

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

49

A.H.

# INTERNAL BULLETIN

Issued by the  
**SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY**  
116 UNIVERSITY PLACE, N. Y. C.

Vol. II, No. 5

DECEMBER, 1939

## CONTENTS:

	Page
LETTER ON INDIA, by <i>Leon Trotsky</i> . . . . .	2
ON THE NATURE OF STALINIST INTERVENTION, by <i>Sherman Stanley</i> . . . . .	2
THE SOVIET INVASION OF FINLAND (A Statement of Pol- icy by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party) . . . . .	5
RESOLUTION ON THE SOVIET-FINNISH WAR (Introduced by the Minority of the Political Committee) . . . . .	6
THE MAJORITY OF THE N.C., by <i>Ben Hall</i> . . . . .	7
WE CONDEMN THE INVASION; WE DEFEND THE SOVI- ET UNION, by <i>Albert Goldman</i> . . . . .	7
ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS AND POLITICAL PRINCI- PLES, by <i>Joseph Hansen</i> . . . . .	9
WHY NOT ANALYZE THE RUSSIAN ECONOMY, by <i>Roger</i> <i>B. Cross</i> . . . . .	16

SWP: I.B. VOL II #5 1939

Symes pg 12

# A Letter on India

by Leon Trotsky

November 24, 1939

Dear Comrade Perera,

The question about the possible military intervention of the Red Army in India (not to speak about Ceylon) has been launched absolutely artificially by some of the American comrades. The possibility is not excluded, but it is not this question that is now on the order of the day. From the principled point of view I don't see here any new question in comparison with the Chinese or Spanish experience. The Red Army is not an independent political factor but a military instrument of the Bonapartist bureaucracy of the US-SR. The military intervention would be only the continuation of the political intervention and the political intervention of Stalin's Comintern is developing in India as elsewhere every day. But our task is not to speculate about the possibilities of a future military intervention—rather it is to learn how to fight against the present political intervention. Every fight demands a correct appreciation of all the factors involved.

The first thing is not to forget that the direct enemy of the Indian workers and peasants is not the Red Army but British imperialism. Some comrades, who in the last period have replaced Marxist policy by anti-Stalinist policy, forget the political realities in India and imitate the Stalinists of yesterday who proclaimed—before the Stalin-Hitler pact of course—that the main enemy in India is . . . Japan.

The Stalinists in India directly support the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois national parties and do all they can to subjugate the workers and peasants through these parties. What we must do is create an absolutely independent proletarian party with a clear class program.

The general historic role of the Stalinist bureaucracy and their Comintern is counter-revolutionary. But through their military and other interests they can be forced to support progressive movements. (Even Ludendorff felt himself

forced to give Lenin a train—a very progressive action—and Lenin accepted it.) We must keep our eyes open to discern the progressive acts of the Stalinists, support them independently, foresee in time the danger, the betrayals, warn the masses and gain their confidence. If our policy is firm and intransigent and realistic at the same time, we would succeed in compromising the Stalinists on the basis of the revolutionary experience. If the Red Army intervenes we will continue the same policy, adapting it to military conditions. We will teach the Indian workers to fraternize with the rank and file soldiers and denounce the repressive measures of their commanders and so on.

The main task in India is the overthrow of the British domination. This task imposes upon the proletariat the support of every oppositional and revolutionary action directed against imperialism.

This support must be inspired by a firm distrust of the national bourgeoisie and their petty-bourgeois agencies.

We must not confound our organization, our program, our banner with theirs for a moment.

We must observe strictly the old rule: march separately, strike together.

We must keep a suspicious eye on the temporary ally as well as on the foe.

We must utilize the dissensions of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois tendencies in order to reinforce the self-confidence of the proletarian vanguard.

If we follow seriously these good old rules, the intervention of the Red Army would not take us unawares.

With warmest greetings to yourself and to the Ceylon comrades, and with best wishes for your trip,

*Yours comradely,*

L. TROTSKY

---

## On the Nature of Stalinist Intervention

by Sherman Stanley

In a letter addressed to a Sinhalese comrade, comrade Trotsky takes the minority comrades to task for their raising of the question of Stalinist intervention in India and the British colonies. His implication is that this issue is a false one, without foundations in the realities of the present situation. "The question about the possible military intervention of the Red Army in India has been launched absolutely artificially by some of the American comrades. The possibility is not excluded but it is not this question that is now on the order of the day." So writes comrade Trotsky in his letter.

We wish to reply to this—and other questions—in our article.

(1) It is totally incorrect to say that the minority comrades have raised the question as if point one on the agenda was Stalin's preparation to fling his armies against India. No, we said no such thing as we shall prove. Besides, is it necessary to point out that at the present writing, point one on Stalin's "Agenda of Intervention" is *Finland*? Not for a single moment do we wish to retreat from our analysis that Stalin is preparing the basis for open intervention in India. Every day new facts bear this out. (For example,

the building of military roads by the Soviets in Chinese Turkestan, facing towards Khyber Pass, the historic entrance to Northern India; the further mobilization of British troops in Northern India where there are now about 5-6 times as many troops as the British have on the entire Western Front, etc.)

The evidence for this analysis has already been presented in my article "Stalinist imperialism and the Colonial Revolutionary movements". To disprove our analysis it is necessary to disprove the existing evidence, as well as our concrete analysis of the present war. But in no case did we say that Stalin is ready *today* to attack India. On the contrary! In a letter written to comrade Trotsky on November 6th, I wrote, "The British ruling class stands in trembling fear before such a possibility (A Russian attack on India) and this explains its somewhat pathetic attempts to "woo" Stalin. Naturally, no one can predict what concrete forms Stalinist intervention will take on. *In all likelihood, at the beginning, it will be the type of activity carried on in Spain*—maneuvers to gain control of the movement by promises of aid."

And in our article published in the Internal Bulletin we wrote, "We make no effort to predict the exact nature of this intervention—whether it will be conducted from 'inside' as it was in Spain, with the direct intervention of the GPU, and small Red Army detachments; or whether it will take on the form of open invasion . . ." And again, in the same article, "It is impossible to state the exact form this intervention will *ultimately* assume except to state that it has already begun with an attempt to seize leadership of the workers and peasants within India itself."

When the matter of an invasion of India arose at the Political Committee it was *primarily* in the nature of an *hypothetical* question, flowing from the discussion as to what our attitude should be when confronted with the expansionist aims of the Soviet bureaucracy. But we must emphasize that we believe it would be sheer blindness to reject out of hand the possibility of such a development. We believe that revolutionary policy lies in *seeing and foreseeing*. We categorically reject the idea that further expansionist drives are an impossibility. We hold, rather, that in the present war they are an *inevitability* on the part of the bureaucracy.

(2) The main enemy in the British colonies: Comrade Trotsky wishes to remind us that the main enemy of the Indian masses is not the Red Army, but the British imperialists. "Some comrades" he writes, "who in the last period have replaced Marxist policy by anti-Stalinist policy, forget the political realities in India and imitate the Stalinists of yesterday who proclaimed—before the Stalin-Hitler pact of course—that the main enemy in India is . . . Japan."

The implication of this statement is that the minority faction comrades say that the main enemy in India is . . . Russia! We must categorically reject such an implication as contrary to our position. We need only say, let any comrade produce any statement in the writings or remarks of any minority supporter, or in the rather voluminous writings of Sherman Stanley (in the NEW INTERNATIONAL, SOCIALIST APPEAL, Internal Bulletins, etc.) which says or implies that the main enemy of the

masses in the British colonies is . . . Russia. The main enemy of the Indian masses is British imperialism. But we do not blind ourselves to the fact that other imperialisms (Japan, Germany) and other countries pursuing an imperialist policy (USSR) have their eyes on the British colonies. That is what this war is all about—for the redivision of the world.

No, we are not "yielding to democratic imperialist pressure." We are revolutionary defeatists in England (and its colonies); in France (and its colonies); in America (and its colonies). Our political program has clearly stated this over and over again. Those who accuse us of supporting the Allied imperialist powers must advance some proof, some tendency in our position that leads down this path. If the Soviet Union were allied, under the same circumstances, with the democratic imperialists and had conducted the same policy toward Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, etc., we would have said precisely the same thing. *The burden of proof rests upon those who are accusing us.*

(3) Comrade Trotsky states, "The Stalinists in India directly support the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois national parties. . . ."

This—true enough yesterday before the new Comintern line—is *not* true today. Why should the Stalinists, who are anxiously attempting to seize control of the rising revolt in India, "directly support" Gandhi, who is just as anxious to prevent a revolt and sell out to the British? The entire new, pseudo-revolutionary line of the Stalinists, has thrown them into direct *conflict* with the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leadership of the Congress. They now pose as the extreme "left-wing" of the Congress who urge the masses on to "revolutionary" action and denounce violently all those who preach civil peace. At the recent All-India Congress Committee session, the Stalinists consistently voted *against* the Gandhi resolutions, as being too conciliatory and capitulatory. Even within the "Left Consolidation Bloc" which they set up along with the petty-bourgeois nationalists of the Congress Socialist Party, the "Forward" group, etc., they are in conflict with the petty-bourgeois elements—that is, with those they cannot buy off. We must recognize that Stalinism's line and tactics have changed since the alliance with Hitler.

(4) Revolutionary attitude toward Red Army intervention: To this question we wish to devote the greater part of this article because we wish to clarify the minority position on this question. In the present war, the tactics outlined below can be said generally to apply to all such countries as Finland and Poland, semi-colonial countries (China), colonies (India, Iran, etc.)—against which the army of the Soviet bureaucracy is directed.

(a) All comrades are in agreement, we believe, that if the armies of the bureaucracy are launched against a victorious Workers and Peasants Red Army which has arisen out of a successful revolution, then we are for the defeat of the counter-revolutionary "Red" Army and for the victory of the genuine Red Army. We would urge the soldiers of the bureaucratic army to shoot their officers, to desert to the other side, to sabotage the military struggle from their side, etc.

But the problem has not arisen in this simple form nor

is it likely to for the time being. What we have instead is the bureaucratized and decapitated Red Army of the Kremlin facing the armed forces of the bourgeois states.

In such a situation the Majority faction have made it clear that they stand *unconditionally* for the *victory* of the Red Army over the bourgeois army. That is, to take but the most recent example; they are for the victory of the Red Army over the Finnish bourgeois army. They urge the Finnish proletariat to become partisans of the Red Army—which means in practice to join it, render it material aid, welcome it, facilitate its victory.

Comrade Trotsky, in his letter, implies his endorsement and support to this position. After stating that the Red Army may carry out certain progressive tasks (distribution of land, expropriation of heavy industry if it exists, etc.) he says, "If the Red Army intervenes we will continue the same policy (support to these progressive acts on the part of the bureaucracy), adapting it to military conditions."

Why do we reject the Majority position of support to the invading Red Army? What do we propose in its place? Does our position lead to support of the imperialist bourgeoisie?

(b) Our position in its basic aspects is clear and simple. We are *revolutionary defeatists* in both armies, on both sides of the border. We do not support the invading Red Army; we do not support the bourgeois army of Finland, or the imperialist army of the British in India and the colonies. In both armies and in both countries, we urge the revolutionary workers and soldiers to continue the class struggle, to arm themselves, to work for genuine soviets, to take power (in one country away from the bourgeoisie by social revolution—in the Soviet Union away from the ruling caste by political revolution). What practical tasks and slogans in general follow from this?

Our *common* revolutionary slogan in both armies is the mighty defeatist slogan of *FRATERNIZATION*. The Majority comrades, however, urge the Finnish (or Indian) soldiers to *desert* to the side of the Red Army and facilitate its victory. This is *not* the same as the slogan of *FRATERNIZATION*. We support the victory of the revolutionary Finnish workers over their bourgeoisie; the victory of the revolutionary Russian workers over the bureaucracy.

In those countries about to be invaded by the Red Army—that is, in the *unoccupied* areas—the workers conduct a defeatist policy towards their ruling class. They strive for soviet power, for the organization of the genuine workers armed militia. Towards the threatening invaders they direct the propaganda of fraternization ("Comrades of the Red Army—do not invade our land in the interests of the ruling bureaucracy. We will fight against any attempt by our rulers to destroy the Soviet Union. We will take care of our bourgeoisie and you will help us. Help us also by taking care of your bureaucracy and by fraternizing with us at the front".) This, comrades, we submit is genuine internationalism in the present war. This is the diametric opposite of those reactionary theories now so tragically prevalent in our party according to which we choose the "bureaucratic revolution", "the armed missionary", "the revolution from above" as some sort of

a lesser evil. The revolution by proxy does not free humanity—in Trotsky's words, it bureaucratically enslaves it.

Comrade Trotsky writes, "The Red Army is not an independent political factor, but a military instrument of the Bonapartist bureaucracy of the U. S. S. R. The military intervention would be only the continuation of the political intervention. . . ." We agree with this. But then, how can one support the military intervention (which Trotsky says is subordinate to, and a part of, the political intervention), when we state that the political intervention of Stalinism is *reactionary* and *counter-revolutionary*? It might be argued that there are certain "progressive" features about the Stalinist political line now ("opposition" to democratic imperialism in the colonies, etc.). Should we therefore support Stalinism's political intervention? No, for we consider it *as a whole* to be diametrically opposed to the world revolution, a program of fraud and deceit. Then we must say the same thing about Stalinism's *military intervention*—that it is *reactionary as a whole*. "We are against the seizure of new territories by the Kremlin". These are the words of comrade Trotsky. They are not in accord with the present position of the Majority faction (with reference to Finland), nor with Trotsky's implied position of support to future interventions by the Red Army.

(c) But what if the Red Army succeeds in its military intervention despite our opposition? Suppose it does conquer and occupy new territories (as is the case with Finland at the moment of writing). What then? Here our position does not differ from that advanced by comrade Trotsky.

We support those progressive measures instituted by the Red Army and the bureaucracy. We demand their extension, deepening and genuine revolutionary fulfillment. Whenever the bureaucratic conquerers attempt to halt and limit the class struggle in the occupied areas, our slogans will oppose this. Where the Stalinists will attempt to create bureaucratically dominated soviets and workers committees, we struggle for democratically elected soviets. The Stalinists, leaning on the "middle" peasants, will not touch their lands. We will conduct the class struggle among the poor peasants—against the landlords and kulak peasantry. On all the concrete issues in the occupied areas we will advance our independent program.

Will we defend these occupied territories against the imperialists? We have said *yes* a hundred times—in the same sense, and on the same basis, that we will defend the Soviet Union against the assault of the imperialists. But we must warn against the illusion that Stalinism will necessarily do in the other occupied territories what it did in the Polish Ukraine. It has not touched property relations in the Baltic states. It has already indicated clearly its intentions of putting over a *different* program in Finland. The Finnish Communist Party has openly declared that it does *not* intend to "sovietize" Finland. Stalinism aims—when it conquers Finland—to reduce the country to a military satrapy, purged and plundered by the ravenous wolves of the Kremlin.

To summarize:

(1) We consider it illusory to believe that the Stalin bureaucracy is on the verge of overthrow by the Russian masses; that it is incapable of further expansionist aims directed against border states and the British colonial empire.

We believe it necessary to examine and foresee the possible evolution of Stalinist imperialism.

(2) The main enemy of the workers in those countries which are at war with the Soviet Union *is at home*. Our policy has nothing in common with the imperialism of the Allies or the imperialism of the bureaucracy. The third camp—the camp of independent proletarian action *against* the “democratic” imperialists and *against* the Kremlin.

(3) If the present war does not change its character, and the role of Stalinism in the war remains the same, and the Soviet armies continue to be forced by Stalin to carry on reactionary and imperialist warfare, we are revolution-

ary defeatists on both sides. The war is reactionary on both sides. The proletariat cannot support either side. The common internationalist slogan is the slogan of fraternization.

(4) Retaining our complete independence of the Soviet bureaucracy, we will nevertheless render critical support to those progressive measures that it may institute in areas which it occupies as a result of military conquest.

(5) Independence of their “own” bourgeoisie; independence of the Soviet bureaucracy and its political or military intervention—that must be the attitude of revolutionary workers and the Fourth International in those countries threatened or attacked by the Kremlin, in the present war.

---

## The Soviet Invasion of Finland

### (A Statement of Policy by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party)

1. The invasion of Finland by the red army is an incident in the Second World War which is now only in its tentative and initial stages of development.

2. The *character* of the Second World War is that of an imperialist struggle for the redivision of the earth. Despite present alliances, or future changes in the alignment of the powers, the *class antagonism* between the imperialist states and the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers state retains its full force. From this must follow an inevitable attempt on the part of the imperialists of one camp or another, or in a combination, to attack the Soviet Union in order to destroy the economic conquests of the October Revolution and open up the territory of the Soviet Union for capitalist exploitation.

3. Finland is not an independent small state fighting for its independence against an imperialist power. Bourgeois Finland is and always has been a vassal state of the imperialists and an outpost of imperialism on the Russian border.

4. In the present conflict the imperialist powers of the United States and Great Britain stand behind Finland and inspire its foreign policy in relation to the Soviet Union. The diplomatic and propagandistic intervention of the Roosevelt administration on the side of bourgeois Finland is not motivated by “humanitarian” considerations but by the class interests and the future military designs of the Wall Street masters of the government.

5. Stalinist policy in the conflict with Finland is characteristic of Stalinist policy as a whole: the protection of the interests and privileges of the bureaucracy in utter disregard of the sentiments and interests of the world proletariat. The means and methods it employs to gain military and strategic advantages repel the sympathy and support of the workers and oppressed peoples and this undermines the real defense of the Soviet Union to such an extent as to outweigh by far the immediate military and strategic advantages that may be gained by the conflict with Finland. From this point of view—that is, the real defense of the Soviet Union against the imperialists—the Fourth International has always condemned the foreign policy of Stalinism and condemns it in the present situation. The real defense of the conquests of the October Revolution requires, now more than ever, an unceasing struggle of the workers for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy by means of a political revolution.

6. Proceeding from the foregoing points, in accord with the program of the Fourth International, our basic attitude in the present military conflict between the Soviet Union and Finland is as follows:

#### (a) For the Fourth Internationalists in the United States:

Revolutionary defeatism—the main enemy is in our own country! No support, direct or indirect, to the imperialist government

of the United States or its Finnish satellite. Expose and denounce the policy of Washington as political and diplomatic preparation for war against the Soviet Union. For the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union. Expose and denounce the methods of Stalinism which compromise the Soviet Union and weaken its defense.

#### (b) For the Fourth Internationalists in Finland:

Revolutionary defeatism—the main enemy is in our own country! The *first* task of the Finnish workers remains an irreconcilable struggle for the overthrow of their own bourgeoisie. Not a man, not a gun, not a cent for the war of the Finnish bourgeois government against the Soviet Union. Work for the defeat of the Finnish bourgeois government in the war. Aim at the creation of an independent Soviet Finland free from the domination of the Stalinist bureaucracy. If that is not possible in the immediate situation because of the unfavorable relation of forces, political unpreparedness, and military weakness—as is almost certainly the case in the present circumstances—utilize the defeat of the bourgeois Finnish Army by the Red Army to arouse the masses to press forward for the complete expropriation of the Finnish capitalists and landlords immediately after the victory of the Red Army. Organize for the maximum independence of the workers from the Stalinist bureaucracy, and thus prepare its future overthrow. In the present military struggle a victory of the red army is a “lesser evil” than the victory of the army of the Finnish puppet government of Wall Street and London. The Finnish Fourth Internationalists are partisans of an independent Soviet Finland and the irreconcilable foes of the treacherous and blood-splashed Kremlin bureaucracy and its hand-picked Kuusinen regime in Finland.

#### (c) For the Fourth Internationalists in the Soviet Union:

Soviet patriotism—the main enemy is world imperialism. Unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against the capitalist world. Only agents of imperialism, standing for the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union, can desire the defeat of the Red Army by the bourgeois Finnish outpost of the imperialist armies. Irreconcilable struggle for the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which betrays the world proletariat and undermines the defense of the Soviet Union. Against the military-bureaucratic annexation of Finnish territory. For the independence of Soviet Finland. Unceasing criticism and exposure of the Stalinist methods of starting and conducting the war, but not the slightest relaxation of material and military support. The Fourth Internationalists in the Soviet Union will be the best soldiers in the Red Army and inspire it to victory over the imperialist bandits and the Stalinist betrayers.

# Resolution on the Soviet-Finnish War

(Introduced by the Minority of the Political Committee)

1. The editorial entitled, "The Kremlin's Aim in the Finnish Crisis," published in the December 1st issue of the *Socialist Appeal*, expresses openly a political capitulation to Stalinism. The main line of the editorial is concentrated in the sentence: "If a struggle breaks out between bourgeois Finland and the Soviet Union, it is the duty of the Finnish workers to be Soviet partisans in that struggle." Given this main line, and the concrete circumstances of the invasion of Finland in the context of the present phase of the second World War, all of the criticisms, modifications and limitations included in the editorial serve only as pseudo-revolutionary embroidery to cover a policy which in its fundamentals is in accord only with the aims and interests of the Kremlin and directly counter to the interests of the world revolution. This fact is indeed implicitly—and unwittingly—admitted by the editorial itself, when it writes "That the Kremlin's military intervention serves only the interests of the Kremlin and its imperialist ally (Hitler in Poland); that it is carried out without consideration of the will and feelings of the workers of the Soviet Union or the occupied territories or the international proletariat; that it compromises the Soviet Union and disorients the world working class. . . ." If this is the meaning of the invasion, if it serves "only" the Kremlin's interests (in other words, is *against* the interests of the revolution both in Russia and internationally), on what conceivable grounds, other than piety toward a vague, abstract and out-moded formula of "unconditional defense," is the world proletariat asked to defend and support it?

2. To serve the utterly false policy of the N.C. majority the *Appeal* of December 1st, as has been consistently the case during the past two months, is compelled to distort and falsify the meaning and direction of current events. As its summary of a period (the last two weeks of November) which witnessed on every front intensification of the struggle between England and Germany (the German sea warfare in a new stage, the drastic British decision to control German exports; and above all the alteration of British speeches and propaganda to attacks on the German *people* instead of on the German government alone as had been the case previously), the *Appeal* sees only a "British Bid to Germany Aimed Against USSR." It remains true, of course, that the transformation of the present war into a war of combined imperialist assault against the Soviet Union remains *possible*; and it is undoubtedly the case that certain sections of the ruling class within every power are in favor of such a transformation. But to write as does the *Appeal* that "the nub of the war strategy of the great powers" is to bring about such a transformation is simply silly; since if this were indeed the "nub" of the strategy of the powers—all the powers, the *Appeal* declares—then not the present war, but the war against the Soviet Union would now be going on. The N.C. majority elaborates an abstract section of an ancient thesis instead of analyzing the actual war.

3. As in the case of Poland, so in the case of Finland, the Soviet Union continues integral participation in the im-

perialist war, acting on the one side as a partner in the Berlin-Moscow axis, on the other in furtherance of its own imperialist and expansionist aims. Finland, conquered, becomes a necessary strategic base, consolidates the Baltic against future attack both from a defensive point of view and also (if the conquest is speedily and successfully completed) as protection in future expansionist moves either north into Scandinavia, or west and south into the Balkans and western Asia. The role of the Red Army in the Finnish invasion is reactionary, counter-revolutionary.

4. Reactionary also is the role of the Finnish bourgeois government and its army, a government made up of the murderers of the Finnish workers and the stranglers of the Finnish revolution, a slavish tool of British and U.S. imperialism.

5. From the analysis of the roles of the Finnish and Soviet governments and armies in the conflict follows, just as in the case of Poland or of the lesser Baltic states or of future similar episodes, the practical perspectives and tactical conclusions of the Fourth Internationalists with respect to the conflict. In general: the Fourth Internationalists, *internationally*, condemn, reject and oppose, *both* governments and their armies. We call, in this conflict, for the revolutionary struggle of Finnish and Russian workers, against their own governments and the armies of those governments, for fraternization on the fronts, for the right of the Finnish people to genuine freedom and self-determination—a right made impossible alike by their own imperialist-dominated government and by the Kremlin bureaucracy—and for the realization of the objectives of the workers and the masses through the achievement of democratic workers' rule in both countries, and socialism. The realization of the progressive aims of the workers in both countries will in turn be guaranteed through the Socialist United States of Europe.

6. The presumed difficulty or even impossibility of realizing such a perspective in the immediate present does not in the least militate against the necessity of putting it forward unambiguously and now. Only in the light of such a perspective can the Finnish masses (and this applies only in a less acute degree to the masses of all capitalist and imperialist countries, even those not involved directly in military struggle) be turned from desperate refuge in their own bourgeois governments (toward which they are forced so brutally by the policy of Stalinism, and forced also in less blunt and open fashion by the policy of the N.C. majority) and the Russian masses guided toward an orientation where they, jointly with the masses of other countries, will regain the road of the revolution. In the application of this perspective, the Fourth Internationalists will, of course, take into account concrete circumstances—the military situation, the moods of the masses, and also the differing economic relations in Finland and Russia. In Finland they will strive wherever possible toward the expropriation of the big landlords and private industry and the establishment of workers' control and the safe-guarding of their rights and con-

quests from counter-revolutionary Stalinism and its agencies; in Russia they will fight against any tendencies toward re-introduction of private property, and will aim to utilize every occasion for gaining democratic workers' control of the nationalized property. In both countries, they will continue the prosecution of the class struggle on all available arenas, irrespective of the effects upon the military struggle.

7. The collapse of the Finnish bourgeois regime as a result of military reverses will, as in the case of the collapse of the Polish government, produce a movement toward independent workers' power, which can triumph under favorable conditions, primarily, however, on the condition of a rigidly independent class line of the Finnish proletariat. To advocate that the Finnish proletariat act as "Soviet partisans," that is, as assistants of the Stalinist Army,

means to urge the strengthening of the forces that will act as the counter-revolutionary suppressor of any independent Finnish working-class movement or power, even if in the most elementary form. On the contrary, the revolutionists must encourage and give support to even the most embryonic tendency toward independent class action and the development of workers' power—directed against the enemy at home (the Finnish bourgeoisie) in the first place, and against the counter-revolutionary Stalinist invaders.

8. Within the United States, the main task of the Fourth Internationalists naturally remains the struggle against the main enemy, the enemy at home. In the case of the Finnish events, this means above all the exposure of the attempts of the administration and all schools of democratic imperialist patriots to exploit these events for the purpose of swinging the people behind the war aims of U.S. imperialism.

---

## The Majority of the N. C.

by Ben Hall

The crux of the dispute taking place in the party at the present time is: Is it necessary to amend the party position in order to exclude support to reactionary wars waged by Stalin (e.g., that waged yesterday in Poland; today, in Finland; and tomorrow. . .)?

The majority of the NC replies that no change whatsoever is necessary. Proceeding from here, it gave an evasive and ambiguous answer to the events in Poland. On the one hand, it applied the term "monstrous" to the invasion of Poland and stated that "we don't support Stalin's invasion of Poland only because he doesn't come for revolutionary purposes". (Cannon in Bulletin No. 3). On the other hand, it resisted all attempts to declare that we oppose all support to that war.

All possible ambiguity has been removed from the position of the majority by the editorial in the *Appeal* (December 1). Here we are told that if a war breaks out between bourgeois Finland and the Soviet Union it is the duty of the Finnish workers to be Soviet partisans in the struggle."

According to the majority, the military intervention of Stalin has the following results:

(1) It serves *only* the interests of the Kremlin and its ally, Hitler.

(2) It is carried out without consideration of the will of the workers in the Soviet Union, in the world generally, or in the country affected.

(3) It disorients the international working class.

(4) It compromises the Soviet Union.

(5) It drives the Finnish workers into unity with their own bourgeoisie.

Therefore??? Therefore support the military intervention! That is the conclusion of the majority. The majority seems to have discovered a progressive war all of whose implications are clearly reactionary.

We have always recognized the fact that Stalin's foreign policy bore a dual character and could be reactionary or progressive depending upon the precise circumstances. In this particular case we have an example of the reactionary politics of Stalin carried out by war. The war is consequently reactionary. Our policy should be against support to either side.

In effect, the majority argues that because the Soviet Union will be fighting a progressive war *tomorrow*, that therefore it must support its reactionary war *today*. To revert to the trade union analogy, we would have to say: This trade union is conducting a strike for reactionary purposes (e.g., for the ousting of all Negroes from the shops). But tomorrow, in the course of this strike, the union may be attacked by the bosses. Therefore we must support its reactionary strike today.

Such a policy is suicidal. Support to such a strike would compromise revolutionaries in the eyes of the Negro masses; and would, in their minds, throw ALL the "white" parties equally in the camp of the Jim Crow elements. Race chauvinism would be strengthened on all sides.

Applied to Finland this policy has the same results. If Stalin's war in Finland tends to make the Finnish workers cling to their own boss class, our support to such a war would make the disease still worse.

However, should the Soviet Union, *tomorrow* become the victim of a general military offensive conducted by the imperialist powers of either camp who would utilize this or any other reactionary move by Stalin as the pretext for beginning their attack on the U.S.S.R., it would be the duty of every worker to rally to the defense of the Soviet Union.

But because Stalin may be fighting this progressive war tomorrow is no reason to support his reactionary war of today. This would be incorrect; just as it would be equally incorrect to conclude that because Stalin conducts a reactionary war today that we must discard our support to his progressive war of tomorrow.

---

## We Condemn the Invasion; We Defend the Soviet Union

by Albert Goldman

Stalin's invasion of bourgeois Finland has brought greater clarity into the ideological conflict between the minority and majority of our party. (I hope no one of the minority will accuse me of justifying the invasion because of that). Regretfully we must also admit that it has sharpened that conflict. For, as the issues become clearer, the gulf between the groups grow wider.

Up to now we had to argue about implications of this or that

formulation, of the use of this or that word or phrase. Up to now we were confronted by a flood of hypothetical questions and pointless riddles but now we are confronted with an actual situation when everyone is compelled to draw concrete conclusions from his theoretical position. No posing of riddles can help in taking a position in the actual struggle between the Soviet Union and an outpost of world imperialism.

There were comrades who thought that, because both the majority and minority could unite on condemning the invasion of Poland, the differences between the groups were not so serious and could easily be reconciled if only the organizational question could be settled. These comrades must understand now that the reasons given by the two groups for condemning the invasion were all-important and indicated two fundamentally different attitudes to the Soviet Union and to Stalin's activities.

The minority wanted to condemn the invasion because it was an act of imperialism on the part of Stalin. The majority objected to the use of the term imperialism because such an absolutely un-Marxist use of that term could not but lead to absolutely incorrect policies. Condemn the invasion? Yes, but because it violated the cherished principles of socialism, because it confused the masses, destroyed their confidence in the Soviet Union and thus weakened the workers' state.

The important question was: from what point of view should the invasion of Poland be condemned? Sooner or later events were bound to show that the political reasons advanced for condemning the invasion would lead to a different attitude on the question of defending the Soviet Union.

The invasion of Finland brought a new factor into the situation—an actual war between the Soviet Union and capitalist Finland, inextricably connected with the imperialist world, and it is this factor which brought to the surface and made explicit that which was concealed and only implicit in the Shachtman resolution.

*No longer is it a question of what we meant by unconditional defense, but of defense itself.*

\* \* \*

It is first of all necessary to understand clearly the issue between the majority and minority on the invasion of Finland.

Both groups condemn the invasion.

Both groups are for a policy of revolutionary defeatism in Finland, for the overthrow of the Finnish bourgeoisie and establishment of a Finnish Soviet Republic. Both groups also agree that if the Finnish workers should succeed in establishing a soviet republic, they should struggle against Stalin's army for an independent soviet republic.

There is also no difference between the groups on the question of the necessity of continuing the struggle within the Soviet Union for the overthrow of Stalin. We all recognize that it would aid the Soviet Union tremendously if the Stalinist bureaucracy were overthrown by the Russian workers, under the leadership of the Fourth Internationalists.

The question that divides the groups is the question of *defeatism or defensism within the Soviet Union*, the question as to what position the party should take as to the victory or defeat of the red army fighting against the Finnish bourgeois army, before the Finnish workers establish a soviet republic or before the Russian workers overthrow Stalin.

The minority resolution takes a position of defeatism within the Soviet Union. The term defeatism is not found in the resolution but the idea is clearly stated in the last sentence which asserts that within the Soviet Union as well as in Finland the workers should "continue the prosecution of the class struggle on all available arenas, irrespective of the effects upon the military struggle." This is essentially the definition of defeatism adopted by the Fourth International and applied thus far to the policy which workers should follow in an imperialist country when that country is at war. The minority wants to apply it also to the Soviet Union which the Fourth International considers a workers' state.

\* \* \*

It is characteristic both of the confusion and the unprincipledness of the minority that it attempts to change fundamental principles of our International incidentally to the adoption of a policy on a particular question. There is nothing wrong in advocating a change of our fundamental principles but one must do so openly and not attempt to introduce such a change via a word or phrase in a resolution which does not in so many words advocate the abandonment of present programmatic principles and the adoption of new ones.

It has, for instance, been the position of the Fourth International that the Stalinist bureaucracy is not a class in the Marxist sense of the term. In one sentence of a short resolution the minority smuggles in the idea that the struggle of the Russian workers against the bureaucracy is a class struggle in the same sense that the struggle of the workers against the capitalist class in a capi-

talist country, thus transforming the Soviet bureaucracy into a stroke of the pen.

Until the minority seriously attempts to prove to us that the Soviet Union is an imperialist state in the Marxist sense of the term, and that the bureaucracy is a class in the Marxist sense of the term, we shall not argue the question. We have taken a contrary position on the basis of a very thorough analysis and an exhaustive discussion and it is up to those who want to change our minds to produce some new facts and arguments.

Here it is merely sufficient to note that the minority's position on Finland is based essentially on the concept that Stalin follows an imperialist policy and that therefore our attitude in the Soviet Union should be similar to, if not identical with, the attitude of the workers in any capitalist-imperialist country.

\* \* \*

As another justification of the policy of defeatism within the Soviet Union, the minority bases itself on the principle that Stalin is waging a reactionary war. Without any concrete analysis whatsoever the term "reactionary war" is hurled at us by the comrades of the minority in a sort of a triumphant manner, as if the term in and of itself immediately solves all problems.

The argument runs as follows. We support only progressive wars; we do not support reactionary wars; the Soviet Union under Stalin, in invading Finland, is conducting a reactionary war. Hence our policy should be one of defeatism in the Soviet Union. Thus, instead of a Marxist analysis, we have terms thrown at us such as reactionary and progressive.

Is the invasion of Finland by Stalin's red army reactionary? We can say: "Yes, it is." But does that solve the problem for us? It does not. For we cannot substitute a word for a Marxist analysis. In what way is it reactionary? Is it reactionary in the same way as the attack of imperialist Italy on Ethiopia or of Japan on China? Is it reactionary because it is an attack of an imperialist country on a colonial or semi-colonial country? Obviously not. It is reactionary because the invasion goes counter to all the best sentiments of the masses, confuses them and thus weakens the Soviet Union and the world revolution.

But a Marxist cannot stop there. He must take all factors into consideration. What role is Finland playing? What is the actual character of the struggle? What part is world imperialism playing in it?

The minority admits that Finland is a tool of British and American imperialism. The majority, taking all factors into consideration, concludes that the war between the Soviet Union and Finland, in spite of Stalin's crime in invading the latter country, is actually a struggle between imperialism and the workers' state.

And once we analyze the struggle as one between the workers' state and imperialist nations our slogan of unconditional defense comes into play; that is, we defend the Soviet Union "from the blows of the capitalist enemies, irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict." (War and the Fourth International, page 9).

Yes, we are for a Soviet Finland; we are for the overthrow of Stalin but we cannot and dare not be indifferent to the outcome of the actual struggle of the moment. As against the armies of bourgeois Finland fighting the battles of the imperialist world, we prefer and we shall work for the victory of the red army which, in spite of everything, is the army of the degenerated workers' state.

\* \* \*

Some comrades of the minority point to what they deem to be a gross contradiction in our attitude. We unreservedly condemn the invasion and at the same time we call upon the workers to support the red army as against the Finnish bourgeois army. Comrade Ben Hall, in his article "The Majority of the N. C.", makes a big point of this. After enumerating the criticisms which the majority levels at Stalin's invasion of Finland, he continues in a sarcastic vein: "Therefore? Therefore support the military intervention! That is the conclusion of the majority."

No, Comrade Hall. In the first place it is not *therefore* and in the second place we do not support the intervention. To put it plainly: *In spite of Stalin's crime in invading Finland under the circumstances that he did, we shall work for the victory of the red army against the Finnish bourgeois army representing imperialism. Why? Because in a war against imperialism, whatever the cause of the war, the consequences of a defeat of the red army by an imperialist army can be very grave indeed to the nationalized property. The working masses must at all times reserve for themselves the right and the privilege to destroy the Stalinist*

truth is concrete



bureaucracy. We must, with all means at our disposal, prevent the destruction of that bureaucracy by the imperialists.

The comrades of the minority become exceedingly irritated when we use the analogy of a trade union to illustrate our attitude to the Soviet Union and the Stalinist leadership. It is quite correct that an analogy does not prove anything but it shows how the person using the analogy looks at the whole subject. For us the workers' state is nothing but a very large trade union. That is why we constantly use the analogy. The only valid reason for objecting to the analogy of the trade union is that the Soviet Union is not a workers' state. But once you admit that it is then the trade union analogy is absolutely perfect.

Comrade Hall, however, accepts the analogy and on the basis of the analogy tries to prove that the majority is wrong.

We would not, he says, support a strike of a trade union to exclude Negroes from a factory. That is correct but let us examine the analogy a little further.

What did Stalin, the reactionary leader of the trade union, want from Finland, the little boss representing, in this instance, the big bosses? He wanted certain islands and a peninsula, Hagoie, for the purpose of assuring the defense of Leningrad. The object of Stalin, therefore, is not to exclude Negroes but to get certain positions from the boss in order to be in a better position to ward off a possible attack.

What did Stalin, the reactionary leader, do when the boss refused to grant his request? He did what many reactionary trade union leaders do on many occasions. He attacked the boss in such a way as to alienate the sympathy of everyone including the workers themselves. Therein lies his crime. But once he committed that crime, for which we must condemn him without any reservations, he involved the union in a strike against the bosses and in that strike no revolutionist can possibly be neutral.

Stalin's objective was not bad. The way he attempted to realize it is very bad because even if he achieves the objective he has weakened the union by alienating the sympathy of the workers.

Let us take the analogy from a different viewpoint. Let us consider the objective bad, that is, let us consider that he is actually calling a strike to exclude Negroes, in which case we could not possibly support him. But, whatever his motives may be, the strike actually developed into a struggle between the bosses and the union and the union is in danger of destruction at the hands of the bosses. No revolutionist will permit the bosses to destroy the union even though the calling of the strike was for a purpose which he could not possibly support.

If we are right in considering the Soviet Union a workers'

state—though degenerated—and if we are also right that Finland represents an outpost of imperialism, then it follows, as night the day, that in spite of everything we must prevent the defeat of the red army at the hands of the Finnish bourgeois army.

\* \* \*

There are many comrades of the minority who are playing around with the idea that a defeat of the red army is to be preferred because that will lead to a revolution against Stalin. They cite Lenin as authority for the proposition that a defeat of one's own imperialist army is preferable because it will create conditions favorable for a revolution. The difference is that Lenin dealt with a struggle between imperialist camps with the same property relations in both camps and under those conditions the workers can and must be utterly indifferent to the fate of their own imperialist state. The workers must concentrate on the struggle to overthrow their own capitalist government and if this leads to the defeat of their own imperialist army, that risk must be taken.

And after all, it is not such a great risk. Why? Because, even assuming the worst possible variant, that is, assuming that the opposing imperialist army will overrun the country and defeat not only the bourgeoisie but also the revolution, there would be only a change of masters under the same property relations.

It may conceivably happen that a defeat of the red army by a bourgeois army would lead to a revolutionary movement among the Russian masses but the far, far greater probability is that such a defeat would give heart to every counter-revolutionary element within the Soviet Union and encourage the imperialists in attempting to smash the workers' state once and for all.

A defeat of an imperialist army creates a revolutionary movement amongst the masses; a defeat of the army of a workers' state—no matter how degenerated—would set the counter-revolutionary elements into motion.

Can anyone point to many cases where strikes have been broken by the bosses and the trade union completely defeated and where as a result the revolutionary elements came to power immediately after the defeat?

\* \* \*

All the arguments lead to one conclusion. If you believe in the Soviet Union as a workers' state and you analyze the present conflict as one between the Soviet Union and an important outpost of imperialism then the application of our slogan of unconditional defense must apply, regardless of the crimes of Stalin.

The workers and not the imperialists must punish and destroy the Stalinist bureaucracy.

## Organizational Methods and Political Principles

by Joseph Hansen

### Turning Organizational Considerations Upside Down

To those comrades who have become part of our movement since the entry into the Socialist Party and who are now attempting to arrive at a serious and well-considered understanding of the political and organizational differences which are being discussed in our party, some of the aspects of the present struggle over the Russian question are very perplexing.

Especially perplexing is the force of attraction which has temporarily bound together the different political groups of the Minority. How can those who advocate defeatism in the USSR unite with those who don't know where they stand now or where they will jump tomorrow? How can these two groups unite with a third which votes for defense of the USSR and thus agrees with the political opponents of the Majority?

The motives which impelled the third group under the

leadership of Comrade Abern to join the variegated Minority more than any other single factor cause serious comrades to wonder, since Comrade Abern is one of those who like Comrades Cannon and Shachtman and Comrade Specter of Canada helped found the Left Opposition in America and hence should know and be following the principles of Marxism. Comrade Abern (with his friends, naturally) is the only one in the Minority who up to date has declared his agreement with the political position of the Majority and the only one who separates himself from supporting the Majority position solely because of *organizational* reasons. How can this action of Comrade Abern be squared with the fundamental Marxist principle he presumably would follow that organizational concessions may be made for the sake of political agreement but never political concessions for the sake of organizational agreement? Comrade Abern's action can easily lead one to believe that there must be more than lies on the surface, that he is following some basic principle, has some highly important end in

view, which requires this devious combination and hence is worthy of support. Perhaps Comrade Abern hopes through an organizational bloc with political opponents to keep the party better on the rails of the Majority political position with which he agrees. Perhaps Comrade Abern hopes after the victory of the Minority bloc to have gained sufficient weight in his own right to wield the organizational black-jack on his erstwhile organizational allies if they raise their principled differences with the basic principles of the Fourth International.

In the internal struggles of the party as well as in other fields, the experience of the past can help in solving the problems of the present. Comrade Abern's role in the present struggle might better be appreciated if we recall the role that was played by various elements at the time of the struggle over entry into the Socialist Party. In that fight, Comrade Abern's perspective was a highly *conservative* perspective, *the most conservative in the party*, although that, true enough, did not prevent it from entailing the most drastic organizational conclusions. Comrade Abern opposed the entry not on principled grounds, as he quite frankly stated, but on tactical grounds. He agreed apparently with all the political conclusions of those who advocated entry. He maintained that it was merely a question of what organizational methods we should use in accomplishing our task of influencing the development of the Socialist Party and that we could do it, even with our small forces, more successfully from the outside. So far as I know he has not changed that estimate to this day. Yet despite the fact that Comrade Abern had only tactical differences, he planned quite deliberately to split from the party if he did not succeed in gaining the majority for his *conservative* organizational position. And he cited as justification that there are times when a split is justified over tactical considerations. All the members of his faction (known as the Muste-Abern faction) were carefully prepared for the eventuality of split. Thus Comrade Abern found *his* organizational methods so *rigid*, so *inflexible*, and so *conservative* that he was brought to the very brink of the extremely *adventuristic political position* of splitting from the Fourth International. He exchanged conservative politics for adventurism, and adaptable organizational methods for intransigence. Then as now Comrade Abern placed organizational methods above political principles.

Up to the very time of the convention of the Workers Party which decided upon entry, Comrade Abern had not made up his mind whether to carry through the planned split or not. As he informed those of us who adhered at that time to his position, split depended solely upon the size of the forces which opposed the entry. If they were large the split would be carried through; if they were small then the split would not be carried through. Split hinged on counting heads. Such a position could not help but cover up the alien tendency of Oehler and contribute to his making greater gains than he would have made otherwise since Oehler made the entry a principled question and split on *principled* grounds. Many adherents of the Muste-Abern faction decided that entry was a principled question if it was a splitting question as Abern claimed and joined the Oehlerites. Of the various organizational schools in our

party, that of Comrade Abern's has proved to be one of the most costly.

The miserable end of Comrade Abern's anti-entry faction is well worth considering in the light of the present struggle. Comrade Weber had the political courage to break sharply from the incorrect position he had taken in supporting Abern and this had a powerful influence in disintegrating the faction. After alarming defections to the Oehlerites on one side and the Cannon-Shachtman entry faction on the other, a leading comrade labeled quite modestly the "Lenin of America"\* came down from Canada to save the pieces, but neither his organizational methods nor his political principles proved more efficient than Comrade Abern's. A bloc of Stalinist stooges left with appropriate fanfare in the *Daily Worker*.

Comrade Abern succeeded only in gaining the organizational recompense of placing some of his faction members on the National Committee—the "Lenin of America," A. J. Muste, himself, and Gerry Allard who later found it more profitable to sacrifice his political principles for the sake of exercising his organizational efficiency as editor of Norman Thomas' pious mouthpiece, *The Call*.

A. J. Muste, titular head of the faction who had been ballyhooed as the best organizational find since the inception of the Left Opposition in the United States, later found it more profitable to utilize his organization efficiency in the service of Christ and a quiet chapel. Vereecken and Sneevliet in Europe who had lent their prestige and authority to the anti-entry position also ended miserably, finding organizational solace in the *enemy camp* of the London Bureau. Out in California, Barney Moss—West Coast lieutenant of Abern—retired to the academic Berkeley hillsides, far from political work and care, after he broke once and for all with Bolshevik organizational methods, and now spends his time under the eucalyptus trees brow-beating the youth who are attracted by his sherry wine and guff.

True, Comrade Abern cannot be held responsible for the renegacy of these ex-members of the Fourth International, but it is not without significance that all of the leaders of the anti-entry faction except Comrade Weber, who broke demonstratively and acknowledged his error, placed organizational efficiency above political principles and ended in various camps opposed to the Fourth International.

A party may have highly efficient organizational methods, and yet be an executioner of the socialist revolution as the Stalinist party. A party may have inefficient organizational methods and be reformist as the Socialist Party or the Lovestoneites. A party may have the most expensive stream-lining in the way of organizational methods and yet be the most reactionary party in the world, as the party of Hitler. And a party may have highly efficient organizational methods or very slipshod methods and yet be a revolutionary workers' party. In the one case its successes will be *more* marked, and its growth *more* rapid and sure, other factors being equal. But for Marxists the first thing to decide upon is not the *efficiency* of an organization but its *political* principles: are they correct ones that will lead the working class to socialism or are they false and dangerous?

\*At the present time, I understand, this "Lenin of America" spends his time contemplating the navel of a phonograph record.

If one considers a given set of political principles to be the ones the revolutionary party of the workers must follow, then—and only then—does he consider their organizational application and the relative efficiency which can be obtained from them in a given situation. *Political principles come first.*

### **Organizational Methods and Administrative Efficiency**

Just as the more conscious followers of Abern place organizational methods above political principles, so the newcomers to their ranks place administrative efficiency above organizational methods. Consequently there is a whole series of gradations of sub-political motivations that have drawn these people together and will hold them together until they learn better or else fall into the state of arrested political development which seems to characterize some of our otherwise capable and loyal comrades. Someone's letter wasn't answered; some one didn't like the tone of voice or manners of this or that leader on some particular occasion; someone walking down the street with a leader was afraid to break a silence he felt to be intentionally oppressive; someone found the floors of the headquarters unswept, or the desk without stamps for an important mailing; someone foolishly came on time to an appointment—at worst fanciful, but even granting all these accusations to be true (and the Minority members sin as much in this as those of the Majority) still all this is only secondary to the problem of deciding upon the correct organizational methods to fit the political principles of the party. Thus the launching of the campaign technique was an organizational method to better implement our ideas, and while there is no sharp break in this field of the party's life just as there is no sharp break between organizational and political problems and one grades into another (in a very acute revolutionary situation any of these can assume *principled* proportions—but clearly declared to be of principled importance *not* just organizational), yet getting the handbills out in time, seeing that squads distribute them, paying a deposit to hold a hall for a lecture—all this can be classified as within the administrative sphere.

The imagination to conceive changing our whole organizational form from independence to organizational amalgamation with and subordination to a larger party and to accomplish this successfully despite bitterest and most conservative opposition from all sides, this is imagination of high organizational caliber—or more prosaically, it is Bolshevism. The sending out of the mail telling the comrades when and where, this is administrative—still administrative if not carried out at all or no matter how nicely the letters were made up or how carefully they were addressed so that they got to the right people and not to an alien force.

Let us not confuse an administrative job with an organizational method or a political principle.

Correct organizational methods are of paramount importance as the history of our party in the United States shows and they have loomed high—far higher in my estimation than all of Abern's undoubted administrative ability. It is all the more inexcusable then to place efficient administration above organizational methods. Of what use is

the efficient administration of inefficacious organizational methods?

First come political principles, then organizational methods, and only after that the question of efficient administration.

You comrades in the Minority, where does your caucus differ so fundamentally in its position or so conspicuously in the successes of its leaders from that of the Majority on the *administrative* plane that you find it impossible to join the Majority in the fight for correct political principles and correct organizational methods in our party?

Are the administrative records of the Minority leaders so outstanding, are they such models of orderliness, such technicians, so thorough, prompt, dynamic, machine-like and disciplined that you must perforce take over their political and organizational revision, casting aside the basic doctrines of the Fourth International and the organizational methods which have played a major role in building our section into the most powerful in the Fourth International?

### **Some Organizational Methods**

For the moment let us leave aside the political differences which separate the Defeatist and the Doubtist sections of the Minority from the basic position of the Fourth International and consider the organizational accusations which are concentrated most sharply in the position of Comrade Abern.

First, it must be stated that most of the accusations which are now being made are not new. They did not burst from cover full-feathered in the last two or three months. Secondly, it must be added that the greater part of the accusations, although generally known throughout the party and quite freely discussed by everyone, are of the type which in letters follow the heading "personal" and which avoid expression in resolutions, documents, or even speeches at official meetings where they could be met squarely. This is one of the organizational methods unfortunately prevalent in certain circles of our party.

The Oehlerites based a good deal of their appeal to the membership not so much on the merits of the "French turn" and its American application as upon the organizational trick of endless hammering upon a few catchwords: "Cannon hatchetmen," "Cannon stooges," and "Philadelphia thugs." A newcomer could not help being impressed by these cries—where there was so much noise there must be some blood. The victim of this organizational procedure began to interpret every action of the leadership—no matter what—as a plot, deep and double-dyed, against the rank and file and the free development of political personalities who might challenge their clutch upon alleged bureaucratic sinecures. The repetition of some of these Oehlerite catchwords in a quieter and milder organizational form by some of the adherents of the Abern-Muste caucus lent weight to them. Cannon's organizational methods were "notorious;" Cannon did not solve problems by political persuasion but by "bureaucratic repressions;" "Cannon wanted a 'one-man party'; etc., etc. All these epithets found their most literary expression I believe in California where Symes-Clement-Rogers took them over whole and undigested as a slick organizational method and repeated them with that

peculiar nervous frenzy which characterized the Clarityite caucus in California.

"We agree with you politically ninety-nine and forty-four hundredths percent," Symes insisted over and over during the Good and Welfare period of the branch meetings she attended; "in fact in many respects we are better Trotskyites than you—but . . . we can't agree with your organizational methods. Bolshevism leads to Stalinism and Cannon is a son-of-a-bitch. Just wait until Shachtman gets here. He'll straighten Cannon out." (Symes didn't wait long enough.) This language of course was unlady-like even for Symes, but any of the California comrades who battled her attempts at revising our program can vouch for the literal accuracy of this quotation in its entirety. Whoever supported the position of the Fourth International in California was dubbed by Symes a "Cannon hatchetman," a "Cannon stooge." It was difficult to believe in listening to her that the Oehlerite and entry fights had ended, especially when Symes made overtures to the ex-members of the Muste-Abern caucus. Rogers ended up calling the cops; Clement didn't count much as an independent political factor—he was only Symes husband—and Symes returned where she had started, gnashing her teeth in *The Call*, berating Trotskyism as "inverted Stalinism" and peddling the pathetic and worn-out wares of Angelica Balabanoff.

On the international scale this same organizational method of fighting the Bolshevik line is pursued by Pivert and Co. against the Fourth International in general and Comrade Trotsky in particular. That this argument could arise again in *our* ranks is perhaps explainable in view of the newness of many comrades. That it could be repeated by old experienced comrades with the hope that it would take in anyone who has been in the ranks a few years is rather amazing. In any event the record of this particular organizational method is not only worn in the grooves but just a trifle cracked. It is simply not true that whoever arrives at the same conclusions as are recorded in the basic documents of the Fourth International is a stooge or a hatchetman for some particular leader.

### **The Positive Side of this Organizational Method**

In contrast to the "hatchetmen" and "stooges" the party is blessed with the "independent thinkers," who constitute the other side of the coin. Independent thinkers in this case are those who arrive at a position different from certain leaders and in agreement with other leaders. This of course is a neat and useful distinction—very efficient organizationally. One not only is free to support certain leaders without his conscience accusing him of being a "stooge" but he enjoys a certain eminence, an independence of personality (which of course has nothing to do with "American individuality") and that is no mean qualification in these times when Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky have dug up so much ground previously. Let us finish with this argument once and for all. Even the bourgeois professors prove often enough (in peace times) that the grain of originality in anyone is strictly limited; as for the Marxists, they are more interested in politics.

In the present struggle, the epithet, "independent thinkers," is merely a clever organizational stunt designed for

morale and used by certain factionalists to pat themselves and their followers on the back. I have yet to hear of a single case in our movement where any one with a new idea or a new formulation of an old idea was stifled, gagged, prevented from presenting it in either the party press or internal bulletin, or driven from the ranks to waste away his talents a mute and inglorious revolutionary Milton.

A subdivision of the "independent thinkers" designed to influence the youth movement organizationally is the "persecuted youth." These are merely the "independent thinkers" who belong to the youth—organizationally—and who suffer from the alleged bureaucratic repressions of the party regime. Some of these youth have been in the revolutionary movement as long as fifteen or sixteen years, long enough to no longer look convincing as suffering choir boys. The wear and tear on their mimeograph machines as a mute evidence of their organizational methods should alone prove that far from suffering from repression they are not repressed enough.

The argument of the "persecuted youth" is one of the most shallow and demagogic of all. Its appeal is directed to the *leaders* of the youth organization. Those thoroughly capable rank and file youth members who are treading on the heels of these leaders receive a colder and more hostile appreciation. A sharp and salutary break with the hide-bound organizational conservatism in this section of our movement would prove far more valuable to the youth than the organizational method of thumping them a thousand and one times between the shoulder blades and teaching them self-pity.

### **"Inside Dope" — the Underground Organizational Method**

The well-known fact that the National Office is far from being a model of efficiency in such administrative matters as promptly answering letters from comrades in the field (I speak particularly of the past) has acted as a catalyst in precipitating a grouping in our party which lives on the "inside dope." Someone high in the party flashes all the pertinent inner news involving the most authoritative bodies of the party to his personal friends, even though they may not sit upon so much as a Branch executive, and they in turn enjoy the aura of always being in the "know," acquainted with all the "important dope" in the Political Committee. It is absolutely elementary that only the Political Committee as a whole has the right to pass out information of concern to it unless serious political differences arise which require the intervention of the membership—there is no other way of protecting the party not only from enemy forces but from disturbances which are not important enough to warrant attention and energy from the ranks. Why then the organizational method of the grapevine? It is a distinct flattery to be in such close connection with the center even though it must be kept sub rosa since the information does not come through the normal party channels. The comrade who falls for this (as I once did) feels superior to the other rank and filers, smarter, and something of a leader in being able to anticipate the mimeograph of the National Office by a few days. This organizational method alone is basis enough for the crystallization

of a kind of grouping which springs to the defense of its main-root when a faction fight threatens, which might have organizational consequences against the channels of their information. But it is highly damaging to the political development of a newcomer to this school. He learns to depend on letters from the center instead of his own judgment. He learns the cynical contempt toward the other party leaders which characterizes his mentor. The authority of the party and its leading bodies is lowered to a point where observance of discipline in action becomes desultory. The grapevine is one organizational method which should be condemned in our party. For greater administrative efficiency in our National Office, yes—even if we have to draft a few more stenographers into service; but an end to the sieve from the top which spreads the “inside dope.”

### ***The Empiric School of Riddles***

The organizational accusation of the Defeatists and the Doubtists—that the regime bases itself conservatively on the fundamental conceptions of the Fourth International—this of course flows from their principled position. The Defeatists want an organization that will express *their political principles* efficiently (defeatism in Russia, loose party organization, part time functionaries, etc.); the Doubtists want an organization that will express *their doubts* efficiently. Thus there is a very sharp cleavage in the theoretical positions back of the organizational grievances which have temporarily united the Minority. None of them like the regime of the Majority for entirely different reasons. Comrade Abern has not yet given theoretical expression to his organizational views, perhaps because he agrees with the political position of the Majority. Apparently he has succeeded in divorcing theory from practise with one hundred percent administrative efficiency.

Inasmuch as the organizational conclusions of the Defeatists and the Doubtists are the result of theoretical positions at variance with the present position of the party, their arguments are of much greater weight and importance than the arguments of those in the Abern position who are attempting to lift themselves in the party by nothing but their administrative bootstraps. For the first time in our movement we have a school of riddlemakers.

Beginning with the question, “What do you tell the Polish workers when the Red Army crosses the frontier?” the school of answering problems with riddles has expanded even more rapidly than the “imperialist” empire of Alexander the Great, taking in Persia and Afghanistan in a few days and then in one leap, India (“answer yes or no” in the most formal categoric style of British empiricism) but unlike the “imperialism” of Alexander, this school did not stop at India. When a representative of Ceylon came to America, the riddlemakers warm-heartedly made up a sparkingly fresh and original riddle right on the spot: “What do you tell the Ceylonese workers if the Red Army crosses the frontier into Ceylon?” And when a representative came from China, they again showed their originality by marching the Red Army promptly across the Chinese frontier. As yet no representative of the Fourth International has appeared from Alaska or we might expect these independent thinkers to freeze a bridge of ice

over Bering Straits for the convenience of a Red Army on skates—in brief since the western border of Canada is unfortunately not fortified — “What do you tell the American workers if the Red Army invades California?” This in the minds of the independent thinkers of the Minority looms more important than the question of just what they would tell the American workers if their faction took over the Socialist Workers Party.

In place of serious analysis based on the actual concrete class forces warring on the world arena, the Minority have cooked up a never ending series of riddles with glib and independently thought out variations. When it is pointed out that we never defended each and every action of the Red Army any more than we did of the G.P.U. or of Stalin’s diplomatic corps, or his 13th Street hacks, or his trade union flunkies—that we defend the Soviet Union with our own methods and our own forces regardless of what Stalin does or does not do, the Minorityites dropped back to the second line trenches. “But there is terrible danger that Stalin will gain control over the Indian revolution.” Yes—there is terrible danger, and we fight it, but that does not change our estimate of the economic conquests of October or our defense of these conquests. There was terrible danger in the United States that Stalinism would conquer the C.I.O. but that did not lead us to posing the question of revising our fundamental analysis of the U.S.S.R. To raise that question now because Stalinism is a danger in the colonial countries (and more acutely in view of the coming revolutions) makes one wonder what we are dealing with—political virgins who are first now realizing what Stalinism means and how we fight it?

Now the third line trenches of the Minority are opening their guns. “Would it not be better to overthrow the Soviet Economy for the sake of overthrowing Stalin?” Thus some of the Minority comrades are beginning to ask, “Would it not be better to destroy the degenerated workers’ state and replace it even with fascism for the sake of destroying Stalin?” As if the ghastly experience of Italy and Germany were not bitter enough! This is the bridge where the Minority meets those who hold there is no difference between Fascism and Communism. And that also is the parade ground of the imperialist democratic warmongers.

The riddle of the riddlemakers is not difficult to solve. They arose in an organizational way as an attempt to pose embarrassing questions which would stump the conservative leadership with problems “unheard of in their philosophy” of Marxism particularly in “*this* concrete war” and which would provide an opening wedge for the Minority comrades to introduce their political position as the official position of the party. The Minorityites hoped to prove their contention that the Majority is bureaucratic, conservative, “inept,” (“tail-endist” to revive the more colorful phrase that was used by Abern and Muste in the entry fight) through posing questions which the Majority, according to the blue-print, would fumble. The cost of teaching their membership the facile method of riddlemaking instead of concrete analysis based on actual forces of course did not enter into their calculations. That cost, like all the costs of mis-education, is to be borne by those who

were not yet experienced enough to see the organizational reason for the sudden manufacture of riddles.

Why did the riddlemakers come to the front in this particular struggle? Even without considering Burnham's withdrawn resolution it is not difficult to see that the Minority is weighted down on the side away from Marxism—the side that hinges its judgment upon each concrete event in and of itself and divorced from its historical and class relationship. Is this concrete act good or bad? Is it an imperialist act or isn't it an imperialist act? The fixed and iron categories are set up and each event shoved into its pigeonhole sheared clean of all conflicting forces, all shifting, mobile, and temporary factors. "It's an 'imperialist' act," and the act is shoved once and for all into the imperialist pigeonhole. On a wider scale, Professor Dewey gave a good demonstration of this philosophical school of thought when in a recent issue of the Sunday New York Times he stated categorically that the concrete experience of the Russian revolution had shown that the way of violent revolutionary change could not better human relations. In brief—all of Bolshevism and the titanic experience of October spawned only Stalinism. Unfortunately for Professor Dewey's philosophy, revolutions will continue to occur in the future just as they have in the past, whether individual philosophers think they are best or not, and it is *this* kind of concrete ground from which the Marxists start. Aside from that, if Professor Dewey did not enjoy high standing, a comfortable salary, and congenial friends in the professorial world, but starved in the ranks of the working class and the unemployed, he might change his mind about the benefits of revolution—and revolution in the *Bolshevik* style. The philosophical school of Pragmatism of which Professor Dewey is the acknowledged head, is the prevailing philosophy in America, the practical, humdrum, work-a-day concrete handmaid of idealism. To the American Marxists this school of philosophy is a bitter enemy. When it penetrates our ranks it must be fought and counteracted even in those times when it does not raise political differences with the line of Marxism. That is a task far more difficult and serious than the composition of riddles.

### **Will You Defend the Soviet Union if Stalin Attacks It With the Red Army?**

Our basic conception of the Soviet Union to date has rested on our analysis of its economy. Taking as our starting point the key question for Communists at all times—the question of private property in the means of production, we decided long ago that the economy of the Soviet Union was a workers' economy, that it was therefore a mighty positive force for the world revolution and that we would defend it against all attack, subordinating that defense only to the world revolution as indicated in one of the resolutions of the First World Congress in 1919. During the past years we have defended it against the attack of Stalin no matter what tool he used against that economy, whether the G.P.U., the lies of his journalists, the frame-ups of his judicial apparatus, or the firing squads of the Red Army. We had to differentiate sharply between the economy which was the greatest ally of world revolution within the Soviet Union and the political regime which

was based on that economy and yet corroding it. We advocated political revolution against the Stalin regime which meant fighting the Red Army arms in hand if in a revolutionary situation it acted as the instrument of Stalin against the revolutionary workers of the Soviet Union. Arms are the customary weapons of political revolutions and civil wars. (Naturally in our strategy we would attempt to win over the ranks of the Red Army if it were not possible to win the army over as a whole.) On the other hand if Stalin were forced to act in defense of the Soviet Union before that revolutionary situation arrived in Russia, without abating our opposition to his regime in the slightest we would not oppose such actions but would be in the forefront of carrying them out efficiently. The existence of the Soviet economy gives us the touchstone by which to judge whether or not it is still a workers' state, no matter what the deformations. If that economy is crushed then it will be time to declare that it is a capitalist state in which we struggle for social revolution and defeatism in time of war. The only other alternative, that a new form of exploitation hitherto unknown to history has arisen, has been answered by Comrade Trotsky in his article, "The U.S.S.R. in War." Yes, we defend the Soviet Union, not only against Hitler and the democratic imperialists, but against Stalin and his instruments as well.

### **The Character of the War**

It is precisely in order to avoid characterizing the actions of the U.S.S.R. in the Marxist way on the basis of the economy and the political regime resting on that economy that the comrades of the Minority have now taken as their touchstone in judging events the character of the war. The war is imperialist, they say, therefore everything that happens in that war is imperialist. The pigeonholes have been cut, the events must fit them. They grant that the character of the war might change, but as to what concrete events would change the character of the war they are conveniently vague.

Thousands of times the quotation of Clausewitz that war is the continuation of politics by other means has been cited in our press and the concrete meaning of its corollary explained time and time again: the character of a war is determined by the economy of the state which wages war. In our press "imperialism" has come to mean exactly the economy of a state dominated by finance-capitalism, as explained by Comrade O'Rourke in his article in Bulletin No. 3, so that when we say that a war is an imperialist war of conquest we mean by that the war of a finance-capitalist state. A feudal state can wage only a feudal war no matter how much territory it conquers. A slave state can wage only a war characteristic of its economy. A degenerated workers' state can wage only the war of a degenerated workers' state. To use the *general*—not Marxist—meaning of imperialism\* in relation to the U.S.S.R. in order to characterize its role as "imperialist" and thus hope to lump it together with the capitalist states is at best a confusion of terms—at worst a cheap trick worthy of a sharp high school debater. The war conducted by the

\*Imperialism—The policy or practice of seeking to extend the control or empire of a nation.—Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. This definition could apply equally well to the progressive conquests against capitalism by a *healthy* workers' state.

imperialist states is an imperialist war. The war conducted by the U.S.S.R. is the war of a degenerated workers' state. We oppose the degeneration; we defend the workers' state. We start not from our characterization of the war but from our characterization of the state.

Measuring all events by the "character of the war" is a sharp axe with which to cut away the rudder and masts of Marxism. "If Great Britain should attack the Soviet Union now, we would not defend the U.S.S.R.," say the Defeatists. Why? "Because the character of the war has not changed." In other words, the iron category has not been changed by these independent thinkers. Marxists on the contrary seek those dynamic forces moving in the direction opposed to the enemy and defend and support these forces. The war is not *all* imperialist. One very important part of that war (covering one-sixth of the earth's surface!) is the deadliest enemy of imperialism—the Soviet economy. The world revolution has everything to gain in defending that economy. What can be gained by overthrowing it? That would be about as intelligent and progressive as advocating that Tom Girdler's thugs be allowed to smash the C.I.O. completely, wipe it out of existence with machine guns and tear gas because the policies of Lewis do not fit with those of the Fourth International. No matter what philosophical school we belong to, in politics it is a matter of self-preservation to be able to distinguish allies from enemies.

### **Yes, War Pressure of the Imperialist Democracies**

The imperialist democracies have set up a great hue and cry about the fate of poor imperialist Czechoslovakia, poor imperialist Poland, and now poor imperialist Finland. The condemnation they heap upon the U.S.S.R. does not distinguish in the slightest between the progressive nature of the basic economy and the reactionary nature of Stalin's political regime. In fact the imperialist democrats deliberately confuse them, lump them together, and attempt to brand the workers' revolution as synonymous with Stalinism. Against this vicious campaign it is necessary for our movement to wage the sharpest, most relentless struggle. That the Defeatist and Doubtist comrades of the Minority have allowed their analysis of the Soviet Union to take on the same coloration as that of the democrats—dumping everything into one pot—is an alarming symptom in our movement. It is necessary only to recall in conjunction with this similarity in analysis the fact that it arose at the same time as the democratic hue and cry, receives its most agitated and acute expression with every new crisis on the war front. It is not at all the case of calling the Defeatist and Doubtist comrades of the Minority *conscious* reflectors of this war pressure.\* But this phenomenon in our party at this time seems more than coincidental, especially in the light of the well-recognized bad social composition of our ranks in the centers of Minority strength. It should call forth from the Defeatists and Doubtists of the Minority the most careful explanation if they wish to avoid the conclusion that seems most natural in the situation.

\*Freud was fond of pointing out in his works that the victims of even such constant occurrences of every-day life as *forgetting*, for example, are never conscious of the cause and are indeed the stoutest deniers of the real cause, and that only by the most vigorous discipline and searching analysis can the victim become aware of the true cause.

As for the organizational motivation of Comrade Abern in adhering to the Minority, I should like to read an explanation from him himself. His motives seem far more obscure—or else brazenly obvious.

### **What Will be the Political Line of the Organizational Bloc ?**

Inasmuch as the Minority have the perfect and unchallengeable right to run any of their adherents for any post in the party as part of their campaign to win a majority, it is possible that they will win and as a result institute *their* regime in the party. The comrades of the Majority will be the first to defend them in this right, for upon the free exercise of this right depends the successful maintenance of democracy within the Fourth International. Moreover both the Majority and the Minority have agreed to eliminate all question of split, expulsions, or resignations. This means that if either the Majority or the Minority win the party, those in opposition who lost have agreed to abide by the incoming regime and to work loyally in accordance with the principles of centralism. Hence every serious member of the party must ask himself and the Minority caucus: will it be the political line of the *Defeatists*, the line of the *Doubtists*, or the line of those Minority comrades who agree politically with the Majority?

Our movement has been built through great sacrifices. Hundreds upon hundreds, and not only in the Soviet Union, have given their lives for the basic line of the Fourth International. That line was forged through costly experiences and struggles both organizational and political. It must not be given up lightly, for administrative reasons, for emotional reasons, or because of temporary and passing moods. The reasoning of those older experienced proletarian comrades who hammered out the Fourth International in collaboration with the heroic few who first took up the fight against Stalinism as part of world reaction in 1923-24 must not be rejected lightly. The coming period is not just one of reaction and terror but one filled with the brightest vistas for our movement. The proletariat took one-sixth of the globe in the last war. In this one they will smash the bloody rule of capitalism forever. But if we are to succeed it can be only with the line of the Fourth International—a hard basic principled political line that is not easily changed or traded for a mess of organizational pottage.

December, 1, 1939.

P.S. : Since writing the above, I have been informed that Abern is running for City Organizer in New York with excellent chances for success. What does this mean? Will Abern break from the political hegemony of the Defeatists and Doubtists on whose organizational strength he is riding and carry out the political line of the Majority? Or is he merely the organizational blackjack with which the Defeatists and Doubtists intend to slug their way into political power? The fact that the Minority is ousting such a competent Bolshevik organizer as Bert Cochran should open the eyes of many to the fact that there is something more serious than just the organizational or administrative question at stake in this struggle.

# Why Not Analyze the Russian Economy ?

by Roger B. Cross

1. The Defense of the Soviet Union, if we continue to defend it, should be based upon evolutionary defeatism in the various capitalistic countries. The goal is World Revolution. The question of defense of the USSR must be subordinated to this strategic goal.

2. A Workers' State, if it means anything at all, means a state controlled by the workers. And Workers' Control means Workers' Democracy. Thus, only when and if there is Workers' Democracy can a state be described as a Workers' State.

3. Private property is not the sine qua non of capitalism. Marx characterized the two peculiar traits of capitalistic production as: 1) surplus value, 2) commodity production; and foresaw the tendency towards the abolition of capital as private property within the boundaries of capitalist production itself (cf. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 312, 313, 516, 1025, 1026, Kerr ed.; and Engels, *Anti-During*, pp. 312, 313, International Publishers).

4. If the state is in the hands of the capitalists, state ownership is capitalism (sometimes called state capitalism). However, put this same state ownership (and state planning) in the hands of officials democratically elected and controlled by the workers, and State Socialism, i.e., a Workers' State, exists. Without workers' control, State Socialism vanishes into thin air.

5. In Russia, the means of production have passed from the hands of the entrepreneurs into those of the state. However, the workers have no control over the means of production and hence no control over the products of their labor. To live, the Russian workers have to sell their labor power, as under capitalism.

6. Is the Stalinist bureaucracy a class? If it is not a class, does it prove that Russia is still a Workers' State? The bureaucracy is different in structure from the bourgeoisie, but not in function. Its function is the accumulation of capital, and thus the control of the products of the workers' labor. Commodity production, surplus value (profits of the state) and conversion of profits into further state property exist without working class control of the bureaucracy through Soviets or other Working Class organizations. Besides having a function identical with that of the capitalists, the Russian bureaucracy also has recently acquired the important power of perpetuating itself through the revival of the right of inheritance, certainly one of the most salient characteristics of a ruling class—capitalist or otherwise.

7. Therefore, according to Marx's specific features of capitalism, commodity production and surplus value, capitalism would seem to exist in Russia—a new type of capitalist state perhaps, but, minus workers' democracy and control, still a capitalist state.

8. The mere differentiation of income and the opportunity of a profitable investment in state properties, in themselves do not constitute a vital danger to the future of a socialist economy. The danger reaches terrifying proportions when one realizes that it is not checked by *Workers' Control*. Therein lies the difference between a capitalist and a workers' economy.

9. Whether we label Russia as a Workers' State or not, the issue resolves itself into whether or not the progressive nature of state property and state planning should be defended. The chief arguments for the defense of the Soviet Union are: a) Property-

relations need not be changed to resurrect a real Workers' State from a degenerated Workers' State; b) state property and state planning are progressive; c) Russia is not an imperialist nation; d) the revolutionary potentialities of the Russian working class far exceed those of other sections of the world proletariat.

10. What are property relations? The only possible meaning is the relation which various groups in a society have to property. If one group controls the property, exploiting the rest of the groups by control of it, and the exploited groups wrest control of that property, a change in property relations has quite obviously taken place. This is what will happen if the Russian workers displace the Stalinist bureaucracy. Whether such a revolt in Russia is called political or economic, the result will be the same, that is, the property relations will be changed in the same way in Russia as they would in America were the capitalist class overthrown here.

11. The contention is that state-owned industry is progressive, but the same tendency is present in our most highly developed capitalist countries. The corporate form of the Italian government has all the earmarks of state control of industry. Roosevelt's NRA in the U. S. and Hitler in Germany epitomize the same trend. In times of war, capitalists practically always resort to state control of industry to a greater or lesser degree. According to the above contention all of these are progressive and should be supported. If we are to support such "progressive" measures in capitalism, God would have to bring Socialism, for we certainly couldn't accomplish the task.

12. To the contention that Russia is not an imperialist country, her treatment of the people in the Mongolian areas is not exactly anti-imperialist. But should Poland have been defended because it wasn't an imperialist nation?—or England and France because they are defending their imperialist gains against new imperialisms?

13. By giving lip-service to revolutionary principles and ideals, Stalin equates the present Russian system with socialism in the minds of the Russian people. This is comprehensible only when we realize, (1) the fact that the Russian people are culturally and educationally far more backward than the proletariat of our more advanced countries, and (2) the tremendous power of the Stalinist propaganda. This will have a three-fold effect upon the Russian people: a) they will become discouraged and lose hope in socialism (i.e., their present political and economic structure which they think is socialism); b) they will become easier prey for increased capitalist propaganda insofar as the alleged soviet socialism has not materially increased their welfare; c) Somewhat the same attitude towards actual socialism will be instilled in them as that instilled in the proletariat of the Fascist countries—only is labelled Trotskyism and, until the Nazi-Soviet pact, fascism.

Therefore the task will be as difficult if not more so to instill a revolutionary consciousness into the Russian workers than it is in capitalist countries.

14. Without workers' democracy, no workers' state is possible. State ownership plus workers' democracy equals State Socialism. In the absence of workers' democracy, it is just state capitalism. Consequently, we must urge first, *the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy*, and secondly, *revolutionary defeatism in Russia*.