionary movement during the life of Lenin. One need only mention the controversy between Lenin and the Populists, between Lenin and the Economists, between Lenin and the Legal Marxists, the struggle between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, the controversy inside the Bolshevik Party over the question of boycotting the Duma.

Or we may jump to the period after the revolution of 1917 and find that controversies continue inside the far more homogeneous Communist Party. There was the struggle over Brest-Litovsk, the controversy over the N. E. P., the controversy over the nationalization and militarization of the trade unions, the controversy over the question of democratic centralism, the Workers Opposition, and many more.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT CAUSED THE CRISIS

Controversies in a party tend to become peculiarly sharp and acute at periods when history is at a turning point. What turning point have we reached in the history of the Soviet Union which makes for a sharp controversy inside the Russian Party?

That turning point is due to a change in the character of the international situation and a change in the character of the internal situation of the Soviet Union.

In the international situation, the outstanding characteristic is the partial stabilization of capitalism in the post-war period. This involves a slowing-up of the revolutionary movement and raises the question:

What is the fate of Soviet Russia, surrounded as she is by hostile capitalist governments? Can the Soviet Union, backward technically and with a majority of peasants, continue to endure and build socialism while surrounded by imperialist countries? This is one fundamental aspect of the controversy.

The other or internal aspect is closely connected with the above. The Soviet Union has made such progress in the building of industry that the question of the construction of socialism is no abstract one concerning the future, but a real and pressing question of the present.

The first years after the war and the counter-revolution were years in which very little could be accomplished in the building of new industry, where most of the progress was in the nature of restoration back to the pre-war levels, reoccupation of abandoned factories, reopening of flooded mines, rebuilding of bridges and railroads, that had been destroyed by intervention and counter-revolution. While some efforts were made to build new industry and while there were important changes in the character of industry, still the outstanding feature was one of reconstruction rather than new construction.

Now the Soviet Union has reached and passed the pre-war level. It is at a stage today where it must build new industries,

new factories, new railroads, electrify the country, build factories that manufacture something which Russia never manufactured before, namely, machinery. Further development involves the problem of changing the Soviet Union from a predominantly agrarian country into a predominantly industrial country, of bringing agriculture under the sway of industry, of fusing agriculture and industry on a new basis, the basis of socialist economy.

PATHS TO INDUSTRIALIZATION

But how does a country industrialize itself?

England industrialized itself by ruthless exploitation of colonies for hundreds of years. The Soviet Union cannot exploit colonies. It is the enemy of colonial exploitation.

Germany industrialized itself by a war of conquest in which it seized the iron and coal regions of Alsace-Lorraine and exacted five billions of francs in "war reparations." But the way of aggressive war and pillage of the defeated country is impossible to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union.

Old Czarist Russia made such little progress as it did in industrialization by inviting imperialist finance capital to take over its resources (through concessions) and to exploit the Russian masses mercilessly. This also is against the principles on which the Soviet Union is founded.

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIALIST ACCUMULATION

So the problem is, where will the Soviet Union get the funds (the "capital") to build new industries, to industrialize the nation, to build socialism?

Is it able out of its own resources, out of its own production, to accumulate a surplus over immediate needs for socialist construction?

Obviously this involves many difficulties and problems. Before analyzing the program of the opposition on this matter, let us sum up some of the difficulties enumerated above.

1. The Soviet Union is an industrially backward country.
2. It was economically dependent upon other countries for machinery, capital and manufactured products before the revolution.

3. The peasants far outnumber the workers.
4. It is completely surrounded by hostile capitalist nations.
5. For the last few years, there has been a simultaneous growth in the strength of capitalism (partial stabilization) and in the strength of the Soviet Union.
6. The imperialist powers are trying to prepare a new attack upon the Soviet Union.

PESSIMISM OF THE OPPOSITION

These difficulties and problems terrify the opposition. Their theoretical leader, Trotsky, never believed that it was possible to build socialism in the Soviet Union on the basis of its own inner forces. In fact, he did not even believe that it was possible to maintain the rule of the workers in a single country, unless the revolution should promptly spread to other countries. Thus he wrote during the war:

“. . . the building of a lasting regime of proletarian dictatorship would only be conceivable on a European scale, that is, only in the form of a federation of European republics.

“. . . It would be hopeless to believe . . . that for example revolutionary Russia could maintain itself in the face of a conservative Europe or a socialist Germany could exist isolated in a capitalist world.”

Lenin thought differently about this question, and the ten years of existence of the Soviet Union prove that Lenin was right. Now the question is no longer: Can the Soviet Union endure? but has become a question of a higher order, can the Soviet Union build socialism?

In 1923 Trotsky reviewed the question and wrote:

“So long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the rest of the European countries, we are forced to seek an understanding with them in our struggle against isolation; at the same time, it can be said definitely that this understanding can help us at best to heal this or that economic wound, to make this or that step forward, but that a real upward swing of socialist economy in Russia will only be possible *after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe.*” (Emphasis mine.—B. D. W.)

The same views have been defended by such opposition

leaders as Radek, Sokolnikov and Smilga and in a somewhat modified form by Zinoviev and Kamenev.

From the above quotations, we see that Trotsky never abandoned his views about the impossibility of constructing socialism in a single country—in the Soviet Union. In this matter, he agreed with the Mensheviks. When he joined the Bolsheviks in 1917, it was because he felt that the revolution would spread swiftly to the rest of Europe, and he was thus able to bury this fundamental difference with the Communists, or at least keep it in the background. But the partial stabilization of capitalism and the consequent delay of the revolution in the rest of Europe brought Trotsky's disbelief in the possibility of building socialism again to the foreground and caused an acute crisis in his views.

Pessimism and despair in the face of the difficulties of constructing socialism, panic in the face of the partial stabilization of capitalism, exaggeration of the difficulties and problems confronting the Soviet Union, failure to recognize the fact that these problems are problems of growth and the result of the tremendous progress made in the building up of Soviet economy—this pessimism, alarmism, panic and despair are the undertone of all the documents of the opposition.

At different stages of the controversy, they have caused the opposition to exaggerate the strength of capitalism and the weaknesses of the Soviet Union, to deny the possibility of constructing socialism, to predict the degeneration of the Soviet Union, to see it sliding back toward capitalism, to predict the degeneration of the Communist Party, to profess to see it degenerating.

At the same time as the opposition denies the possibility of constructing socialism or denies that progress is being made, it proposes desperate "get-rich-quick" schemes, ultra-revolutionary "short-cuts" to the building of socialism.

At the same time that it exaggerates the strength of capitalism, the opposition proposes revolutionary-sounding "short-cuts" to the world revolution, as in the case of the proposal to break the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee (see Chapter VIII) the premature proposal to break with the Kuo-Min

Tang (see Chapter IX), etc. Zinoviev went so far as to "get rid of" stabilization altogether by the simple process of proposing a thesis denying its existence and declaring stabilization "at an end."

This question of stabilization is of special interest to the American workers.

A LESSON FOR AMERICAN WORKERS

We live in a country where capitalism is still very powerful. We cannot even speak of a "stabilization of capitalism" in America, because American capitalism was not at any time so shaken as to be called "unstable" in the sense that tottering European capitalism was. In fact, America is today the biggest reserve source of strength for world capitalism, and it was largely on the basis of American loans and American aid that stabilization was accomplished in the European countries.

This does not mean to say that American capitalism is secure for all time, or that it does not face serious contradictions in its further development. But for all its weaknesses and contradictions, what stands out at the present moment is its visible strength and power.

In such a period as this, it is not easy to be a Communist in America. Those who are not generators of revolutionary energy, those who lack faith in the development of the revolutionary movement and in the certainty of ultimate victory, those who lack the ability to do hard, steady, undramatic detail work, the slow building of the foundation of a movement, are of little use to the American revolutionary movement today. Some of them give way to pessimism, skepticism and despair, in which case they often drop out of the movement altogether.

Others propose to give up the revolutionary tasks of the movement and to adopt an opportunistic program. Or they close their eyes to the actual objective situation in the country and live with their imaginations in the European situation, instead of attempting to grasp realistically the American situation and to adapt their program to it. Such comrades may make all sorts of ultra-leftist proposals, which might be in

order if conditions were as they are in the more advanced European countries, but which are dangerous and worse than useless here in America.

REALISTIC ANALYSIS AND HARD WORK

What the movement needs in this period is calm analysis of things as they are, hard, constructive work on the basis of the opportunities which present themselves. The work is not so "dramatic," it does not rush from one big success to another, but there are many opportunities for realistic work.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK

We must neither exaggerate the stability and strength of American capitalism nor underestimate them. We must recognize the difficult conditions which we have to face for work and at the same time we must recognize the tremendous opportunities that the situation in the United States presents to us, particularly in view of the fact that the field is virtually abandoned to us, that the bureaucracy has openly abandoned the class struggle and the leadership of the Socialist Party has openly become a tail to the bureaucracy in the American Federation of Labor, that in all America we are the only clear voice speaking for a labor party, the only active force urging and working consistently to organize the unorganized, the only clear fighter against war and against imperialism, and that our daily paper, the *Daily Worker*, is the only daily paper that takes a position in favor of militant class struggle.

Once the conditions are grasped as they are and tactics properly developed on the basis of them, it becomes clear that the Communist movement in America has a tremendous role to play in the organizing of the working class industrially and politically, in the saving and strengthening of the unions, in the organization of the unorganized, in the building of a labor party, in the defense of the elementary interests of the American working class, both native and foreign born, in the organization and development of our class forces, in the building of a party and the raising of its ideological level and the strengthening of its influence among the American masses.

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURE OF THE OPPOSITION BLOC

The present opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is distinguished in the first place by the fact that it is an alliance or bloc of every kind of opposition that has existed in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union since the revolution occurred. Every element that at one time or another went into opposition to Lenin or to the policies of Leninism and that could not find its way back to the line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, has united with every other such element, regardless of extremely differing and extremely contradictory viewpoints and policies, because they are united in this one fundamental thing—opposition to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to its majority and to its political line.

Therefore, the opposition bloc represents an unprincipled combination of remnants of the old "Workers Opposition," of the old "Democratic Centralism" controversy, incurable opponents of the New Economic Policy, remnants of the Brest-Litovsk opposition, etc., etc. Then there is Trotsky, who since 1903, with only two exceptions for a very brief period, was in open conflict with Lenin and the line of Lenin in the Russian revolutionary movement. Finally, the so-called "New Opposition" of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the last and most recent opposition to the Central Committee and to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The fact that Zinoviev and Kamenev, on the one hand, and Trotsky on the other, can be united in a single bloc is in itself a demonstration of the unprincipled character of the opposition.

While Zinoviev was still a defender of the line of Leninism against Trotsky, he had this to say, summing up the repeated attacks of Trotsky upon that line: "To persist in advocated attacks of Trotsky upon that line:

"To persist in advocating in the Bolshevik Party in the

period of 1921-24, in the period of transition: (1) nationalization of trade unions; (2) greater 'freedom' of the state apparatus from control of the party; (3) more attention to be paid to experts (in Russian, 'spetz'); (4) to guide the policy of the party by the students' barometer; (5) to advise the postponement of the currency reform and howl about the doom of the country; (6) to commence a semi-Menshevik campaign against the comrades working in the party apparatus and in favor of 'democracy' as interpreted by Comrade Trotsky last year—all this, willy nilly, means objectively helping the new bourgeoisie.

" . . . in practice, although he himself does not desire to do so, he is rendering a priceless service to the class enemy. . . .

"Comrade Trotsky must once and for all give up 'saving our party' from alleged errors. . . He must stop arranging these regular 'Party crises' according to 'time-table' every year and recently every six months. It must be understood that any attempt to put forward Trotskyism in the guise of Leninism by rush tactics must fail. In a word, it must be understood that Bolshevism is Bolshevism." (The Lessons of October.)

In 1924, Zinoviev and Kamenev demanded the immediate expulsion of Trotsky from the political committee. When this was rejected by the party, they began an attack upon its leadership, declaring that they were defending Trotskyism, making a secret alliance with Trotsky against the correct Leninist line, and intended to revise it in the direction of Trotskyism.

Yet in a short while, Zinoviev was in alliance with Trotsky, then defending him and finally accepting his program and leadership. For Trotsky is the real leader of the opposition.

TROTSKY LEADS THE OPPOSITION

Why is Trotsky the leader? First, because he was the most consistent opponent of the line of Lenin in the Russian revolutionary movement, from 1903 to the present date. Second, because he has the most rounded-out philosophy of opposition. Third, because he is not only the most experienced opposition leader but also he is the most experienced in the building of such opposition blocs (he built a similar unprincipled bloc

against Lenin in 1912). Finally, because Trotsky has a peculiar gift of eloquent phrase with which to make palatable to revolutionary workers an unrevolutionary program. He is a master of the gift of concealing a program running counter to the interests of the revolutionary movement, in ultra-revolutionary-sounding left phrases.

LEFT PHRASES AND OPPORTUNIST CONTENT

It is important to examine this last point in more detail. If we can learn to see beyond and through the revolutionary phrase to its objective political content, then we have indeed learned a very important lesson for the working class movement. Therefore, it is worth while examining a few examples of Trotsky's skill in disguising proposals which run counter to the path of the revolution in ultra-revolutionary phraseology. I will give a few examples.

When the Bolshevik fraction was formed in 1903, Lenin already foresaw that a separation of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks was necessary, that when the revolution came the Mensheviks would be on the wrong side of the barricades fighting against the revolution. Trotsky fought Lenin with such high-sounding phrases as "Lenin is cutting pieces out of the flesh of the working class." Objectively, this meant no Bolshevik party was to be formed. What would this have meant for the Russian working class in 1917?

"PERMANENT REVOLUTION"

In the period of the 1905 revolution, Trotsky developed a theory similar to the Mensheviks, leaving the peasantry out of account. His theory that the working class could not ally with the peasantry, had to split with them in seizing power and clash with them, he clothed in the phrase "Permanent revolution." What could sound more revolutionary than "permanent revolution"? Yet objectively, such an attitude towards the peasantry meant no revolution at all.

To express the relation of workers to peasants and the necessity of this alliance completing the tasks that the formerly revolutionary bourgeoisie were abandoning, Lenin proposed for the 1905 period the slogan: "Democratic dictator-

ship of workers and peasants." Trotsky's "revolutionary impatience" expressed itself in the slogan: "Down with the Czar, up with a labor government." A fine-sounding slogan. But as Lenin pointed out, it left out the peasants and it left out the bourgeois democratic tasks of the transition period. Another "revolutionary short-cut" that escapes the difficulties and problems of the revolution by never even starting to tackle them.

"THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE"

Let us skip to the World War period. In that period, Lenin urged the turning of the imperialist war into a civil war. Lenin urged the slogan: We must fight for the defeat of our own master class; and he said: "It is obvious that any one who does not fight for the defeat of his own master class cannot make a genuine struggle to turn the imperialist war into a civil war or revolution."

Trotsky was also against this slogan. As usual, his slogan promised more than Lenin's. Lenin, he declared, was "following the path of least resistance" and suffering from "national narrowness."

"Not defeat of one's own master class" said Trotsky "but a revolutionary struggle against war." It seems as if he is "offering" more than Lenin, but subtract from the idea of civil war the idea of the defeat of your own master class, and what is left? Nothing! A completely empty phrase with a revolutionary sound and with a counter-revolutionary content.

Coupled with this was Trotsky's demand "Not socialism in a single country but the United States of Europe." History does not work that way. The revolution does not start everywhere at once. Now the crisis is sharpest in one country and now in another. Every revolutionist must be ready to start in his own country to defeat first his own bourgeoisie.

THE BREST-LITOVSK PEACE

After the revolution came the question of Brest-Litovsk. The need of the hour was peace, and a chance to build up industry and the Red Army. Therefore Lenin proposed the

signing of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. "A breathing space for the revolution."

Trotsky was far more "revolutionary." Peace! A breathing space! Not for him! He said, "No peace but a revolutionary war."

If we had had that revolutionary war Trotsky might have died bravely on the battlefield and other revolutionaries would have died alongside of him on the battlefield, but what would the working class have had today? The crushing of the revolution and blackest reaction throughout the world!

SOME AMERICAN EXAMPLES

This question of being able to see through revolutionary phrases to their objective content is of such importance that it is worth digressing for a moment to take examples from the history of the American revolutionary movement.

For example, there was the demand raised by the ultra-leftists in the Communist Party: "The Party must not agitate for immediate demands, only for the overthrow of capitalism." Surely this sounds very revolutionary. But what does it mean in practice? It means the abandoning of the daily struggle, the giving up of the difficult tasks of getting the masses into action, the omission of the step-by-step process which leads to a revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. Hence in practice "No immediate demands, nothing but revolution" meant no revolution at all.

THE FARMER

Lore's view on the farmers was: This is a workers' party and we want a working class revolution. We want no farmer-labor alliance and no workers and farmers government. This attitude is the American form of the Trotskyite position on the peasantry. In practice, it means fore-going the possibility of an alliance between the farmers and the workers. It means weakening the forces that struggle against capitalism. It means abandoning the farmers to the leadership of capitalism and thus strengthening the enemy forces. Yet it sounds ultra-proletarian and ultra-revolutionary.

Lore showed essentially the same attitude on the question

of alliance with colonial struggles against imperialism. Once more a revolutionary phrase was used to cloak this position. "Not colonial nationalist revolutions—we want the world proletarian revolution." Objectively, this means no struggle against imperialism, no alliance between the victims of Wall Street in the colonies and its victims here.

DUAL UNIONISM

Another fine-sounding slogan which our Party had to reject was: "Out of the reactionary unions. Build revolutionary unions." What class conscious worker does not prefer revolutionary unions to reactionary unions? But the revolutionary movement cannot skip over the task of winning the organized masses in the reactionary unions. The slogan which sounded so revolutionary meant separating ourselves from the masses of the organized workers and abandoning them to the mercy of the reactionary bureaucracy.

THE LABOR PARTY

When the Communist Party proposed to work for the building of a labor party, the slogan was raised: "No labor party, but a Communist Party." Here again, it sounded more revolutionary to refuse to build a labor party and to demand that all building be done on the revolutionary Workers (Communist) Party. Yet the building of a labor party is fundamental in the present period. To neglect it is to neglect the chief means of separating the overwhelming mass of the backward workers from the capitalist parties which still dominate them. The political separation of the workers from the capitalists through the formation of a mass labor party is the first step in moving the American proletariat to revolutionary struggle against capitalism on a class scale.

These are only a few examples of such slogans in the American Party. Such errors occur from time to time and therefore one of the most important lessons for American workers to learn from a study of the controversy in the C. P. S. U. is that of analyzing slogans so as to see their objective political meaning and not be blinded by "left" phraseology.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL THEORY OF THE OPPOSITION

Politics is a question of class relationships. The basic requirement for revolutionary leadership is the ability correctly to analyze the class forces in a given country and in the world at a given moment. He who fails to analyze correctly the relation of class forces cannot lead the working class.

The political theory of Trotsky which is the political theory of the opposition has failed basically to analyze the relation of class forces in the Soviet Union, as it failed to analyze class forces in old Czarist Russia as well. He fails to understand the role of the peasantry and the relation between peasant and worker.

Important in every country of the world, the question of the relationship between worker and peasant is even more important in the Soviet Union than in industrially more advanced countries.

Within the Soviet Union, the workers are greatly outnumbered by the peasants. Outside the Soviet Union, there is a ring of hostile capitalist states, armed to the teeth and plotting the destruction of the workers' government. The workers of the Soviet Union have made their revolution with the aid of the peasants. They cannot resist attack without the support of the peasants. They could not maintain their rule if that support were changed into hostility. The problem of maintaining working class rule and building socialism in the Soviet Union is in the first place the problem of maintaining the alliance between peasants and workers. Not only must the alliance be maintained, but it must be continually strengthened and the peasantry must be led through that alliance to the building of socialism.

A policy which tends to break that alliance may sound ultra-proletarian and ultra-revolutionary, but any policy which threatens to break that alliance is a policy threatening the very existence of the revolution.

THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

In the preceding chapter, we analyzed in part Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" and his slogans of the 1905 period, which left the peasantry out. In 1922, in writing a new introduction to his book entitled *1905*, he showed that he had not yet abandoned these theories, but rather thought that history had confirmed them. He writes:

"It was just in the period between the 22nd of January and the October strike (this refers to events in the year 1905—B. D. W.) that the views of the present writer were formed on the character of the revolutionary development of Russia . . . the idea that the Russian revolution, confronted by immediate bourgeois aims, cannot be content with gaining these. The revolution cannot solve its first bourgeois tasks by any other means than by the seizure of power by the proletariat.

"But after it has seized power, the proletariat cannot confine itself to the bourgeois frame-work of the revolution. . . .

"This means for the proletariat *hostile encounters* with every group of the bourgeoisie which has supported the proletariat at the beginning of the revolutionary struggle, not only with these, but *with the broad masses of the peasantry as well*, whose support has enabled them to get and maintain power." (emphasis mine—B.D.W.)

This theory, that the working class must use its power not only against the bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy but against "the broad masses of the peasantry as well" is the very heart of the political theory of Trotskyism. It is because he does not perceive the revolutionary role of the peasantry, it is because he does not see in the peasantry an ally for the working class, that he did not believe in the power of the Russian masses to make a revolution, to maintain a workers' government, and to build socialism.

THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM

And from this followed a second theory—the theory that the revolution can only be successful and endure if it spreads immediately to other countries. "If this does not happen," says Trotsky, "it will be hopeless to believe—as is evident from the experience of history and theoretical consideration that the revolution in Russia, for example, could remain isolated in a capitalist world."

For this reason also, Trotsky says: "The contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelming preponderance of peasant population can find their solution only on an international scale, in the arena of the world revolution."

It is for this reason that the stabilization of European capitalism arouses in him such pessimism and despair. It is for this reason that the opposition made so many proposals which were calculated to break the alliance between workers and peasants, and it is because he believes that the peasantry is going to be provoked by the policy of the workers state to rise in armed conflict against it that Trotsky comes to the conclusion that the power of the working class can only be maintained if they get the direct state aid of the victorious proletariat of other countries. On this he wrote: "Without the direct state support of the European proletariat, the Russian working class cannot retain power and cannot turn their temporary rule into a permanent socialist dictatorship."

LENIN AND TROTSKY ON CLASS FORCES

Let us compare this fundamental theory of Trotsky, stripped of its revolutionary phraseology, with Lenin's view of class forces.

Lenin regards the working class as the leader of all exploited and toiling masses including especially the peasantry.

Trotsky regards the working class as the enemy, exploiter and destroyer of the peasantry.

For Lenin the dictatorship is carried on by the proletariat leading the peasantry.

For Trotsky the dictatorship is carried on by the working class against the peasantry.

According to Lenin, the conquest of power and control of the state apparatus by the working class strengthens the alliance of worker and peasant. It enables the working class "to satisfy by revolutionary means the needs of the peasants."

According to Trotsky the conquest of power by the working class puts an end to the possibility of alliance between worker and peasant, makes the working class government the

exploiter of the peasants, and leads to an armed clash of the broad masses of the peasants with the workers' state. As the peasants are in a majority, the workers state cannot endure, unless there are successful revolutions in other countries and the victorious worker's governments give "state aid" to the government of the Soviet Union. State aid means funds, industrial products, munitions and soldiers to crush the anticipated peasant risings.

Under such circumstances the fact that the Soviet Union has endured as long as it has is, according to Trotsky, "a miracle." Stabilization and the delay of the revolution in the West creates a situation that gives little hope. The Soviet Union may continue to exist, but there can be no talk of building socialism "The genuine rise of socialist economy in Russia will be possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe." This is Trotsky's most optimistic verdict. And his less optimistic one is that the Soviet Government will degenerate or be overwhelmed by peasant revolts or foreign attack. "Without the direct state support of the European proletariat, the Russian working class cannot retain power and cannot turn their temporary rule into a permanent socialist dictatorship."

As to the possibility of "building socialism in a single country" namely in the Soviet Union, Lenin has this to say:

"Unevenness of economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. From this it follows that the victory of socialism is at first possible in a few capitalist countries and even in a single one. The victorious proletariat of that country having expropriated the capitalists and having organized socialist production would rise against the rest of the capitalist world, rally to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raise rebellion in these countries against the capitalists, and, in the event of necessity come out with armed force against the exploiting classes and their States." ("Against the Stream.")

After the revolution he wrote:

"The reason why the bourgeoisie of the whole world is furious and raving against Bolshevism and is organizing military campaigns, conspiracies, etc., against the Bolsheviks is that it understands perfectly well that our success in the work of re-

constructing social economy is assured, unless we are crushed by military force, and to crush us in this manner they will not succeed."

In a speech after the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) Lenin declared:

"Let me conclude by expressing the conviction that however difficult this task may be . . . all of us together, if not in a day, at least in several years, will fulfill the task at all costs and NEP Russia will become socialist Russia." (Speech to the Moscow Soviet).

Finally I quote from one of his last articles written shortly before his death:

"As a matter of fact, with the political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with many millions of petty and small peasants, with the leadership of this peasantry secure in the hands of the proletariat—is this not all that we require in order that cooperation, that cooperation alone, which we formerly scorned as mere huckstering and which to a certain degree we have a right to scorn as such as now under the NEP, is this not all that is necessary for the construction of complete socialist society? This is not yet socialist society completely constructed, but it is all that is necessary and is sufficient for this construction." (Article on Cooperation.)

Of course the Communist Party knows that the Soviet Union will not be safe from attack by foreign imperialism until after the victory of the working class in various countries. It does not underestimate this danger and prepares earnestly against it.

But this must not be confused with the question: Can the worker-peasant alliance be maintained? Will it be overthrown *from within*? Has it enough revolutionary energy *to build socialism without aid of other governments, out of its own resources*, on the basis of its own class forces? The answer of Lenin, the answer of the Party he built, is: "Yes." And the progress of the first ten years proves that that answer is correct.

STATE AID VERSUS AID

Nor does the party overestimate, as Trotsky does, the question of the "state aid" of victorious revolutions as the only source of aid. The Soviet Union is being and has been aided

by the workers of the world before they have conquered state power in other countries. It was aided by the mutiny of the French fleet in the Black Sea, by the revolt of the German troops, by the mutiny of the American troops in Archangel. Every army that has ever been sent against it has mutinied!

It has been aided by the formation of Committees of Action by the British workers in 1920 and 21, when Britain threatened to attack the Soviet Union. It was aided by the longshoreman's strike on the Pacific Coast which prevented the shipment of American ammunition to Vladivostok. It was aided by the workers of the world with relief during the famine. It is aided by the struggles of the workers of every country of the world, by the struggles of the oppressed colonial peoples, by every blow which weakens the forces of capitalism and imperialism. It is aided by the conflicts inside the imperialist forces. It is aided by its great and ever-growing popularity among the toiling masses of the world. And it is aided above all by the growth of the Communist Parties and the Communist International, organizer and leader of the world revolutionary struggle.

When the Soviet Union is attacked it will be aided by strikes in the countries attacking it. The armies sent against it will consist of workers. Such armies will be "demoralized." There will be mutinies, desertions to the Red Army, revolts. The workers of the world will know how to defend the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER V.

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF THE OPPOSITION

Politics is concentrated economics. The economic theory of the opposition and their "practical" economic proposals follow from their political theory, from their estimate of class relationships.

The central economic problem of the Soviet Union is the problem of Socialist accumulation—where to get the funds to industrialize the Soviet Union and build up socialism.

Preobraschensky, who is the official "economist" of the opposition, as Trotsky is its political leader, has written a work entitled "The Fundamental Laws of Socialist Accumulation" to answer that question.

The basis of his economic theory is that the proletarian state is the exploiter of the peasantry and that the funds for the building of industry should be gotten from the exploitation of the peasantry by industry and by the state. He writes:

"The more backward economically, petty-bourgeois and agrarian a country is when it goes over to a socialist organization of production, the more necessary it will be for the socialist accumulation of such a country to draw support from the *exploitation* of pre-socialist forms." (Emphasis mine.)

By "exploitation of pre-socialist forms" Preobraschensky means especially the peasantry. In the same work he compares the peasant region of Russia to the colonies of an imperialist country!

PRICE POLICY OF THE OPPOSITION

One of the most vicious features of capitalism from the standpoint of agriculture is "the scissors"; the gap between industrial prices and farm prices whereby the farming population has to sell its products cheaply and buy industrial products at a greater price rate. This is a form of exploitation of the farmer by the owners of industry. Preobraschensky proposes to continue this under working-class control of industry and even to increase the gap. He advocates "a price policy which consciously or unconsciously is based upon the

exploitation of every description of private economics.”

“It is not the task of the socialist state to deprive the petty-bourgeois producers (again the peasants are meant—B. D. W.) of less than capitalism has deprived them of, but to take away more of the greater income secured to them by the rationalization of the whole economics of the country, including small production.”

He advocates not only higher prices for industrial products as a means of exploiting the peasantry, but higher taxes, direct use of the state power (which would mean a return to the forced levies of war communism) and even withdrawal of government funds from trade.

ABANDONING TRADE TO THE NEPMAN

This last proposal is typical of the “get-rich-quick” schemes for industrialization and socialist accumulation proposed by the Opposition. Viewed superficially, it seems to promise to speed up the building of socialism. Why should the workers’ state invest any of its funds in cooperatives and trading organizations for buying and selling the peasants’ products when every kopek is needed for industry? “It is disadvantageous for state economics to apply a part of the capital of which its own production is in need for the purposes of trade which is philanthropic as far as its proceeds are concerned.”

It seems to promise speedy socialism, but in reality it would accomplish just the opposite, an enormous step backward towards capitalism.

Why? Because to take state funds out of buying and selling is to put trade back into the hands of private capital, into the hands of the Kulak and Nepman. It means to give up the job of squeezing the Nepman out of trade in which so much progress has been made that now 64.5 percent of the retail trade and 91 percent of the wholesale trade is in the hands of the cooperatives or the state. It means to give up the successes of the last few years in isolating the kulak and to abandon the countryside to his tender mercies. It means to give a tremendous stimulus to the economic and then the political power of the capitalist elements in Soviet economy and to give up the task of trying to lead the peasants towards

socialism. That it is a "short-cut" there is no doubt, but a "short-cut" not to socialism but back to capitalism.

THE QUESTION OF MONOPOLY

Monopoly represents a parasitic form of capitalism. It is superior to earlier competitive capitalism in the sense that it represents large-scale industry, but is greatly inferior to earlier capitalism in the sense that the elimination of competition makes it no longer necessary to be "progressive," to produce better and cheaper goods. Monopolist capitalism makes its profits, not by producing better and cheaper goods and continually improving its methods of production but by cornering the market and continually extending the monopoly. This enables it to fix prices artificially and to force the taking of goods at a given price. Lenin emphasized the necessity of taking from capitalism (a) the progressive tendency of competitive capitalism in producing better and cheaper goods; (b) the large-scale production system of monopoly. He also emphasized the necessity of rejecting (a) the anarchy of the competitive system, and (b) the degenerating parasitic tendencies of monopoly, which takes advantage of its privileged monopoly position instead of improving production.

Preobrashensky in his theory proposes to borrow from monopoly precisely its parasitic character and raise it to a system of exploitation of the peasantry by the proletariat. He says:

"... the state economics of the proletariat originates historically on the foundation of monopolist capitalism. The latter, however, leads to the creation of monopolist prices for the products of monopolist industry in the home markets, gains a surplus profit in consequence of the exploitation of the small producers, and thus prepares the ground for the price policy of the period of original socialist accumulation. Thus the concentration of the whole of the big industries of the country in the hands of a single trust, that is, in the hands of the workers' state, increases to an extraordinary extent the possibility of trying out such a price policy on the basis of monopoly, a price policy simply signifying another form of taxation of private production."

Lenin was always worried about the danger of monopolist degeneration, of bureaucratic management of state industry.

If Preobrashensky's theories were followed, then the state industries would not have to improve continually their producing methods and continually lessen the cost of production, but would artificially fix prices as high as the traffic would bear. This would mean monopolistic and bureaucratic degeneration of state industry and would make it more an instrument of exploitation of the backward industrial forms (the peasantry) than the trusts are under capitalism itself.

Lenin proposed to fight this tendency to monopolistic and bureaucratic degeneration by (1) the pressure of the broad masses; (2) the constant lowering of prices and the cost of production; (3) competition with the NEP, selling cheaper and better goods; (4) the winning of the peasantry through these lower prices and superior quality of goods to appreciate the superiority of the state industry over private industry; (5) the development of the cooperatives.

Lenin aimed at increasing the market by increasing the buying power of the peasantry, raising the backward forms of industry to the level of the large-scale industries of the cities. But Preobrashensky aims not at the development of the countryside and the abolition of classes by the raising of the peasantry and fusing of it with the proletariat, but the maintenance of the dictatorship and its degeneration in such form that the proletariat becomes a real exploiting class and the peasantry the exploited. Thus under the guise of socialist accumulation he is objectively proposing the adoption of the worst forms of the imperialist monopolist character of capitalism.

The economic theories of Preobrashensky follow logically from the political theories of Trotsky as to the conflicts of interests between worker and peasant and the necessity of the workers so exploiting the peasant as to arouse his hostility. From this politics and this economics, follow all of the practical proposals of the opposition on price policy, on taxation policy, on trade policy, etc., discussed in the next chapter.

Before taking up those "practical" proposals, let us briefly contrast the economic theory of the opposition with that of

Leninism, which underlies the taxation, price and rural economy policy of the Party:

Lenin: The more backward a country, the more necessary an alliance between workers and peasants.

Preobrashensky: The more backward a country, the more necessary the exploitation of the peasants by the workers.

Lenin: Proletarian industry must strive to prove to the peasant its superiority to capitalist industry by selling cheaper and better, by lessening the gap between industrial and agricultural prices.

Preobrashensky: Proletarian industry must take not less but more than capitalist industry, must use its monopoly position to widen the price gap.

Lenin: We must invest larger and larger sums in trade and cooperatives, crowd out the Kulak and Nepman and lead the peasant toward socialism.

Preobrashensky: Take all funds out of cooperatives and trade. Such use of funds is philanthropy.

Lenin: An increase in the buying power of the peasants is a basic necessity to the development of Soviet industry, since the peasants constitute the chief market of Soviet industry. Through cooperation, electrification, the raising of the level of the peasantry and the demonstration by performance of the superiority of socialist industry, the peasant will be led from increasing identity of interests to complete fusion with the proletariat in the socialist order.

Preobrashensky: The small producer is a colony, an object of exploitation. In the long run he will be exploited out of existence and thus socialism will come about.

Lenin: No colonial robbery or exploitation of economically backward nationalities inside or outside the Soviet Union. From alliance to complete fusion and disappearance of classes.

Preobrashensky: Proletariat is exploiting class; peasants exploited class, the colony.

It is easy to see that the economic theory of the opposition leads where the political theory leads—to exploitation of the peasants, to a rupture of the alliance of workers and peasants, to “armed clashes,” to destruction of the Soviet power.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRACTICAL PROPOSALS OF THE OPPOSITION

It is obviously impossible to take up all of the proposals of the opposition in so limited a pamphlet as the present one. It is even difficult to select typical ones for two reasons:

1. The opposition is so heterogeneous, made up of such contradictory elements, that on some matters it has nearly as many contradictory proposals as spokesmen.

2. The opposition often permits one of its spokesmen to put forth a proposal as a feeler. When it is analyzed and annihilated, it is withdrawn or "forgotten," or the very opposite proposed in order to cover up the retreat.

3. The more the opposition finds itself discredited and rejected by the entire party, the more desperate it has become, finally degenerating into a purely destructive opposition that criticizes everything, opposes everything, seeks to capitalize every defeat and misfortune that the working class sustains. By opposing everything that the party proposes, it desperately hopes to catch the party in some mistake and how can the party help but make errors sometimes? It is not afraid to injure its prestige by opposing correct proposals because it has no prestige left to injure.

Still we can select a few type proposals of leading members of the opposition and see how they follow from the economic and political theories analyzed in the two preceding chapters.

These proposals are, for the most part, the answers of the Opposition to the questions planted in Chapter II—"Where will the Soviet Union get the funds for the building of new industries? How will the Soviet Union industrialize itself? How will it build socialism? The answers of the Opposition to these questions are so diverse and contradictory that we will in each case note the author of any particular proposition.

"AGRARIANIZATION"

There are the arguments and proposals of Shanin and Sok-

olnikov to the effect that the Soviet Union should concentrate on the development of agriculture, as this is easy, and export agricultural products and import machinery and manufactured goods. This would in practice keep the Soviet Union an agrarian country and would lead to a linking of Soviet agriculture not with Soviet industry but with European capitalist industry.

Thus (to give only a brief quotation) Sokolnikov writes:

“The key to the acceleration of the process of raising the economy of the Union lies in the rapid rise of agriculture . . . as agriculture develops an increasing quantity of produce will be obtained for disposal on the foreign market which can be utilized for the purpose of supplying what is required for raising the whole of economy. . . The export of agricultural products may be increased and such a quantity of grain and other produce may be placed on the world market as may, in the course of a few years, bring about a great world economic revolution.”

And Shanin writes:

“Agriculture requires an incomparably less amount of invested capital per unit of production. Hence, in view of the slow process of accumulation of capital, our economic revival in the near future will proceed principally in the direction of the revival of agriculture. . . It is quite erroneous to assume that our industry, in the near future, can develop at the same rate as agriculture. As a matter of fact, this problem is insoluble; at all events, it is insoluble unless large quantities of capital are imported or unless the development of agriculture is forcibly retarded. . . .

“Arguing from the view that our agriculture requires less capital than industry, preference should be given to agriculture. The development of agriculture to the full extent that the world market can absorb, should be the principal aim.”

Thus the first answer of the opposition as to how the Soviet Union can be industrialized is: “It can’t be industrialized. Develop agriculture. Make it more agrarian.” This would lead to Russia’s becoming a colonial agrarian country under the domination of foreign industry and imperialism. It would lead to a Russian Dawes plan and the return of capitalism. The difficulties of industrialization are met by a proposal to give up the job.

Yet the Soviet Union is making progress towards indus-

trialization and while during the first years agriculture recovered fastest, industry is now developing faster and has passed agriculture and is leading and dominating it economically. The general line of the party is to convert the country from an agrarian to an industrial one, capable of producing by its own efforts all the equipment it requires.

SUPER-INDUSTRIALIZATION

After their plans for agrarianization were completely discredited and refuted, the opposition, through other spokesmen, began to advocate "Super-industrialization" schemes; get-rich-quick schemes for industrializing overnight by excessive taxes on the peasantry (Ossovsky, Preobrashensky), by forced seizure of peasant products (Piatakov), by raising wholesale prices of industrial products sold to the peasants by thirty percent (Piatakov, Preobrashensky, Repshe). All of these schemes would lead to the reintroduction of war communism, to the lowering of the purchasing power of the peasant, which is the principal market for Soviet industry, to the domination of the capitalist elements in trade (Nepmen and Kulaks), to the breaking of the worker-peasant alliance and to the return of capitalism by the back door as the agrarianization schemes of Shanin and Sokolnikov would bring it in by the front door.

BEND THE KNEE TO FOREIGN CAPITAL

A third set of proposals of the opposition identified with the names of Medvediev and Schliapnikov declares that small peasant economy must be exterminated. At the same time, they declare that industry cannot be built by its own accumulation and savings, nor by means of taxation but only by the aid of foreign capital. How to get this?

"We demand," they answer, "that the government shall make more strenuous efforts to obtain these funds by means of foreign and internal state loans and by granting concessions involving greater losses and material sacrifices than those the government has hitherto been prepared to make in order to obtain these credits . . . , to make greater material sacrifices to

international capital which is prepared to undertake the revival of our ruined (?) industries. . .”

“Down on your knees to international capital” is the desperate proposal of Medvediev and Schliapnikov! Here again capitalism and imperialism are led back in by the front door.

As one after another their proposals were rejected and refuted, the opposition became more and more reckless, more and more careless of their reputation, and more and more desperate in their disregard for the realities and possibilities of the situation or their own consistency. They swung from the advocacy of an increase of taxes on the peasantry to the advocacy of a disastrous cut. (The taxes on the peasantry with the exception of the Kulak are being steadily and slowly lowered according to a consistent plan—see figures below.) From an advocacy of a 30 percent rise in prices which was to bring an extra billion rubles for industrialization overnight, they swung to an attack upon the slowness with which the government is succeeding in lowering prices! From exaggerating the difficulties of industrialization to denying their existence and finding easy overnight solutions and then from easy overnight solutions to fresh pessimism and gloomy prophecy and declaration that Soviet economy was moving backward, not forward at all. Finally, they ceased making “constructive proposals” and contented themselves with a constant barrage of criticism of everything proposed and everything accomplished and with an attempt to speculate with every misfortune, every difficulty and every obstacle in the slow and difficult path of building socialism in the Soviet Union.

Gradually, they appealed less and less to the party members who had so overwhelmingly repudiated them, and began appealing more and more to the most backward strata of the working class and the peasantry and to other non-communist and non-proletarian sections of the population.

One or two examples of such appeals are all we have room for here, but they will suffice.

THE QUESTION OF WAGE INCREASES

The wages of workers in the Soviet Union have gone up steadily since their lowest point in 1921, so that they are now

above pre-war and still rising (this without counting the shorter workday and the many forms of social remuneration such as cultural opportunities, unemployment, sickness, accident and old age insurance, vacations with pay, etc.). Still, it must be remembered that the workers of the Soviet Union are deliberately refraining from consuming all they produce in order that some of their product may be used to build up industry and develop a socialist order of society. In other words, the workers of the Soviet Union are in part sacrificing their immediate interests of today for the sake of the future, for the building of socialism.

The opposition, as it grew more desperate, suddenly attacked this fundamental source of socialist accumulation, and attempted to rally the more backward workers, less willing to sacrifice the present for the future, by the demagogic and impossible demand of an increase of 30 percent to 40 percent in wages. But the workers were class-conscious enough indignantly to reject such demagoguery.

Here is a sample of the easy way in which Zinoviev conjured a billion rubles out of his sleeve. He went to the shop nucleus in the Aviation factory Aviopribor and urged that the members vote for him and his platform. He said in part:

“Reduce expenditures by half a billion at the expense of the bureaucracy. Take the Nepman by the scruff of the neck and we get another half a billion. We take this billion and divide it between industry and wages. This in two words is our economic program. . . .”

Simple, isn't it? Another billion was promised by the scheme of raising wholesale prices 30 percent (proposal of Maizlin, Piatakov, Preobrashensky, etc.).

Rykov described the scene as follows:

“Comrade Zinoviev comes to a meeting of a Party nucleus and planks down a billion rubles on the table, and Maizlin holds another billion in reserve. . . . Our supporters could not make an offer nearly as high as that. However, in spite of this handicap, this ‘two billion’ card was beaten by the rank and file members of the party in every nucleus. The rank and file members of the party proved to be more educated on economic questions than the leaders of the opposition.”

The Aviopribor nucleus indignantly rejected the platform and its advocate.

In a similar demagogic manner, they swung suddenly from the proposal to industrialize by high taxation on all forms of peasant economy to a demand for a 25 percent increase in the number of peasants exempted entirely from taxation. Here again the policy of the party has been slowly and steadily, as conditions permit, to increase the number of poor peasants exempt from taxation. The number of poor peasants exempt altogether from taxation rose from 15 percent in 1925 to 25 percent in 1926. A further exemption of ten percent during the current year means that practically all of the poor peasantry is exempted. The tax on the middle and upper layers of the peasantry gets progressively higher so that on an income of 100 rubles per head the tax is 25 percent.

THE QUESTION OF THE KULAK

On the question of how to combat the Kulak, the opposition has used its characteristic demagoguery and made characteristic errors which, had they been accepted, would have led to disaster. The Kulak or rich peasant represents from three to four percent of the total peasant population. The government taxes him heavily (an income of 100 rubles a month, pays about 400 rubles a year or four months' income in taxes). Also, the Party policy is to restrict his political and economic rights, to lessen his power in the village and above all to isolate him so that the poor and middle peasant do not follow the Kulak but oppose him and follow the proletariat. The opposition raises a demagogic cry about the Kulak, proposes taxes greater than his income, proposes confiscation (which would mean a return to war communism) and even proposed at one time the slogan: "Let loose the class war in the village."

At the same time, its concrete proposals have been: withdrawal of state funds from the cooperatives, which would have given the Kulak complete control of the village; withdrawal of state funds from trade, which would have put the village under the domination of Kulak and Nepman; excessive taxation of all forms of peasant economy, which would have consolidated the village against the working class; high

prices for industrial products, which would have had the same effect; and neglect of or pressure against the middle peasants, which would have driven them into the hands of the Kulaks. When the party, at the Fourteenth Congress, began to lay systematic plans for the winning away of the middle peasants from the Kulaks, whom they were then following, and proposed to ally the middle peasants with the poor peasants and workers by a gentler policy toward the middle peasant, the opposition clamored that this was yielding to the Kulak. The middle peasants make up the overwhelming mass of the peasants. They are increasing more rapidly than either poor or rich peasant. The Kulak increases with extreme slowness by the enriching of a few of the middle peasants.

The poor peasants are being aided to develop toward middle peasantry, or in some cases are proletarianized. The Kulaks are being reduced in many cases to the condition of middle peasants. Thus the middle peasant is the key to the rural situation. But the opposition opposed the measures designed to separate them from the Kulak and win their alliance with the poor peasants and the proletariat. They declared that the middle peasants were destined to break up into Kulak and poor peasantry. (This was the direction of development of the middle peasants under capitalism, but the reverse has proved true under the rule of the workers.)

The proof of the correctness of the Party's policy adopted is now clear to every one because the middle peasants, since the Fourteenth Congress, have stopped following the Kulak and the Kulak is now completely isolated, while the middle peasant is in firm alliance with the poor peasant and worker. The danger from the Kulak is not at an end but it is considerably lessened. But the way of the opposition would have led to the breaking of the worker-peasant bloc, the assumption of leadership in the village by the Kulak, or, in the case of some of their contradictory proposals, a step backward to the days of war communism and civil war in the village and such a weakening of the Soviet Union as would have made Trotsky's doleful theories as to the impossibility of enduring without State Aid of other lands, a reality.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OPPOSITION AND THE PARTY

The preceding chapters show the Opposition abandoning, one by one, all of the basic Leninist views on the question of the revolution.

Denying the basically socialist character of proletarian industry, denying the possibility of the building of socialism in the Soviet Union while surrounded by hostile capitalist countries, describing the Nep not as a road to Socialism but as "capitalism under the proletarian dictatorship," denying the possibility of leading the peasants in a common alliance towards socialism, proposing measures to break that alliance, exaggerating every difficulty and gloomily prophesying failure and a return to capitalism at every moment—the opposition had gradually developed a complete set of Menshevist views on the basic questions of the proletarian revolution. In the final stages of their development, they also adopted Menshevist views on discipline, the authority of conventions and leading bodies, the direction in which the party was developing and the duties of its members toward it.

The organization of a communist party is based upon the principle of discipline and democratic centralism. Built for struggle, it requires in the face of its enemies the unanimity and solidarity of a fighting force. As a party of action it cannot turn itself into a perpetual debating society. In pre-convention periods, for two months, the most intensive discussion of all differences is permitted, but once the convention has decided, then it is the duty of every member to carry out the party program as decided by the convention. The conventions derive their authority from the membership. They elect the leading committees and officials and between conventions these committees are supreme.

The Opposition at first tried the regular party methods of trying to change the party program by an appeal to the membership in a convention period. They were overwhelmingly

defeated. They then set themselves up as self-appointed leaders regardless of the decisions of the convention and the membership. They sought to prolong the discussion period indefinitely and turn the party that has such gigantic tasks to perform, into a debating society. They refused to recognize the authority of the convention and the central committee created by it. They refused to abide by the decisions of the convention. They attacked the system of discipline and democratic centralism. They set up a factional machinery of a party within a party with its own leading committees, its own discipline superior to the discipline of the party, its own secret meetings and its own secretly printed and circulated literature. They created a party within a party, threatening the fundamental unity of the Communist Party and driving towards a split in the Communist party and the International.

The working class of the Soviet Union cannot have more than one party to lead it in its struggles. If there are two parties claiming to represent the proletariat, then the working class is divided. Not only that, but inevitably, the enemy classes will take advantage of the situation to support and utilize the opposition party as their own instrument of struggle.

Whether they wanted to or not, this is what the opposition soon found happening. And they played into the hands of such developments by their attacks upon the party, by their violation of the Soviet laws on licensed printing plants with their secret underground presses, and above all by their appealing from the party to the non-party population. When they went out on the streets and held or tried to hold street demonstrations against the party in which every one was appealed to to join, they converted themselves into open enemies of the party and the working class whose interests it represents. These street demonstrations, had they been successful in rallying great masses, would have passed over into an attack on the Soviet Power. But the masses refused to follow them. Only a handful of enemies of the Soviet regime and discontented petty bourgeois intellectuals followed them, and the mass of workers indignantly repudiated the demonstrators, tried to attack them so that the state militia had to protect them.

The opposition had attacked and rejected the program of the Party and returned to the viewpoint of the Mensheviks on the questions of class forces and the nature of the revolution. Now they attacked the party and returned to the Menshevik view on discipline and the Menshevik estimate of Democratic centralism.

The Central Committee they denounced as a "bureaucratic machine." The fact that the membership of this great fighting party had rejected the opposition they said was a result of the membership's having been "terrorized." It is interesting to note that the Mensheviks in 1903 raised the same cry against Lenin and the Central Committee that the Opposition now raises against the Central Committee under the leadership of Stalin, Bukharin, etc. Lenin's answer is illuminating:

"It seems to me quite clear," wrote Lenin, "that these cries about the notorious bureaucracy are simply intended to conceal dissatisfaction with the personal composition of the Central body. It is a fig leaf intended to conceal the violation of the solemn promise given at the Convention.

"You are a bureaucrat—because you were appointed by the Congress against *my* will. You are a formalist because you abide by the formal decision of the Congress and ignore my objections. You are acting in a crudely mechanical manner because you abide by the 'mechanical' majority of the Party Convention and ignore my desires to be coopted (drafted into a leading position—B. D. W.). You are an autocrat because you do not wish to surrender power. . .

"The fact that the minority adopts such methods in its struggle merely proves once more their *intelligenza*-like instability. It desired to convince the Party that it had not been happy in its choice of central bodies by refusing to work under the guidance of these hated central bodies. . . The refusal to be subordinated to the leadership of the center is tantamount to refusing to be in the Party, to destroying the party."

THE QUESTION OF THERMIDOR

As the opposition became more and more vicious in its attacks upon the party, it raised the peculiar slogan of "Thermidor." Beginning with doubt as to the possibility of building socialism, it ended up with convincing itself that the revo-

lution was degenerating, that Russia was going back towards capitalism, that the counter-revolution had begun.

What did they mean by their cry of "Thermidor"? Thermidor was the name of a month in the newly adopted calendar of the French revolution of 1789. In that month in the third year of the revolution, counter-revolution began. It was in the month of Thermidor that Robespierre was arrested and executed, that the newly rich speculators created by the French revolution, the traffickers in paper money and loans, the profiteers on the food scarcity and the remnants of the old regime, overthrew the revolutionary government and set up a counter-revolutionary one.

The opposition had reached the end of its development! With the cry of Thermidor, it was attacking the Party as the representative of the counter-revolution! The Soviet Government, it was declaring, is no longer a workers' government, but a government of Nepmen and Kulaks, suppressing the revolution. From the slogan of Thermidor followed with inevitable logic the duty of making a new revolution against the "counter-revolutionary" government, of overthrowing the Party through which the rule of Nepmen and Kulaks was being introduced, of destroying that party, organizing against it, demonstrating against it, fighting against it, of street demonstrations which, if successful, would lead to uprisings. Respect for party discipline, for Soviet law, these could not stand in the way. Respect for them was respect for the laws of counter-revolution and returning capitalism.

The opposition had completed its development. "Error has its logic as well as truth." The logic of their errors had led them step by step from rejection of the party program to an attack upon it, from violation of its rules of organization to violation of the laws of the Soviet government, from setting themselves up above the party to setting themselves up against the Party, from trying to rally the membership of the party to their cause to trying to rally the non-party population against the membership of their party.

THE VIOLATED PLEDGE

Expulsion was long overdue. A party is not a trade union.

In a trade union all workers belong. When we call a strike, we do not ask a worker in a shop whether he believes in this or that program; he can be a Catholic or a Ku Klux Klanner, a Republican or a Communist—we demand that he join the strike because he works in the shop that is being called out.

But a political party is different. A party is an organization of the most politically conscious and developed section of a class that it seeks to lead. Its members are united on the basis of a definite program. Whoever rejects that program does not belong in the party. Consequently the Opposition should have been expelled when they rejected the program of the party and refused to abide by the convention decisions.

But with admirable patience the party waited, gave them repeated opportunities to correct their errors, sought to convince as many as possible, win away every possible loyal party member. When finally expulsion began, the Opposition on October 16, 1926, pretended to sue for peace and made a solemn written pledge to abandon their factionalism, dissolve their secret dual party apparatus, cease their attacks upon the Party's leading committees and act like disciplined Communists. When the Party accepted this pledge and refrained from expelling them, they spread the rumor everywhere that the Party was weak and the little handful of oppositionists redoubled their attacks and plottings. It was after this solemn pledge that they set up the illegal printing plants and began the effort at street demonstrations against the party. These merited not only expulsion, but arrest. In spite of themselves they had become agents of counter-revolution.

It is no accident that they soon found themselves entangled in a white guard conspiracy also in spite of themselves. The counter-revolution supported their efforts to set up illegal printing plants. The White Guard also needed underground printing plants. They used the opposition, in spite of any desire it may have had. The Opposition hired some non-party workers in the printing plant. The political police, investigating white guard conspiracies, stumbled upon one of these plants. Party members having connections with the opposition and non-party members having connections with the

White Guard working side by side! Arrests followed and the expulsion of those directly responsible.

Even after their expulsion, when the discussion period for the last convention occurred, the expelled members were permitted to participate in the discussion and publish their views in *Pravda*, the official organ of the party. The voting revealed that their following had narrowed down to one-half of one percent of the voting membership of the party. Ninety-nine and one-half percent against one-half of one percent. I know no way of conveying the weakness of the opposition to the reader more clearly than to tell him that one-half of one percent is the amount of alcohol in near beer!

At the last convention, held in December, 1927, the opposition refused to give up its non-communist platform. It refused to abide by the decisions of the convention. All those leaders who so refused, were expelled. The unprincipled character of the opposition and its lack of unity then revealed itself by the collapse of the opposition bloc. Zinoviev and Kamenev and their followers broke with Trotsky and his followers and issued a declaration accepting the decisions of the party, recognizing their errors, renouncing their wrong platform, pledging the dissolution of their factional apparatus, and requesting readmission to the party. They were answered that their case will be reviewed at the end of six months. During that period they must prove the sincerity of their declaration by their actions and by their work. If they loyally carry out their declaration, at the end of six months they will probably be readmitted as rank and file members.

If any of the expelled conspire to form a rival party, or continue with secret printing plants and efforts to organize street demonstrations against the party and the government, they will undoubtedly be arrested. If they keep out of politics and go to work they will be treated like any other non-party worker. If they apply for readmission and show that they sincerely follow the party, accept its program and its discipline and its leadership, they will be readmitted. But they will not soon be entrusted by the workers of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with responsible positions.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OPPOSITION AND THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the leading party in the Communist International. A struggle in any section of the International is the vital concern of all sections. A struggle in the Russian section is even more so.

The Communist International, both at the sessions of its executive and at its Congress, repeatedly condemned Trotskyism, condemned the opposition and unanimously supported the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Opposition no more abided by the decisions of the Communist International than by those of its own party. On the contrary it extended the field of its work to an international scale and while trying to build up a rival party in the Soviet Union tried to build up a rival International. Had it gained more following inside and outside of the Soviet Union, this would have been more evident.

But it was obvious enough. Not finding any support in the various sections of the Communist International, it actually set up connections with expelled communists and renegades from Communism. In Germany with Maslow, Ruth Fisher, and Korsch, the ultra-leftist adventurers whom Zinoviev himself had so sharply condemned and aided to expel while he was Chairman of the Communist International. In France with the opportunist Souvarine, and the syndicalists Rosmer and Monatte, expelled for opportunism. And so on in every country. Again an unprincipled combination (Ultra-left and ultra-right). And again anti-Communist because both groups are engaged not in fighting capitalism but in publishing papers which attack their own former Communist parties, the Communist International and the Soviet Government.

Just as they had attacked the policy of their party, the Opposition attacked the policy of the Communist International

in every field. Two of the outstanding ones will have to suffice, namely, the policy of the Communist International in China and the policy of the Communist International in the question of the Anglo-Russian unity committee.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN UNITY COMMITTEE

The formation of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was one of the most important steps in the effort to form a united front of the organized workers of the world for world trade union unity. The Soviet Trade Unions, belonging to the Red Trade Union International and the British Trade Unions belonging to the Amsterdam International formed a committee of delegates from each (who were, of course, elected officials) for common action for the defense of the interests of the workers, a joint offensive against imperialism, capitalism and war and for world trade union unity.

The leaders of the British trade unions were forced to agree to this by the sentiment of the masses of their organizations. They were playing the game of swinging to the left because the masses were swinging to the left and they wanted to maintain their leadership and prevent the masses from going too far or seeking more revolutionary leadership. The Russian unions entered into this united front to gain contact with the rank and file of the British unions and to expose the fake character of the leftism of these leaders.

The unity committee was a powerful agent for radicalization of the British masses, for propaganda in every country for world trade union unity, for mobilization against war and imperialism, for defense of the Soviet Union. Zinoviev, of course, supported its formation, and even expected too much of it when he declared: "It is one of the first real guarantees of peace, it is one of the surest guarantees against intervention, a guarantee that in the course of time *we shall make reformism in Europe harmless.*"

When the leaders of the British trade unions were trying to break the Unity Committee, when they were betraying the general strike, when they were rejecting aid from the Russian unions, when they were trying to conceal their connections with the Russian unions, when it was most necessary for the

Russian unions to maintain contact with the British unions, to criticize and expose the treachery of its leaders and to expose these leaders by forcing them to break off their relations with the Russian unions under the fire of such criticism, the Opposition suddenly proposed that the Russian unions should take the initiative in breaking off the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. This was, of course, rejected and the Russian unions continued their criticism of the British leaders until the latter were openly forced to make the break with the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee and expose themselves still further.

Even worse than the error of the opposition was its arguments. If they were logically followed out, they led to an abandonment of the united front tactics altogether; and even implied to the British workers, abandonment of their unions and giving up the struggle to revolutionize them from within.

The phrases about "objecting to sitting down at the same table with these reformist leaders" sound revolutionary but are the opposite. We sit down at the same table with them, not to flirt with them or feast with them, but as one of the ways of reaching the masses that follow them, and as a means of making demands on them which will expose them when rejected. We had no illusions about these leaders when the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee was formed, but the masses had. The leaders of the British general council entered under pressure from their masses and tried to use the Committee as a leftist coloring without doing anything. The Russian Union leaders tried to expose these leaders, destroy the illusions of the masses following them, demanded that something be done of value to the working class. At the time when all this was to reach its climax came the stupid proposition of the Opposition. This was Trotsky's old trick of substituting dramatic gestures and left phrases for difficult and determined struggle. Once more the opposition shows its tendency to surrender (of course, in the grand style) to the difficulties of the work.

CHAPTER IX

THE QUESTION OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

The opposition charged the Communist International and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with every misfortune, every reversal and every defeat sustained by the working class anywhere in the world. Zinoviev, in his speech before the last plenum of the Central Executive Committee, declared that Stalin was responsible for the breaking of relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union, for the straining of relations between France and the Soviet Union, for the defeat of the Chinese revolution, and some sixteen or seventeen other similar accusations, until his indignant hearers yelled out: "You forgot the Crimean earthquake. You forgot the Mississippi floods."

The Opposition's propaganda on China is of this character—an attempt to make political capital out of the temporary defeat of the Chinese revolution.

Yet the Opposition has failed to understand the Chinese revolution, and as usual has made a series of proposals leftist in sound, which would have been disastrous.

The basis of the tactics of the Communists in the Chinese Revolution is the understanding that China is a country oppressed by foreign imperialism and that the revolution represents a developing movement which begins as a movement against foreign imperialism and its supporters within China and necessarily, in the course of its development, deepens into a struggle against feudalism, against militarism, and against capitalism.

The opposition failed in the first place to understand the relation of class forces in China, as they failed to understand the relation of class forces in the Soviet Union. They failed to see the role of the peasant and the possibilities of the development of the agrarian revolution in China. Thus Trotsky thought that the center of the revolution was the question of tariff autonomy and Radek declared that there was no feu-

dalism in China, which meant that no powerful agrarian anti-feudal movement could develop.

The opposition failed to see the difference between a revolution in an oppressed country and a revolution in an oppressor or imperialist nation. For example, Radek made a similar error in 1916, when he denounced the Irish revolution led by Jim Connelly as a "putsch" under bourgeois leadership unworthy of proletarian support. His slogan was of course ultra-leftist and ultra-proletarian. "We want no bourgeois nationalist revolutions; we are for the world proletarian revolution."

The opposition failed to see the possibilities of an alliance during a certain period of the revolution with the national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie fighting against imperialism. The tactics of the Communist International were to form such an alliance by the entrance of the Communist Party into the Kuo Min Tang while it maintained organizational independence and the right of independent propaganda and criticism of the acts of the Kuo Min Tang.

The problem was to get into this powerful organization, which existed before the Communist Party was formed and before the proletariat had developed as an independent force, to gain contact with the awakening masses that were following the Kuo Min Tang, to push that organization as far to the left as possible, to deepen the revolution as rapidly as possible, to develop the forces of the working class and the peasantry as rapidly as possible, and to break with the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie who, in the early stages, were leading the revolution, only when it was no longer possible to work with them. In other words, the correct tactics were to stay in the Kuo Min Tang as long as it remained revolutionary in its character, as long as it carried on a real fight, and as long as it permitted freedom to the Communists to organize inside and outside of that body.

If the Communists had failed to enter the powerful Kuo Min Tang, when it was at the head of the great masses, or if the Communists had left prematurely while the Kuo Min Tang still enjoyed the confidence of the masses as the leader

in the struggle against imperialism, they would have remained a tiny sect, separated from the masses and from the struggle. Yet the opposition proposed such a break with the Kuomintang at a time when the latter still enjoyed the confidence of the masses.

By remaining in the Kuo Min Tang as long as possible, the Communist Party of China succeeded in building itself from a tiny group of a few thousand into a party of 50 or 60,000 at the time of the attack upon it. It succeeded in arousing the proletariat and the peasantry to independent action. It succeeded in exposing the bourgeoisie when they became terrified by this independent action of the workers and peasants and went over into the camp of the reaction, so that when the Chinese Party broke with the bourgeoisie and was sharply attacked, it was no longer an attack against an isolated sect but an attack against the leader of the workers and peasants, an attack upon the entire working class and peasant class.

True, the Chinese Communist Party made various mistakes in this difficult and complicated manoeuvre, being an inexperienced party in a swiftly-moving situation and inevitably absorbing many wavering elements in its rapid growth. But the Communist International was quick to correct these errors and on the whole the party has conducted itself well and accomplished tremendous results. The proof of it is that the Party is now recognized by the toiling masses of workers and peasants of China as their leader, and the bourgeois and militarist leaders of the now discredited Kuomintang as their enemies and executioners, whereas when the Communists first entered the Kuo Min Tang, they had no mass following and the workers and peasants just awakening to revolutionary struggle, followed the still revolutionary bourgeoisie and the Kuo Min Tang.

The opposition points out that the Party has now broken with the Kuo Min Tang and says "I told you so." Or "Didn't we tell you to do that long ago?" That is precisely the trouble, however, with the proposals of the Opposition on China. When they proposed a break with the Kuomintang,

it would have been disastrous to the development of the Chinese revolution.

Similarly, the opposition proposed the premature raising of the slogan: "Build Soviets" at the same time that they proposed withdrawal from the Kuo Min Tang, in other words, while the masses were still following that party.

The revolution is now entering a higher stage, where the Communist Party leads and the workers and peasants no longer follow the bourgeoisie but struggle as an independent force. Now the slogan of "Build the Soviets" is being properly raised and the masses understand it, the time is ripe for it. The opposition again steps forward with an "I-told-you-so," which reveals that they do not understand that a revolutionary movement has stages, and that a slogan which is ripe for one period is wrong for another, and that revolutionary slogans raised at the wrong time may sound revolutionary but are against the interests of the revolution. This is another important lesson that American workers can learn from a study of the controversy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

As to the defeat of the Chinese revolution—the opposition makes two errors in this connection. First, that a defeat necessarily proves that the Communist leadership is at fault. We cannot be guaranteed that every struggle we undertake will end in victory. If we wait until we are 100% sure of victory before struggling, there will be no victories and no struggles. The defeat of the revolution of 1905 is a typical example. It was Plechanoff, the Menshevik, who played the part of the wiseacre after the defeat and said the workers should never have taken up arms. But 1905 made possible the victory of 1917.

The second mistake of the opposition is to assume that the revolution in China is decisively defeated. It has suffered several reverses, but continues to broaden and deepen, to swing ever fresh masses of workers and peasants into action, and despite reverses, to move onwards towards final victory.

CHAPTER X

THE DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

From day to day, signs multiply that world imperialism is planning an open attack upon the Soviet Union. Its very existence arouses their hatred and their fear. It is a constant inspiration to all the oppressed peoples of the world and to the workers of every land. Its very existence heartens the workers to new struggles. Its achievements in the building of socialism are a continuous demonstration that the workers can get on better without their bosses and a perpetual clarion-call to struggle against the capitalist system with its exploitation, its misery, its unemployment and its wars. Therefore, the exploiters and oppressors are determined that the Soviet Union must be destroyed.

The Soviet Union is devoting all its energies, on the one hand, to postponing the attack upon it as long as possible and, on the other, to preparing itself against such an attack. Still, it is obvious that the combined imperialist forces of the world will be infinitely better equipped with poison gasses, with airplanes, with munitions, with resources, and that the Soviet Union would be doomed to destruction if it had to depend exclusively upon its own resources for its defense. The one hope of the victory of the working class in such a war lies in the fact that the armies that will be sent against the Soviet Union will consist of workers and that they will defend the workers' land against the attack of their own master class.

In this situation, the class-conscious workers of the big imperialist countries and particularly, of course, the Communists, must make every effort to rally the workers of the world to the defense of the Soviet Union, to deepen their understanding of what the workers of Soviet Russia are accomplishing, to strengthen their love for the one land that the working class can truly call its own.

In the face of this necessity, where is the opposition leading? The opposition raises the cry that the Communist Party

of the Soviet Union does not defend the interests of the proletariat, that the Communist International is no fit leader of the working class. They circulate slanderous propaganda in every country through renegades from communism and enemies of the Communist parties, in which they declare that the Soviet government is not a workers' and peasants' government, but a Nepmen's and Kulaks' government, that the Communist Party is not the party of the working class, but the enemy of the working class. With all of this propaganda, they objectively play the role of helping imperialism to prepare its attacks upon the Soviet Union.

If the Soviet government is not a workers' government, then the question that the workers of the world will ask themselves is: what reason have we to defend the Soviet Union in the forthcoming war? If the Communist Party and the Communist International are not fighting for the interests of the workers, then what reason have we to follow the leadership of the Communist International against capitalism and against imperialism? Such is the real effect of the slanderous propaganda of the opposition against the Soviet Union and against the Communist International.

If they were successful, if the working class were to believe their slanders, then they would be strengthening the imperialist armies, lessening the possibility of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, strengthening the forces preparing to attack the Soviet Union, and weakening the forces preparing to defend it. Their propaganda is the more dangerous because it is disguised in the name of Communism.

Similarly, the opposition weakens the forces of defense inside the Soviet Union. By trying to split the Party that leads the working class, by trying to rally backward non-party elements against the Communist Party, by violating the discipline of the Party and the laws of the Soviet Government, they are objectively playing the role of tearing down from within the defenses of the Soviet Union. Inside the country as well as outside of it, they tend to paralyze the will of the working class and to encourage its enemies.

The revolutionary character of any group or party is not tested by what they say, but by where it leads.

The world is divided into two camps on the question of the Soviet Union. For or against—defense or attack. The activities of the opposition lead it inevitably into the camp of the attackers, into the camp of the enemies.

How far the opposition has gone in this direction is proved not only by their acts but even by their words. For example, Trotsky wrote a letter to the Control Commission on July 11, 1927, taking up the question of defense of the Soviet Union. In this letter, he drew an analogy between himself and the Clemenceau group that was fighting in opposition to the French government in 1914 while the Germans were within 80 kilometers of Paris. In this letter, he implies that in the event of attack upon the Soviet Union, he would feel it his duty to imitate Clemenceau, to sweep out the present leadership and put in its place the leadership of the opposition.

But how could he do this? To whom would he appeal? To the Party? The Party has already rejected his leadership. He has less than half of one percent of the Party behind him. Surely half of one percent could not defeat 99½ percent. He would have to go outside of the Party. He would have to appeal to the non-party masses. He would find himself supported by the enemies of the party and would be in the camp of the enemies in spite of himself. That is the meaning of the attempted street demonstrations of November 7. That is where the path of the Opposition leads. And that is what makes so important the issues involved in this discussion. That is what makes it so important that every worker should understand what the Soviet Union is, what problems it faces, what progress it is making, what achievements it is accomplishing, what the Communist Party is, and what the leadership of the Communist International means to the workers of the world. That is what makes it so important that we should struggle with all our energy to refute the slanderous attacks of the opposition. The struggle against the opposition is part of the struggle for the defense of the Soviet Union. The struggle against the opposition is part of the fight against the war dan-

ger, against the forces of imperialism and reaction. In the face of this attack it is the duty of the awakened workers to redouble their efforts to let the workers of this country know what the Russian revolution means and what it has accomplished. We must make every worker understand that the workers of the Soviet Union are building socialism, that the workers of the Soviet Union are better off today than they were yesterday, that the government of the Soviet Union is a working class government, that the Communist Party is the defender of the interests of the workers, that the Communist International is the leader of the workers of the world in their struggle against capitalism.

In the war that is coming, every worker must be rallied to the defense of the government of the Soviet Union, every worker must rally to the aid of the workers' army and the workers' government. If the truth is known about the Russian revolution and the achievements of the workers in the Soviet Union, we need have no fear as to the outcome of the struggle. It will end with the victory of the working class, with the defeat of the workers' enemies and the sweeping of capitalism and imperialism from the face of the earth.

PART II

AMERICA DISCUSSES THE OPPOSITION

CHAPTER I

TYPICAL VIEWPOINTS

THE controversy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has caused widespread discussion in the United States. The discussion has extended far beyond the circles of the Communist movement, and its closest sympathizers. Renegades from Communism and consistent opponents of the Communist movement have picked it up and sought to settle old grudges or find new "justifications" for old positions of antagonism to the Soviet Union and the Communist Party. The capitalist press has filled columns with information and misinformation, both editorially and in the form of news. The Jewish daily *Forward* and other conscious enemies of the Communist movement have tried to "fish in troubled waters." Jewish nationalists have made of the question a "Jewish issue." Old Mensheviks like Abramovitch have become sudden defenders of "true Communism" in the person of Trotsky, against those who are abandoning Communist doctrine. "Trotsky" is a visionary" say these new-found friends of world uprising, "but he stands for the world revolution. Stalin is realistic, but he succeeds by abandoning the world revolution—by unfaithfulness to Bolshevik principles."

It is interesting to examine these discussions by non-Communists, ex-Communists, anti-Communists. They throw additional light on the nature of the controversy. They show where the hopes of our enemies are grounded. And they throw far more light on the "American scene" itself, on the nature of the various currents within and without the labor movement, on the real attitude of various groups and periodicals toward the Soviet Union, its Communist Party and the Communist International.

Unfortunately, limitations of space and of time to make the analysis prevent me from taking up more than a few typical reactions to the controversy and from analyzing any of them very exhaustively. I have therefore had to limit myself to a casual examination of articles in the following papers and periodicals: *Modern Quarterly*, *Volkszeitung*, *Advance*, *Nation*, *New Republic*, *World Tomorrow*, *Jewish Daily Forward*, *Reflex*, and *New York Times*. Special attention has been paid to Eastman and Lore and their respective satellites. All matters treated here are necessarily fragmentary.

In most of these comments on the controversy in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, certain type arguments and viewpoints recur again and again.

TYPICAL VIEWPOINTS

Chief of these are:

1. An attack on Communist discipline, a denial of the necessity of discipline in a Communist Party, a denial of the right of a Communist Party to limit general discussion to a discussion period before a convention and a demand that it turn itself from a party of action into a permanent debating society, a denial of the authority of conventions and their right to settle anything, a denial of the right of a party to expel those who fundamentally disagree with its program and who refuse to accept and abide by its decisions.

These attacks come principally from the Mensheviks and Socialists, who have always denied the Leninist concept of the Party as a fighting organization built on the principles of democratic centralism, and from renegades and ex-Communists expelled for refusing to carry out the party program, for violations of discipline and for un-Communist and anti-Communist activities.

Such arguments are found in the Socialist *Forward*, in the writings of the Mensheviks like Abramovich, and in the writings of the expelled Communists Lore, Salutsky and Eastman, where these arguments form the chief matter to the exclusion of any serious discussion on the fundamental political differences.

FREE LANCE INTELLECTUALS

The same arguments are made by intellectuals on the fringe of the revolutionary movement who have never been willing to subordinate their "well-developed" egos to the collective judgment and discipline of the Party, and to do the difficult work and stand the consequences of being a Communist in America, where it is far from an easy task, and where those who worship only the God of success cannot see flashing successes from day to day.

Such elements come nearer to our movement when the revolution flames up abroad or when the Party is scoring some notable success as in Passaic, but move away again when the labor movement suffers defeat, when the Party has to retreat, when it goes through a painful period of controversy, when it is under sharp attack—in short, when it is seen that a revolutionary movement is not built overnight and that much patience, determination, devotion and unpicturesque and undramatic hard work (often "backstage" rather than "in the limelight") is required to build our movement and prepare it for leading a still politically backward and divided and disorganized working class to victory over the most powerful capitalist class in the world.

Such elements have always sought for "reasons" and arguments to justify their not being Communists. They have found justification in being sniffingly superior persons, far, far above the battle and able to sit in judgment, to jest and sneer about, to knock and criticize and to feel dreadfully superior to a movement which they would earn the right and the ability to criticize only by being active in it and helping to strengthen it.

They see in the arguments of Trotsky and Zinoviev, in the attacks of the Opposition upon the party, "Communist arguments" to justify their old position, "Communist reasons" for not being members of the Communist Party!

ATTACK ON THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

2. The second type of viewpoint advanced is an attack upon the dictatorship of the proletariat, a denial of the necessity on

the part of the Soviet Union surrounded by hostile capitalist countries to continue its restrictions on freedom of speech and press.

The *New York Times* puts the question very clearly in an editorial comment on the defeat of the Opposition. It declares that one of the results of the defeat will be "the extinction of the feeble spark of democracy discernible in Trotsky's demand for free discussion. . . . Had that been granted it is not inconceivable that the despised bourgeois freedom of speech might have been extended with time beyond the confines of the Communist Party."

THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM

3. The third type of viewpoint deals with the question of the correctness of Communist theory—with the possibility of constructing socialism in the Soviet Union.

Out of the mouths of Communists, the enemies of Communism try to find new arguments to substantiate their old theory that the Bolsheviks were wrong, that they should not have seized power in November, 1917, that Russia is economically unripe for the building of socialism, that the peasants are incurably anti-socialist, that the Russian revolution is doomed to failure and a return to capitalism. These opponents of Communist theory range from the Mensheviks and *Forward Socialists* to the *New York Times*.

A CLEVER MANOEUVRE

At every turning point of the revolution, the more enlightened of them has used the subtle trick of hastening to approve the measures taken by the Communist party and the Soviet government but has interpreted them as "realistic steps away from Communism." Thus they interpreted the NEP, the grain tax, the concessions policy, the effort to secure recognition by various governments, etc.

While Lenin was alive, he was treated by them as a crafty realist determined to hold on to power by sacrificing his principles, and the Workers Opposition and other opposition movements were the unpractical dreamers and visionaries faithful to those ideals which could never work in the real world

where human nature is unchanging and hostile to Communism. Now this argument is applied by Abramovitch, by the *New York Times*, etc., to the latest controversy.

The subtlety of their method will be apparent when you realize that they really agree, as they have always agreed, with Trotsky's wrong estimate of the peasantry as the enemy of the working class and with the Trotskyite viewpoint of the impossibility of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, but they declare that Trotsky does not recognize these things, while Stalin does and is realistically but secretly making the Soviet Union a peasant and a capitalist government.

4. As an offshoot of the theory that the peasant is essentially hostile to the working class, that the alliance between them is against the nature of the peasant, that the peasant will become articulate and lead Russia back to capitalism—come grave explanations to the effect that Stalin is an Asiatic and a peasant, that the Soviet Union is now a peasant government, that "Stalin's victory means the peasants are the ruling class."

Closely related to the above are the theory of the degeneration of a ruling group, the theory of bonapartism, the theory of Thermidor, all of which the opposition has unconsciously absorbed from Menshevik and other bourgeois sources, and now the Mensheviks and other defenders of capitalism hasten to quote these viewpoints not as their own, but as the viewpoints of the "true Bolsheviks" themselves.

THE THEORY OF DEGENERATION

5. The Opposition has also provided the enemies of the Soviet Union with new ammunition in their efforts to prove that capitalism is eternal because it is in harmony with "eternal human nature." If you make the rich poor and abolish the ruling class, a new rich and a new ruling clique will spring up. It happened in the French revolution with Thermidor and Bonaparte and the victory of the speculators and new rich of France. It is happening in Russia with the Kulak, Nepman and Bureaucracy with Stalin as the Bonaparte and the fall of Trotsky (Danton) and Zinoviev (Robespierre) as the Thermidor. So runs this argument.

THE QUESTION OF DEFENSE

6. Most dangerous, although least clearly expressed because the capitalist press does not dare talk frankly about it, is the comfort being derived from the slanders of the Opposition against the Soviet Union in connection with the approaching imperialist attack upon the Soviet Union.

In the material examined below, the reader will find one or more of the above matters appearing with all sorts of variations and in all sorts of combinations, also with varying subjective intentions and motives. I begin first with Max Eastman and his admirers because of the active role that he has played in disseminating misinformation concerning the subject in the United States, England and France. Then Lore and those connected with him, such as Salutsky. Then the Liberal press. And finally the viewpoint of the *New York Times*, organ of finance capital.

CHAPTER II

THE GOSSIP OF MAX EASTMAN

The opposition has rallied choice elements to its cause in the various countries of the world. In Germany it is the expelled and renegade Communists Maslow, Fisher, Korsch and Katz, whose activities today consist not in fighting capitalism or the government of Germany, but in fighting the Communist International and the government of the Soviet Union. In France it is Souvarine, another expelled communist, who publishes a paper whose whole fire is directed against the Communist International and the Soviet Union. And so one may go from country to country and in each it is the renegade, the ex-communist, who becomes the outstanding apostle of the views of the opposition. In the United States, this noble role is played by Max Eastman.

Eastman illustrates admirably the kind of elements that are attracted to support of the Opposition and the international connections between them.

In 1925, Eastman published a scurrilous book of old-maidish catty gossip on the controversy in the C. P. S. U. under the title "Since Lenin Died." The attacks upon the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leadership were of so vicious a character, so full of falsification and scandal based even in many cases on White Guard rumor-factory products,* that Trotsky felt called upon to repudiate them.

Eastman, whose *aplomb* and self-assurance are boundless, no doubt explains away Trotsky's attack upon his book as "forced upon him by the bureaucracy." The only trouble with this explanation is that it does not jibe with Eastman's

*Eastman even publishes an engagingly frank footnote to one of the choice tidbits of gossip which reads: "There is no mystery about my possession of this and the foregoing information; it is all contained in official documents stolen by counter-revolutionists and published in Russian, at Berlin, in the *Sozialistichesky Viestnik*. (Like the Macdonald forgeries and the Hearst Mexican documents—B. D. W.) This paper, which is a remnant of Menshevism, publishes a great deal of nonsense and irresponsible rumor about Russia, but the authenticity of these documents is recognized by the Bolsheviks (!). I took pains of assuring myself of it absolutely before leaving Russia . . ." (Mr. Eastman could teach Mr. Hearst a thing or two about how to testify before Senate committees on "stolen documents"!)

description of Trotsky as "a proud man," "selfless and fearless," etc. Nor does it harmonize with the character of Trotsky's denunciation of the book.

Thus Trotsky declares:

TROTSKY'S REPUDIATION OF EASTMAN

"Eastman's book is bare of any political value . . . approaches the events of the inner life of our Party without a serious political criterion, in a purely psychological manner . . . he is nourishing the Menshevik legend on the Bonapartist character, the pretorian guard character of our army. . . .

"Eastman's assertions that the Central Committee confiscated pamphlets or articles of mine in 1923 or 1924 or at any time, are untrue. . . . Another false assertion is that Lenin offered me the post of chairman of the Council of People's Commissars."

". . . conclusions placing our Party and its leaders in such a light that the same attentive and thoughtful reader is inevitably forced to the question: *What bonds can unite Eastman and this party, or Eastman and the revolution led by this Party?*" (Emphasis mine.—B. D. W.)

Eastman's book was published in Great Britain and the United States and translated in whole or in part into other languages. Opponents of Communism and lovers of scandal and gossip made good customers for a book which attacked the leadership of the Communist Party and the Communist International as : "the machine" (p. 33), "the heads of the bureaucracy" (p. 35); which describes the conventions of the Party that leads the working class in the Soviet Union in this wise: "The performance of this convention (the XIIIth) was a continuance of the deliberately unscrupulous campaign carried on during the winter (p. 98)." "Nobody can tell how much Trotsky's sickness played into the hands of his enemies. It is certain that they consciously reckoned with it in starting this unscrupulous campaign." (p. 96). "It was undoubtedly one of the most perfectly packed conventions ever held in the history of the world." (The whole world, no less—and in all history!) "Their (the delegates'—B.D.W.) performance reminded me of nothing so much as the Armistice Day exercises in a patriotic American private school."

(p. 90.) "Their speeches (those of the leaders—B. D. W.) and articles . . . would be thrown out of a prize essay contest for defective children." (p. 51.)

AN "ORPHAN" PARTY

The party that made the revolution and is building socialism in the face of incredible obstacles, Eastman describes in such language as is employed in a description of how a single speech of Zinoviev "stampeded the whole Russian Communist Party, and produced a condition of intellectual mob-hysteria that lasted all winter." (p. 60.) Or again: "When Lenin was gone, the party was left, not only with the wisdom he had taught them, but also with the irresponsibility, the childlike dependence upon his will and judgment. A large family of orphans suddenly found the sixth part of the terrestrial globe in their hands . . . and no practice in the art of tackling big problems independently." (pp. 100-101.) And so on to the point of nausea. . . .

But even at the risk of nauseating the working-class reader, I must make one more quotation from Eastman's "analysis." It is of interest as an evidence of the profound intellectual snobbery of Eastman's attitude towards the working-class and its party.

Eastman feels called upon to explain how it is that the Communist Party so overwhelmingly repudiated Trotsky, how it is that the workers have again and again rejected his viewpoints, and why it is that such little support as he had and retains is predominantly among intellectuals of petty-bourgeois origin. His answer is that it is "not only because the workers are inherently more subject to organizational management (he means manipulation—B. D. W.) than the intellectual" but also because of the "intellectual complexity of the trick which had been played upon them."

EASTMAN USES THE *Times*

A renegade radical who writes such stuff as that naturally discovers (as so many of our tired radicals have discovered) that he has the columns of the *New York Times* open to him

for further performances. In October of 1926, Eastman availed himself of the privilege to publish in that capitalist journal a new slanderous attack upon the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This new attack repeated some of the old gossip and some new. It ended with a declaration that the victory of the present leadership means the rule of the landowners and the bourgeoisie, "and once more the workers will have been betrayed, and after all, the famous Russian revolution will not be more than a bourgeois revolution."

HIS INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

The *New York Times* paid Eastman a substantial sum of money for this latest attack upon the Soviet Union and when he was reproached for receiving money for attacks on the Soviet Union in a capitalist paper, he sent a letter to the *Nation* in which he declared that he had not kept the money but had turned it over to French Communists for use in the service of the Communist movement. Some time later, the renegade ex-communist Souvarine, who publishes a paper which dedicates itself to the task of attacking the Communist International, the French and Russian Communist Parties, and the Soviet Government, published an acknowledgment of having received money from Eastman, thus showing the international connections between all these renegades who, in the guise of supporting the proposition, attack the Communist Party and the Soviet Union.

EASTMAN REVISES MARX

Eastman's activities have not stopped there. He has proceeded from an attack on the Russian Party and the Communist International and their leadership to an attack upon Communism in general, of course in the guise of "improving" Communism, of making it "more scientific;" of saving Communist theory and practice from its own baser nature—from its "metaphysical character."

This "theoretical" contribution to "the science of revolution" was in part printed piecemeal in the columns of the *Modern Quarterly* (January-April, 1927) and the *New Masses* (September, October, November, 1927).

The entire attack on the Communist revolutionary viewpoint, theory and practice has finally appeared in book form in the United States after previous publication in France and England. It is entitled "Marx and Lenin" with the sub-title "The Science of Revolution."

Written in the name of saving Leninism from its own theory and purifying Marxism from its "non-scientific and metaphysical" character, it is a general attack upon the whole of revolutionary science. Its method is to set up a grotesque caricature of Marxism, a Marxism that would make its founders turn in their graves. Having set up this straw man, Eastman proceeds bravely to knock him down and tear him to pieces.

In its viewpoint, it returns to utopianism, mixed not as Eastman believes with the psychology of Freud but with the antiquated psychology of Jeremy Bentham, a metaphysical psychology of "the real nature of man" (p. 191), which, of course, is timeless and unchanged by the changing material conditions in which man lives and works and learns and thinks and feels.

WHAT'S "WRONG" WITH MARXISM

Eastman "refutes" Marxian economics, the dialectic method, the materialist interpretation of history, the "wrong" Marxian attitude towards Darwin, the "wrong" Marxian way of meeting revisionism (of which "ism" Eastman's work is one of the worst specimens), the "wrong" answer of Lenin to the anarchists, the "wrong" answer of Marx to the Utopians, the "wrong" answer of the Bolsheviks to the Mensheviks, etc., etc., etc.

He clamorously puts metaphysics and mysticism out of the front door on every page, or at least declares he is doing it, but energetically hauls them in again by the back door.

It is not my purpose to review the book here. There is, however, one element in the book which concerns us for the purpose of this article, and that is the question of its relation to the Opposition discussion.

The jacket of the American edition contains an interesting

line in italics which reads: "This book has nothing to do with the so-called Trotsky controversy." Nevertheless, we cannot take Eastman's (or the jacket's) word for it. The book has much to do with the "Trotsky controversy."

A THEORETICAL BASIS FOR "THERMIDOR"

I do not, of course, mean to imply for an instant that Zinoviev or Trotsky share any of the stupid "theories" advanced in this book. But there are certain chapters in the book which state in a generalized and heavy abstract theoretical form Eastman's views on some of the issues involved in the controversy in the Russian Party. This is especially true of such chapters as "Bureaucratism and Revolutionary Education."

A quotation or two will suffice to illustrate his method.

"A pious repetition of these ideological phrases [of Marxism] will tend to replace the active science of revolution, and *provide a cover for the rebirth of the old system.*" pp. 201, 202. (This is the "Thermidor" theory restated in the jargon of Eastmanian "revolutionary science."—B. D. W.)

"That the Hegelian-Marxian metaphysics plays straight into the hands of this enemy, needs no demonstration. . . . For animistic mysteries have always been employed by an aristocracy to befuddle the masses, and the moment the danger arises of a 'revolutionary' aristocracy—a danger which only fools will deny—this materialistic animism stands ready to do its work. . . . Being a religion, it is the natural property of a priestly class. . . ." (pp. 202, 203.) (This is Eastman's way of expressing the theory of the degeneration of the leadership of the Communist Party.)

"Moreover, if Lenin had understood his own thinking, he could have left in his place a body of men better trained to carry it forward than those he has left. . . ." (p. 205.)

"They have established in the place of it [of 'a great system of education'] this great solemn fetish of dialectic materialism, which is nothing but the old shoes of the Almighty God." (p. 206.)

At the same time, it is interesting to note that in his earlier book, "Since Lenin Died," Eastman already incubated the germ of the present work. Thus we find on pages 112 and 113 of "Since Lenin Died" such passages as: "It is not difficult to see the connection between these three points of dis-

agreement between Trotsky and the triumvirate. Underlying them all is that one conflict . . . between the 'abstract agitatorial' attitude and the attitude of a Marxian engineer engaged with the 'concrete life problems' of the revolution. . . .

“. . . a lapse into the old vague talk, the emotional self-deception, the separation of theory from practice, the *practical Utopianism* [emphasis Eastman's] of the pre-Lenin days [all this is Eastman's affectionate way of referring to Marxism]—that is what the triumvirate represents in these real disputes with Trotsky.” Similar passages may be found in other parts of the book.

THE UNION OF THE EXPELLED

Finally, it is interesting to note that such opponents of Marxism-Leninism are the kind of support that the Opposition has found in America. That in every country, it is the ex-Communist, the expelled Communist, the anti-Communist, who is attacking Communism *in its own name*, that takes up the banner of the Opposition in its struggles against the Communist International and Leninism. It is true that Eastman was repudiated by Trotsky (although all too gently), but Eastman proves to be tied up with Souvarine whom Trotsky never repudiated. Add to these Maslow and Fisher, Roland Holst the “God-seeker,” the Italian renegades weary of the struggle against Fascism, Pollipopulous, the opponent of Macedonian self-determination and proponent of the liquidation of the Communist Party of Greece, and all the other petty-bourgeois revolutionists gone mad and tired radicals looking for a “Communist” reason for not participating in the Communist struggle and a chance to justify their absence from the ranks of the Communist Party or treachery to the cause of Communism in the name of Communism itself.

SAMUEL SCHMALHAUSEN AND THE FREE SPIRIT

Among those “near-Communist,” “also-Communist” and revolutionary radical free-lancers “above Communist dogma” and Communist discipline, who group themselves around the

Modern Quarterly, is a marked trend towards support of the Opposition in the C. P. S. U. and the seeking of "revolutionary" justification for having remained outside of and "superior" to Communist discipline. What was before shame-faced evasion now becomes heroic defiance. One can line up with Trotsky and "defy the apparatus." There is "revolutionary" warrant for rejecting discipline. It can now be done in the name of Communism itself, in the name of saving Communism from the petty dictatorship of the bureaucracy. In fact, several of the little band of "free spirits" that rally around this free "Magazine of the Newer Spirit" timidly flirt with the idea of turning it into an organ of the Opposition in this country and more openly flirt with Max Eastman to become the leader of such a movement.*

Samuel Schmalhausen writes a smart-alecky article in the November *Modern Quarterly*, in sophomoric style, bristling with puns, alliteration and wise-cracks, which makes up in quantity for what it lacks in quality. It takes up 35 pages of the *Quarterly*. It consists of "criticizing" in turn liberals, socialists, ex-Communists and Communists, and must, no doubt, have given much self-satisfaction to the writer in enabling him to square a lot of old grudges and to feel superior to so many of his contemporaries, quite a few of whom he has scarcely earned the right to criticize.

The article would be of no concern here were it not for the fact that the few whom Schmalhausen singles out to praise in the course of his 35 pages of knocks show a definite tendency on the part of the author to urge the formation of a new party of an "also-Communist" character with Eastman as its leader. This is the more interesting because Schmalhausen is no accidental contributor but has been helping to shape the editorial policies of the *Modern Quarterly*. Were it not for this fact it would be unexplainable how the *Modern Quarterly* or any other periodical with similar pretensions could give 35 pages or 35 lines to such puerile stuff.

*NOTE: Calverton, editor of the *Quarterly*, has disclaimed the viewpoint of Schmalhausen and opposes any suggestion of making the *Quarterly* an opposition organ.

For Lore he has only one reproach—that he is wasting his “splendid socialist . . . abilities” on German-speaking Americans. He pleads with Lore to “devote his abilities to the American situation among working-class Americans.”

A MOSES FOR TIRED RADICALS

Of Max Eastman he demands active leadership of the American revolutionary movement. Eastman is a “Bolshevik with a mind of his own.” (Most Bolsheviks in America, according to Schmalhausen, “never know what to think until they have received orders and specifications as to how to proceed with their matutinal cerebation.”)

“Eastman’s socialism has the high merit of being based not only on the logic of revolution, but as emphatically upon the psychology of human behavior. It is high time that Eastman faced the duty of becoming the leader of the younger generation of revolutionary radicals whose one deep need is a leadership like his, at once courageous and far-seeing.”

Come thou and lead us out of the wilderness of tired radicalism and supersophisticated cynicism! is the prayer of Samuel Schmalhausen. “There is a lot of splendid courage among our Communist comrades: what they lack is insight. . . . More will and less reverie, great comrade!”

So Eastman has gotten unto himself a disciple. . . . Like master, like man! The kind of disciple can be judged by the “activities” of Mr. Schmalhausen in recent years. Or by smart alliterations about Communist discipline—“the rigid ritual of American Communism oftentimes in practice a left-wing fascism. . . .” (!)

It is interesting to contrast the gentle treatment given Lore and the hero-worship given Eastman with the venomous scurrility with which Schmalhausen approaches the best type of Communist leadership developed in America as symbolized in the person of C. E. Ruthenberg: “The ruthless Ruthenbergs [Schmalhausen would sacrifice anything for the sake of an alliteration] love hate too wholeheartedly to be trusted with the sane and scientific task of recreating civilization.”

CHAPTER III

LORE'S BRIDGE TO SOCIALISM

The *Volkszeitung* is edited by Ludwig Lore, who tries to run it as an organ for the expression of his personal opinions and his personal aims. He is a former member of the Workers (Communist) Party who was expelled by the Party for incurable opportunism and for refusal to submit to Party discipline. He has a close intellectual kinship with the viewpoints of Trotsky and translates the errors of Trotskyism to the American environment. He exhibited over a period of years a lack of understanding of class relationships in the United States, a failure to understand the role of the farmer, the possibility of an alliance between the workers and the exploited sections of the farming population, and an inability to understand the possibilities of an alliance with oppressed colonial peoples against American imperialism.

In the Communist International, he supported by editorials in his paper, which he ran as an organ for the expression of his personal views, every opponent of the line of the International. He supported editorially Serrati, Levi, Brandler, Trotsky and others. He had contempt for party discipline, was an opponent of the necessity for illegal work, and wished to keep a reputation for being a revolutionary by abstract revolutionary propaganda only. The reader will recognize on a changed and diminished American scale many of the characteristics of Trotskyism from the above description, especially if there is added to it the fact that Lore was and remains a master in the art of cloaking his incurable opportunism in revolutionary phraseology.

The *Volkszeitung* pretends not to take sides in the controversy, in order to fish the better in troubled waters to catch a few fish of its own. Lore's position is a confused one and the confusion is twice confounded by the fact that the opposition represented an unprincipled alliance of the man Lore most admires, Leon Trotsky, and the man he most hates, Gregory

Zinoviev. This enables Lore to attribute the "bad points" in the opposition program to Zinoviev and to excuse Trotsky. For example, in an editorial of November 27, Lore writes:

"This program (the program of the opposition) contains points so unrealistic that one (!) would not wish to credit them to a Trotsky or a Rakovsky . . . (follows an example of a reproach level by the opposition against the government for failing to declare war on Chang Tso Lin after the Peking raid). "Such bravado," continues Lore, "one might perhaps have expected of a Zinoviev, but that Trotsky or Rakovsky should so lightly invoke a war of destruction against the Soviet Union . . . that one would still a few months ago have considered an impossibility."

In another place he writes: "At that time he (Trotsky) still enjoyed the bitter hating opposition of Zinoviev, who now—alas!—is with him." That "alas!" speaks volumes as to why Lore cannot give unqualified support to the Opposition.

But even to his old pet abomination, Zinoviev, Lore became more gentle when Zinoviev had met adversity and was following in the camp of Trotsky. Thus he writes in his editorial of December 20, entitled "Blind, Unconditional Submission":

"He (Zinoviev) was shoved aside and driven from the Party which he—however one may regard this in our opinion shame of the revolution—for ten years had served to the best of his ability."

Lore has always had a close ideological kinship with the viewpoints of Trotsky. His hatred for Zinoviev, which, as is usual with Lore, he translates into personal antipathy, was in its origin due to the fact that Zinoviev as chairman of the Comintern symbolized at that time the discipline and the line of the Communist International against which Lore fought.

Hence it is with a sigh of relief and a determination to support more loyally the Trotskyist Opposition, that Lore hails the news that Zinoviev is trying to make his peace with the Party and find his way back into its ranks. In the *Volkszeitung* of January 17, Lore writes:

“Leon Trotsky (and his followers) had about six months ago united with the Zinoviev-Kamenev group. Our readers are informed about this, and our readers also know that we considered this bedfellowship one of Trotsky's most fatal mistakes. This Leon Trotsky has also in the meantime realized. The various Canossa steps of Trotsky in the last year (by this Lore means his attempts to reconcile himself with the Party), such as the pledge of October, 1926) were attempts to meet the necessities of this coalition Canossa steps which were never sincerely intended and therefore always very quickly disavowed by the ‘penitent’ and doubtlessly roused much mistrust against him—Trotsky—in those very circles whose support he needed. (Lore holds Zinoviev responsible for Trotsky's not having made a sharper fight against the Communist Party.—B. D. W.)

Of Zinoviev, Lore writes in the same editorial: “The good man had reckoned on the loyalty of his submissive hirelings in the different non-Russian parties and had badly missed his reckoning.” (Such is Lore's picture of the Communist International.)

The editorial ends: “The leaders of the C. P. of the Soviet Union are making it hellishly difficult for the friends of the Soviet Union always to keep before their eyes the fact that it is a leadership endowed with the confidence of the thinking workers, which is carrying on this base policy of revenge.”

In spite of such editorials and in spite of a systematic propagation of all the worst slanders of the Opposition and even a readiness to pick up rumors from counter-revolutionary sources in Berlin, Riga, and any other rumor-factory on the face of the earth, Lore is very eager to give added weight to his attacks on the Soviet Union and on the Communist Party by pretending to be “above both factions.”

On the matter of discipline Lore is particularly vicious, —much worse than the capitalist press. Thus in a news dispatch of December 5, we read: “His (Stalin's) attitude was that of an inquisitor of conscience. He demanded submission, not merely in acts but also in thoughts.” Right below this

“news” dispatch is printed a brief extract from Lea’s “History of the Spanish Inquisition,” which reads:

“An imperfect confession (*confessio imperfecta*) was every confession that did not bring also information on heretics known to the penitent. Such a confession was technically regarded as a backsliding and punished with death.” Such is Lore’s view of the demand made by the Party that the Opposition should give up its anti-Leninist views if it wished to remain part of the Party that is recruited and united on the basis of a Leninist program and should dissolve its caucuses. And such is Lore’s method of portraying the fact that the Opposition, having once promised to disband its caucuses and violated its pledge, is no longer trusted and is required to give its connection, mailing lists, etc., to the Party so that the Party can make sure that the caucus is dissolved. Can any bourgeois opponent of the Communist Party be more vicious in his attack on Communist discipline and the C. P. S. U. than Lore in his comparison to the Spanish Inquisition?

In his editorial of December 20, Lore writes:

“. . . only he who endorses every dotting of an i, only he who everywhere and at every time exactly so thinks and acts as the majority of the moment desires, wills and commands—only he is worthy to be a member of the C. P. of the Soviet Union.” This is Lore’s old concept of Communist discipline as “Kadavergehorsam”—the obedience of a corpse—now aimed not at the American Party but at the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.”

In the issue of November 27 is probably the worst slander of all in that respect, in an editorial entitled “The Stalin Machine.” It pretends to repeat and analyze a news item cabled from Kharkov. It reads in part:

“. . . they propose to protect Stalin—the ‘Man of Steel’—through a special *lese majesty* (offense to majesty, the sedition act of monarchical countries) paragraph! According to Rykov’s speech that was explicitly decided upon. Every one who speaks of Stalin in disrespectful fashion (*uneherbietigen Auedruecken*) shall be arrested and tried. (Could the Riga rumor-factory produce a worse lie? B. D. W.) In other

words, the Soviet Union is identified with the general secretary of the Communist Party and the thesis is set forth that every offense of Stalin is equivalent to a deliberate injury of the Soviet Union. That that is going a trifle too far should be clear even to the unconditional believers." To which I can only add, in Lore's own words, "that that is going a trifle too far should be clear even to the most unconditional believers" in Lore and the vile gossip of the anti-Communist *Volkszeitung*.

Lore uses the occasion of the controversy to take many side-swipes at the Communist International, the "brother-parties," and, of course, the Workers Party, from which he was expelled. When the Workers Party sent a telegram expressing its views on the controversy in the brother-party of the Soviet Union, Lore speaks of it as the "asked-for telegram." He denounces the Central Committee for not holding a nationwide discussion and a referendum before taking a stand on the issue. Nor is he averse to manufacturing outright lies about the American Party, any more than he is in the case of the "lese majesty" yarn concerning the Russian Party. Thus in his issue of December 4, he states that there is an order from the Central Committee to the District and County-Committees of the Workers Party (Lore knows that there is no such thing as a County-Committee in the Workers Party) to the effect that "all sympathy with the Russian Opposition is to be castigated by immediate expulsion from the Party!" Lore still has a disciple or two in the party who could have told him that no such order was sent out, so we can only conclude that Lore has a rumor-factory of his own and does not have to buy forged documents.

On closer analysis, Lore does not turn out to be as neutral as he pretends. In his editorial of November 27, we find the statement:

"In general it will of course be well to reserve judgment until authentic material about the questions in dispute is at hand. The literature department of the V.I.A. (International Labor Alliance—Lore's German Language Party, of which he has also formed with Salutsky, Boudin, Bellanca, Kutscher

and other renegades and tired radicals an English section—B. D. W.) will shortly have here the Platform of the Russian Opposition, which has been published in Berlin in an authentic edition.” (Lore does not worry about “reserving judgment” on the authenticity of the platform smuggled out of the Soviet Union and published in the anti-Soviet press in Berlin and other parts of Europe.)

From Lore as a center can be traced an interesting, if diminutive, series of “interlocking directorates” linking up with various renegades from and enemies of the Communist movement in this country. First, there is the aforementioned International Labor Alliance. It was born very quietly in the columns of the *Volkszeitung* in the form of a little association for the publication of a four-page weekly English supplement. In fact, its birth was so quiet that it has never gotten beyond the stage of still-birth. Nevertheless, its parents, godparents and step-parents are an interesting crew. There is Boudin, who got lost when the left wing was formed and separated from the Socialist Party. He remained in the “swamp”—the name which Lore used recently editorially as interchangeable with the “center”—and remained “spurlos versenkt” for a period of eight years. He regards the “International Labor Alliance” as, to use his own words, “a home for homeless revolutionists.”

Then there is Salutsky, expelled renegade from Communism, who sold his Communist principles for a berth from the bureaucracy of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers’ Union when that union’s leadership was in full course of degeneration. His views are taken up in another section of this article. Then there is Bellanca, agent for the Italian language of the same Amalgamated Bureaucracy, also a renegade from Communism. He is in turn linked up with *Nuovo Mondo*, Italian daily largely financed by the Amalgamated Bureaucracy. These form the right wing or opportunist section of the tiny alliance.

It is tied up with an ultra-left incurable dual unionist group-let of men like Kutscher, expelled from the Communist Party for refusal to carry out the policy of working in the mass

unions. Similar elements are Kiehn and Burkhardt. (For anyone familiar with the Siamese twin character of deviations from the Communist position, this alliance of crazy leftism with opportunism will furnish no surprise. They are the two faces of the same shield on which is borne the device: Abandonment of the struggle in the conservative mass union.) Lore is in turn connected up with certain "reporters"—gossip-mongers—in the Soviet Union and in Germany, expelled and opposition elements. Thus his diminutive *Volkszeitung* Supplement Organization earns its right to the pretentious name of International Labor Alliance. It is Lore's International. And if the Opposition in the Soviet Union had fared better and succeeded in making a split and linking up with the Souvarines, Maslow-Fishers, etc., in a "Fourth International" Lore and his International and Eastman and his little band of admirers of the Schmalhausen type would have in course of time offered themselves as the American section.

That such an organization as Lore is trying in vain to construct represents a bridge back to the social-democracy and the A. F. of L bureaucracy, an examination of its attitude toward the struggle against the bureaucracy will reveal. Thus in the *Volkszeitung* of the 4th of May Lore has an editorial on the attitude of both the VIA and the newly formed International Labor Alliance toward the struggle in the unions. The first half declares sympathy with the left wing in the needle trades fight. The second half is published under a vicious cartoon republished from a Yiddish humorous paper, "The Big Stick," depicting two Jewish workers belaboring each other with big clubs labeled "class struggle." One follows the Communist *Freiheit*, the other the Socialist *Forward*. Karl Marx stands in the background amazed and says: "What has been made of my teachings!"

Lore interprets the cartoon; says it is the best picture he could imagine of the situation; explains that the two big clubs are the *Forward* and the *Freiheit*; declares both were built up with the saved pennies of the workers, and that neither is attacking the capitalist enemy but are being used

only against each other. Thus Lore's "sympathy" for the left wing proves to be "neutrality" and attack on both equally, unhesitating concealment of the fact that the struggle of the left wing against the bureaucracy is part of the struggle against capitalism, that we cannot defeat capitalism without defeating its agents in the labor movement.

Lore goes a step further in the editorial, and extends it from the Jewish unions, where the fight is ostensibly between socialist and Communist, although in reality, as I have described above, to the "entire American labor movement." An understanding between Sigman and Hyman and Zimmerman! An understanding between Green and Woll and Gold and Gross! That's easy. Give up the fight against the bosses, and you can reach an understanding with the bosses' agents. But carry on the fight against capitalism and you must vanquish the first line of defense of the bosses, their labor lieutenants, their agents inside the labor movement.

The same deliberate concealment of the real nature of the fight of the left wing against the socialist bureaucracy as an essential part of the struggle against capitalism is to be found repeatedly in the writings of Lore, as, for instance, in the editorial in the "English Section" entitled "What can the International Labor Alliance Accomplish?" This ends with the following sentence: "It can, perhaps, teach tolerance so that, however violently Socialists and Communists may disagree, they may nevertheless realize that each is but part of labor which is the whole." Yes, Brother Lore, and capital and labor are "each part of society, which is the whole." Tolerance is all right between allies, but tolerance between Socialistic bureaucracy and left wing, between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, between Noske and Liebknecht, between enemies of capitalism and agents of capitalism, between those on the opposite side in the class war is the preaching of class peace and the abandonment of the struggle. Green and Woll are also part of the labor movement which is the whole! And Axelrod, Abramovitch and Noske are also Socialists. You are forming a bridge back to social democracy and the A. F. of L. bureaucracy for the Salutskys and Lores to cross.

CHAPTER IV

SALUTSKY EARNS HIS HIRE

J. B. Salutsky (Hardman), another renegade from Communism, expelled from the Party in 1924 for selling his principles to the bureaucracy of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, sees in the action of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union an opportunity to justify the actions of Hillman and Beckerman in the Amalgamated and of Green, Woll and Co. in the A. F. of L. In the *Advance* of December 9 he draws the analogy in an article entitled "The Double Standard of Political Morality."

Here he compares the "labor movement" of America (by which he always means the bureaucracy of the labor movement) with the Soviet Union. Our trade unions, he cries, are "never absolutely safe." We must have a dictatorship in the unions. But the Soviet Union is in no danger of war. "There is no present likelihood of any foreign power invading the territory of the Soviet Union no matter what disagreements members of the government party should develop."

Mr. Salutsky-Hardman is doing noble service for the forces of imperialism systematically planning new war against the Soviet Union by his efforts to disarm the workers of the Amalgamated by such assurances. But that is not his main purpose. His purpose is to suggest that revolutionary terror is unjustifiable in so "secure" a land as the Soviet Union, but is justifiable when used by Hillman and Beckerman, Green and Woll, against militants and progressives in the United States.

"... if members should be permitted to engage in *activities* which tend to throw their (the unions') unity in jeopardy and demoralize their strength, no union will survive. But groups like the T. U. E. L. insist upon demanding immunity in America for things much worse than what they consider a capital offense in the Soviet Union."

A shabby piece of typical Salutsky sophistry. A splendid comparison, Mr. Salutsky. But you neglect to mention that

those who "throw the unions' unity in jeopardy and demoralize their strength" are the Hillmans and Beckermans and Wolls and Greens, whom you serve so faithfully, and they deserve a worse fate than the Opposition in the C. P. S. U.

Mr. Salutsky is very dexterous with the word "Opposition" as he is with words in general. The American Communists, he declares, approve the expulsion and annihilation of the Opposition in the C. P. S. U. "In this country, however, they are themselves in opposition in the labor movement." How profound!

It is not a question of opposition or administration, Mr. Salutsky. It is a question of opposition to *what*, administration in *whose* interests? Against *whose* interests?

The administration in the Amalgamated as in many American unions has become an enemy of the interests of the members of those unions. The opposition to the policies of the bureaucracy is opposition to the policies of the bosses. It is opposition to the agents of the bosses in the interest of the rank and file of the trade unions. The opposition defends the interests of the labor movement in America against a corrupt capitalist-serving bureaucracy. The fight against the bosses in America requires a fight against their lieutenants in the labor movement, the trade union bureaucracy. It is the introducers of piece-work who tend to demoralize the strength of the unions and throw their unity into jeopardy. It is the introducers of production standards. It is those who demoralize by preaching class collaboration. It is those who employ gangsters against the membership of the union. It is those who blacklist, blackjack and expel militants. It is those who demoralize the union and threaten its unity.

The Communists here are fighting for the same thing as the communists in the Soviet Union. Not every opposition is bad. Not every administration is good. The question is—opposition to what? Administration in whose interests? And when the question is thus clearly put, the answer cannot be evaded by juggling and word-play. The militant opposition in the Amalgamated is fighting on behalf of the same class

as the Communist Party of the Party Soviet Union is. It is not as you term it, a question of a "double standard of political morality" but a single standard. The "standard of morality" is in both cases the same—*the interests of the working class*. And whoever defends the interests of the working class in the unions of this country must be in opposition to the bosses and to their agents in the labor movement, to the Hillmans and Beckermans, the Sigmans and Kaufmans, the Greens and Wolls and Lewises—yes, and to their hired lickspittles, the William English Wallings and J. B. Salutsky-Hardmans as well.

Just one more word to Mr. Salutsky. The "Save the unions" slogan adopted by the Workers Party in May of 1927, and accepted as the central slogan of the T. U. E. L. in its convention of December, 1927, Salutsky defines as "simply a shorter term for 'Fight the existing unions to a finish.'"

Slightly mistaken, Mr. Salutsky. To "save the unions" which are in a pretty bad way, we must fight the existing union-wrecking bureaucracy to a finish. We must finish them or they'll finish the unions. A fight against the bosses' agents in the labor movement is a necessary part of the fight to save and strengthen those unions. We can't fight the bosses without fighting their agents as well.

CHAPTER V

ABRAMOVITCH GIVES THE SOCIALIST VIEW

The Socialist press in the United States, such as it is, openly accepted the view of the capitalist press as to the issues involved. *The New Leader* even republished the Hearst forgeries of "speeches" by Stalin and Bukharin as genuine. The Jewish *Daily Forward* rewrote Riga stories, published forgeries, rewrote stories from the *Times* and even from the *Chicago Tribune*.

Their "fundamental theoretical" article was contributed by the old Menshevik Counter-revolutionist, Abramovitch, and it is of more than usual interest representing as it does an authoritative Menshevik view.

Abramovitch agrees with the Opposition' contention that the party is going to the right and abandoning Bolshevism. He explains away the Party's seven-hour day decision and its pressure on the Kulaks and Nepmen as "leftist phrases in the inner policy to cover right actions in its foreign policy." This foreign policy is one of "surrender to the capitalist regimes," surrender of the revolution, surrender of the principles of Bolshevism.

Abramovitch agrees also that the Soviet Union has gone through its Thermidor. The proof is not for him the Soviet Union's internal policy, but Litvinov's work at the Geneva Conference!

This "surrender" of Bolshevik principles is inevitable. The Bolsheviks should never have made a revolution at all. We Mensheviks told them that conditions were not ripe, that Russia could not build socialism. But Bolshevism was visionary. It tried to accomplish the impossible. It has lasted as long as it has, only by surrendering its principles step by step. "Communism can exist in Russia as a power only so long as it is descending from the path of Communism." That descent is practically finished. Every diplomatic victory for the Soviet Union is a proof of it. Every treaty signed with a capitalist

nation is a proof of it. The repudiation of the opposition is a proof of it. Russia has reached a "new capitalism of Bolshevism." . . . She is now really a part of the League of Nations!

And what does the opposition represent? "Trotsky is the representative of the revolutionary part of the Bolshevik Party."

The defeat and disciplining of the opposition is done as a favor to foreign imperialism. Stalin "jails the naive Bolshevik revolutionists, puts them in jail and assassinates them politically" in order to prove to capitalist politicians "that it is possible to do business with him." "The attacks on Zinoviev were a part of the price which Stalin paid for the 'lunch' between Litvinov and Chamberlain—the attack on Rakovsky was a small present given to Briand for his relations with Russia."

Abramovitch is extremely annoyed to find that his arguments are actually used by the Bolshevik press against the Opposition. He complains: "A few weeks ago in one of my lectures in Riga (of course it would be in Riga—B.D.W.) I said that the opposition consists of those Bolsheviks who are really desirous of realizing their ideals and that these communists are criticizing Stalin in almost the same way as we Mensheviks are. As soon as I stated that, a long telegram was wired to Moscow and right after three long articles appeared in *Pravda* and Bukharin made a long speech on this subject!" Too bad!

Even tho Bolshevism is wrong, it is necessary to expose Stalin as false to it, is Abramovitch's conclusion and he ends his lengthy article with a stirring appeal to the capitalist nations not to be deluded by appearances. "Some of Stalin's steps might be more correct than those of the Opposition, but his general policy is just as dangerous as could be the policy of the lefts." It is the duty of the Mensheviks and Socialists generally to expose this fact and to awaken "Stalin's foreign slaves" which is Abramovitch's affectionate way of referring to the Communists thruout the world. This appeal to the

“foreign slaves” not of capitalism but of communism is too good to abridge so I give it in full:

“It is necessary,” reads the appeal in question, “to destroy the false cries of Stalin to his foreign slaves that he is the real defender of the revolutionary proletariat and revolutionary Leninism, while Trotsky and other oppositionists are only voluntary lackeys of the capitalist bourgeoisie. (Fancy Abramovitch defending “revolutionary Leninism!”) The truth is: and that is proved by the recent policy of the Soviet Government on foreign policy that the oppositionists are the only ones who really remained true to the old revolutionary Bolshevism. (Poor Zinoviev, poor Trotsky, they are most unfortunate in their champions. To be defended by Abramovitch and Eastman!) “It is false, this revolutionary Bolshevism,” continues Abramovitch, “and the opposition is therefore following a wrong path which cannot lead to any practical results. But what Stalin is doing means to get away from Communism and at the same time to assure the world that we are building Communism.”

“If this were a departure from Communism to a conscious socialist policy we could still forgive this. But a conscious socialist policy cannot be introduced thru terror and dictatorship. Stalin’s path is: Concessions to foreign capitalists and slavery for the Russian people. Such a path and policy cannot solve the problems of the Russian revolution and the proletariat of the whole world.”

One more “socialist view.” Haim Kantorovich contributes an interesting letter to the *New Leader* of December 17. An old opponent of bolshevism, his unprincipled career has led from the I. W. W. to Zionism. Expelled from the Left Poale Zion organization because he sold his “talents” to the right wing of the Jewish socialist bureaucracy, he now writes for the union-wrecking, anti-soviet organ of the Jewish Socialist Verband, *Die Wecker*, and represents it on the national Executive Committee of the Socialist Party.

The purpose of his letter in the *Leader* is not to discuss the opposition in the C. P. S. U., but to denounce James Maurer, head of the first American Trade Union Delegation to the Soviet Union and member of the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. Kantorovich attacks Maurer for having seen in the achievements of the Russian working

class the accomplishment of that for which the workers of the world are struggling. "I expected," complains Kantorovich, "a Socialist interpretation of Russia, and a Socialist appreciation of Bolshevism." . . . but Maurer's report sounded like "an editorial from the *Daily Worker*."

"He (Maurer) is being convinced that Socialism is really being built there, that the workers are free, happy and contented, more than in any other country in the world. Not a word of criticism . . . Comrade Maurer has not found anything in Russia that he could not justify."

Kantorovich hastens to enlighten him, using the arguments of the Opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (plus arguments of his own) and sermonizing on the fate of the opposition. There is far more freedom in the United States, thinks this enemy of working class rule.

"While the *Daily Worker* is legally published in the United States, Trotsky and Zinoviev, the first commander of the Red Army and the father of the Communist International, cannot legally publish their platform in Russia. . . . Comrade Maurer seems to agree with Stalin (on the question of freedom of the press) though he must know that freedom of the press and of speech are denied not only to the bourgeois class in Russia and to the Socialists, but also to the Communists. . . .

"It should not have been hard for Comrade Maurer to learn that there is freedom in Russia only for the ruling Stalin clique."

"And the things that Comrade Maurer has not seen! He has not seen the jobless and the breadless . . . the goods famine . . . the growth of the new bourgeoisie in the cities and the Kulak in the villages. . . ."

Kantorovich believes that the opposition group are the true Bolsheviks and this old opponent of Bolshevism supports them against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the name of Bolshevism and Social Democracy!

". . . a bitter fight is going on," he writes, "between the real founders of Bolshevism and those who call the NEP socialism (Kantorovich knows the opposition credo by heart); between Trotsky, Zinoviev, Radek and other old communists

and the Stalin and Bucharin group. What is the fight about? The Trotsky, Zinoviev group maintain that every trace of Communism in Russia is being abolished, that all thought about the world revolution is given up, that capitalism is growing in Russia and that the Russian Soviet Government in itself is being gradually transformed from a workers government into a peasant and Nep-men government."

Kantorovich then lectures Maurer on the fact that while the opposition is becoming more critical of Bolshevism and Stalin is denouncing them as expressing Menshevist ideas, and as being "Social-Democratic traitors" Maurer is swallowing Stalin's viewpoint and thus impliedly accepting this identification of Social-Democracy with betrayal of the cause of the proletariat.

"But if Comrade Maurer does not identify Social Democracy with betrayal and Trotsky with the Social-Democrats, he may profit by hearing what Trotsky has to say about the present conditions in Russia. (Kantorovich is right in declaring that the slanders of the opposition are of profit to the Social-Democrats and all other opponents of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union). In the thesis of the opposition—*Pravda*, Nov. 5, 1927—(Kantorovich is a diligent reader of the *Pravda*) it is stated that capitalism grows in the cities, the Kulak gets richer and more influential in the villages, unemployment grows, the housing shortage is terrible, and, what is still worse, the Nep-man and Kulak become more and more politically influential. . . Zinoviev pictures in the following words: 'The Nep is growing and you call it Socialism and are happy about it!'. . . Smilga complains: 'You promise a seven-hour day while the eight-hour day still remains on paper only.'"

Thus the cunning Social-Democrat quotes his slanders now in the name of "the real founders of Bolshevism," the "old Communists," etc., in place of slandering in his own name. And his purpose, to refute the report of the first American Trade Union Delegation, to convince trade unionists that their observations are not correct, to counteract the effects of a favorable report that tends to rally the workers of America to the defense of the Soviet Union!

For years the Social-Democratic opponents of the Soviet

Government had to content themselves with quotations from the Mensheviks, from the white-guardists, from Kautsky and Bauer and others of their own ranks. Now they appeal to "old Communists" and "the real founders of Bolshevism," but repeat the same old fables. And the tragedy of it is that their quotations are accurate. That the opposition has become the mouthpiece for the repetition of all these fables about the impossibility of the construction of Socialism, about the dictatorship of the apparatus, about the degeneration of the Soviet Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, about the failure of the revolution and the gradual return to capitalism.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT THE LIBERALS "THINK"

The *New Republic* has in general fought shy of the whole question. It is too busy injecting mysticism into the shreds of its tattered and soiled rags of liberal virtue to pay much attention to the Communist International or its leading party. But a little editorialette in the number of November 23 is sufficient to show its attitude.

"One of two developments is now probable," declares the editorial writer, "Either there will be an attempt at a coup d'etat, headed by Trotsky, still enormously popular with the masses, or Stalin will move an appreciable distance towards a personal dictatorship on the Mussolini model." Why cannot both things happen? The editorial writer is silent on the question. Why should either happen? Silence equally as "profound." Personal dictatorship of one or the other. Bonapartism on both sides. Such is the manner in which bankrupt individualist liberalism appraises class forces and class conflicts. For the rest, profoundly vapid efforts to prove that the workers of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics are not building a new order of society but a new religion with communism as its Church-militant and Lenin as its Godhead. This learned nonsense is contributed in special articles by the philosophical doctor of philosophy, Horace Kallen and echoed by the anonymous editorial writer.

The Nation, whose liberalism is somewhat less bankrupt and in the main gropes mildly leftward while that of the *New Republic* flounders to the right, was until recently less stupid and more discreet about the history that is being made in the Soviet Union. Its tenth anniversary number, altho it had some of the defects that might have been anticipated in such a paper, was a performance that put the corresponding number of the professedly more proletarian *New Masses* to shame.

The Nation until February 1, contented itself with an

article by its Russian "expert" Louis Fisher, as its sole contribution to the controversy. The article does its author little credit as a political analyst of events he was fairly close to. He sees, as the kernel of the whole controversy, "city or proletarian opposition against too pronounced pro-peasant tendencies in the party." This is accepting the viewpoint of the opposition and vulgarizing it somewhat. He fails to realize that the highest type of proletarian or city political development is precisely that form of development which views the proletariat not as in antagonism with the peasantry, but in alliance with it under proletarian hegemony, and the highest proletarian or city policies are precisely those conducive to the maintenance and strengthening of that alliance and that hegemony so that the proletariat can lead the peasantry with it to the building of socialism. It is the expression of the syndicalism or trade union narrowness of the less politically developed sections of the urban proletariat that can lead to the theory that the interests of peasant and worker are antagonistic and that can forego for the proletariat the role of the leader of all the oppressed and exploited masses in favor of "super proletarian narrowness" and antagonism to the idea that the proletarian dictatorship is conceived also in the interests of the peasantry insofar as the interests of worker and peasant are identical. Lenin was expressing the highest development of urban proletarian political theory and practice when he said:

"The working class will use its control of the state power to satisfy by revolutionary means the needs of the peasantry."

In its issue of February 1, 1928, *The Nation* suddenly departs from its attitude of "judicial calm" to make room in its pages for a column and a half of the most vicious slander—apparently trying to outdo the more orthodox capitalist press. The editorial bristles with atrocity stuff. Stalin becomes a "reactionary personal dictator" and a "newcomer" (after 25 years of Bolshevism!), he represents "that conservative tendency ever to be associated with excessive personal power" and Trotsky is pictured as about to "be shot in the back while trying to escape in the wilderness of Central Asia!" The least the editorial thrill-inventor might give the

Russian communists credit for is for the "unspeakably" public way in which they try and execute those whom they feel it necessary to execute. Surely, the respectable *Nation* has often enough complained about that. What Riga rumor-monger landed in the office of the *Nation* and is responsible for the blood-curdling picture of fantastic gossip it is impossible to say but that the visit of some such fertile inventor is responsible is obvious. The "editorial" even adds one new gem to the Riga arsenal. It reads:

"Sir Austen Chamberlain during the Geneva conference was quoted as saying (the *Nation* doesn't even trouble to say who quoted him or to whom he said it—B. D. W.) that England could not enter into conversations with Russia for the simple reason that 'Trotsky had not yet been shot against a wall.'"

Whoever is responsible for that story is wasting his talents on the *Nation*. He could get a job as a feature correspondent on Russian atrocities with the *Chicago Tribune* or could take Nossevitsky's place from under his nose.

The World Tomorrow, a magazine of Christian Liberalism, sweeps aside the "psychological method" with the remark, "of course there are the personal hatreds involved, but that is by no means all the story." (Editorial, Jan., 1928.)

The rest of the story is the old tale of Trotsky representing the workers and Stalin the peasants, Trotsky being for world revolution and Stalin wanting to limit socialism to a single country. As its "analysis" is stated in compact form, I quote the part dealing with these questions in full:

"1. Trotsky stood for the rapid industrialization of Russia: Stalin and his group are satisfied with the peasant predominance.

"2. Trotsky wanted to shift the burdens of the state from the city population to the peasant; Stalin's program includes peasant relief.

"3. Trotsky does not believe that Russia will be able to survive as the only revolutionary country; he wants world wide agitation for further revolt. Stalin's face is turned to internal affairs; he wants the friendship of other nations.

"Stalin's victory," the editorial concludes, ". . . means the peasants are the ruling class."

CHAPTER VII.

TROTSKYISM AS A "JEWISH" ISSUE

The most amusing variety of attack upon the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the guise of enlightenment on the opposition question is the attack in the name of Jewish nationalism. The Jewish bourgeois press has treated the whole matter as a question of expulsion of Jewish communists.

In business circles, petty labor-hating Jewish merchants and cloak manufacturers who regard Communism as a scourge of God and membership in the Communist Party on the part of their workmen or relatives as a terrible calamity, suddenly burst into lamentations because Trotsky has been deprived of the priceless privilege of membership in that same party.

Counter-revolutionary circles that have been the source of many jokes about the supposed Jewish nature of communism, begot a joke of another color to the effect that Stalin resembled Moses in that the one had led the Jews out of Egypt and the other had led them out of the Communist International.

The Riga rumor-factory produced a "document" from the Central Committees calling upon the peasants not to follow up the expulsion of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky by pogroms against the Jews in general.

The *Reflex*, a magazine of Jewish "liberalism," devoted considerable space in the November issue to the discussion of the controversy and kindred questions. Its editor, S. M. Melamed, wrote the leading article entitled, "St. Paul and Trotsky." Franz Oppenheimer contributed an article entitled "Marxism and Leninism." And W. Gordin, an article of vicious gossip and poison entitled, "Lenin as I Knew Him."

Franz Oppenheimer advances four related theses: 1. that Leninism is not Marxism; 2. that they are not building socialism in Russia today but "an extensive and crass State Capitalism"; 3. that Trotsky is defending impossible Marx-

ism against realistic opportunism; and 4, that the "social problem of our days will be solved not in Russia but in the United States . . . which will be God's own country indeed, serving Europe as a shining example, with peace and plenty for all imitators."

It is interesting to note how every opponent of communism, be his angle of approach what it may, jumps at the opportunity to prove his old thesis that socialism is impossible in Russia by echoing the opposition's arguments as to state capitalism, deviation from communism, degeneration and surrender to the peasantry. Oppenheimer declares: "The stubborn opposition of Trotsky against the Stalin administration is nothing else but the struggle between Marxian economics and sage Real-Politik resting content, for the time being, with State Capitalism. No other terms can be applied to a society permitting thirty million peasants to manage as they choose and to sell their produce for cash in an open market." The goal of the communists he pronounces "unattainable." They have maintained their "minority dictatorship" only by "allying themselves with the peasants at the expense of their ultimate ideal." Trotsky had to be swept aside because he represented utopian, impossibilist true Marxism and defended it against this betrayal.

W. Gordin's vile gossip is not worth dwelling on. Suffice it to note that he uses more coarsely Eastman's "psychological method" of explaining all happenings in terms of the personal traits of the individuals involved. He regards Kamenev as the inventor of "the Lenin cult . . . contrived chiefly as a means of getting rid of Trotsky who naturally had to succeed Lenin as dictator." He turns the usual legend to the effect that the whole controversy is a struggle for power into its truly capitalist form as a struggle for the possession of Russia's economic resources.

". . . under the cover of this red smoke screen lie inexhaustible wells of oil, priceless gold mines, countless factories, shops and stores; who will manage them? who will rule them? is equivalent to the question: who will possess them?" This is a Jewish pawnbroker's interpretation of history.

S. M. Melamed sees in Trotsky "the incarnation of the wrath, anger and bitterness of a race tortured since the destruction of the ancient Roman Empire. . . . He is the 'Big Bertha' on the battlefield between Jew and Slav."

Between Lenin and Trotsky he sees a peculiar division of labor in which "Lenin did all the arguing, but Trotsky, the organizing. . . . None of Lenin's plans and schemes could stabilize the Red regime. Trotsky's organization of the Red Army and reorganization of the Russian railroads did establish Soviet Russia as a world power." What St. Paul was to Christ, Trotsky was to Lenin.

"If Lenin was the redeemer, Trotsky is the prophet, and like the prophet of the old redeemer, he too may have to pay the penalty for his prophecy. Trotsky, like St. Paul, is in love with and attracted to the city. He has only contempt for the village and for peasants. Hailing from the city, he is not the least interested in the village and its welfare. This very contempt for the village and love for the city so characteristic of St. Paul, too, may yet cost him his head. Already it has cost him his position. The present heads of the government, Kalenin, Rykov and Stalin, have the village background; their main interest is the welfare of the peasants. Not so with Trotsky. The difference between him and his colleagues is traced to that fact alone."

A few random selections from the "better" sort of capitalist press comments are sufficient to show that they backed the opposition in its struggle against communist discipline and the fundamental law of the proletarian dictatorship, keenly conscious of the fact that the violation of communist discipline in the name of communism and of Soviet law in the name of Soviet interests is nevertheless a violation and paves the way for the activities of other sorts of opposition. This was long ago expressed by the Menshevik Dan in these words:

"By their criticism of the existing system, which is almost a literal repetition of the criticism made by the Social-Democrats, the Bolshevik Opposition is preparing the people's minds . . . for the adoption of a positive platform of Social-Democracy."

The *Times* expresses the same thing in its lamentation over

the defeat of the Opposition. It declares in an editorial of December 20 that one of the effects of that defeat will be "the extinction of the feeble spark of democracy discernible in Trotsky's demand for free discussion. . . . Had that been granted, it is not inconceivable that the despised bourgeoisie freedom of speech might have extended with time beyond the confines of the Communist Party." In other words, the breakdown of communist discipline is a step in the restoration of capitalism.

The *Times* also accepts the opposition's estimate of the policy of the Party as a policy of compromise, of opportunism, of moving to the right, of abandoning the world revolution, of national narrowness, of peasant policy, etc. "Stalin thinks nationally," says the *Times* editorial of November 17, "and Trotsky thinks in terms of world revolution." By accepting the Opposition's estimate of the Party, the *Times* and the capitalist press generally are able to get some comfort out of the defeat of the opposition. Incidentally, it is important to note that the Opposition is not original in its estimate. The capitalist press has always tried to lessen the influence of the Russian example among the workers of the rest of the world by continually predicting and announcing the degeneration of the Communist Party. "Observers of the Russian scene," declares the same editorial of November 17, "have long been aware of one basic paradox: the attempts to establish Marxian socialism, which is an industrial philosophy, in an overwhelmingly agricultural nation." For the capitalist press (as for the Kautskys and Bauers and theoreticians of the Social-Democracy) it is axiomatic that socialism cannot be built in the Soviet Union and that the Bolshevik revolution cannot be successful. Hence, each success is sedulously described as a deviation from the platform of communism.

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