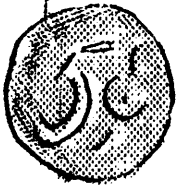


# IN DEFENSE OF BOLSHEVISM

FOR THE FOURTH - LENINIST - INTERNATIONAL

## Trotskyism and the A.L.P.

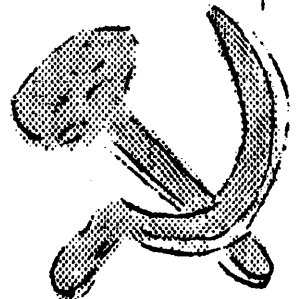
THE REAL REASON BEHIND THE TROTSKYIST "LIQUIDATIONS"



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# Trotskyism and A.L.P. the

## THE REAL REASON BEHIND THE TROTSKYIST "LIQUIDATIONS"

**W**HEN THE TROTSKYISTS FORMED the Workers Party in December 1934 they expressly stated in an official document that "the revolutionary party must at all times maintain its own political and organizational integrity and independence" (Workers Party of the U.S. - Declaration of Principles - The Militant, Dec. 8, 1934. Our emphasis—L.L.)

The principle of independence of a revolutionary party was often stressed in public speeches by the leaders of the Workers Party and in the Party's publications. "It is always essential for the revolutionary Party to maintain its political and organizational independence" they reiterated in the New International, October 1935, p.181. Concerning the nature of the Socialist Party they stated in the Workers Party Declaration of Principles: "The Socialist Party is not a party of revolution but of reformism and pacifism."

And in the April 18, 1936 issue of the New Militant, John West, writing on the attitude revolutionists must take regarding Social Democracy penned these clear words:

"It is necessary not merely to understand that social-democratic reformism is bankrupt, but, positively, to break sharply from social-democracy."

When six weeks later the Trotskyites, including John West, leisurely joined the ranks of social democracy, their preteritions to Leninism melted away. They concretely demonstrated that they did not take seriously a single word of what they themselves wrote about the character of Social De-

mocracy and the necessity "to break sharply" from it. They showed that all their resounding "revolutionary" talk about a revolutionary party maintaining "its own political and organizational integrity and independence" was a demagogic tribute opportunists pay to Leninist principles. They indicated through their liquidation of the Workers Party that its Bolshevism was but a mythical entity. Last but not least, their action, despite the vigorous display of "Marxist" phraseology and sham struggle against Social Democracy and Stalinism raised serious doubts in the minds of many workers as to the validity of the Trotskyite leadership's claim to Bolshevik integrity and political independence.

Indeed, at its source and in its continuous development the Trotskyist leadership at no time led an independent political existence. Up to 1934 they officially regarded themselves as a faction of the Stalinist Comintern and clamored for readmission. Finding this course definitely barred, although for certain reasons firmly remaining tied to Stalinism (See IN DEFENSE OF BOLSHEVISM #3), they made a sharp turn towards Social Democracy. In framing the arguments for the French orientation, Trotsky completely abandoned Lenin's thesis on Social Democracy that it is a petty-bourgeois party serving imperialism and gave the following anti-Bolshevik evaluation:

"The destiny of the proletariat depends, in large measure, in our epoch, upon the resolute manner with which the social-democracy will succeed in the brief interval which is vouchsafed it by the march of devel-

opment, in breaking with the bourgeois state, in transforming itself and in preparing itself for the decisive struggle against Fascism." (The New International, September-October, 1934.)

Henceforth politically the Trotskyist fountains of "revolutionary purity" were contaminated with both Stalinist and reformist bacteria.

Having set forth the utopian task of transforming centrism into Bolshevism, Cannon and Co. entered the Socialist Party; and after hibernating there for about a year and a half they were expelled. Thus the American Trotskyites again became independent by compulsion.

Given no choice, Cannon and his friends with much fanfare and trumpeting proclaimed the arrival upon the American scene of a new, truly "Bolshevik" party—the Socialist Workers Party. Much labor was expended in working out the Declaration of Principles, funds were collected and a weekly organ was launched, the publication of The New International was resumed and the Socialist Workers Party in all seriousness—in so far as the honest members were concerned—was rigged out for a life-and-death fight against Stalin, Lovestone, Norman Thomas and above all against American imperialism. How reminiscent of the early days of the Workers Party — may it rest in peace!

But inexhaustible, it seems, is the Pandora's box of opportunist wonders. No sooner did the Trotskyite leaders strut triumphantly forward in their refurbished familiar armor to "challenge" the enemies of the masses, than their sharp eye caught sight of an attractive reformist morass—the American Labor Party—and a tender spot was touched in their hearts. They resolved to induce their followers to enter the American Labor Party. Were Cannon and his colleagues Marxists and the Socialist Workers Party a Bolshevik Party, they would propose the entry into the A.L.P. of a number of their members to establish a fraction inside this reformist stronghold with a view to facilitating the task of battering it down by blows from

without, maintaining at the same time the independence of their own organization. Instead, Cannon and Co. have made a move closely paralleling the one in 1935 which led to the liquidation of the Workers Party. To cushion the shock and prevent the loss of their members, Cannon and Co. veiled their new reactionary step with a "Marxist" justification which they labelled "The Decline of American Capitalism and the Revolutionary Transitional Program for the Next Period".

It would be a perfectly futile occupation to attempt to call to the attention of Cannon and his opportunist co-workers the fact that in the present epoch, when capitalism is on the decline, only the formation of a revolutionary party can be regarded as a progressive development. No amount of argumentation could make them admit, once their conscious purpose is out of harmony with truth, that in the period of imperialist wars and proletarian revolution a Labor party is nothing but a machine for the preservation of capitalism. For years opportunists of different stripes have been promoting the idea of a Labor party. For years Lovestone has been keeping alive the fraud that the American workers need a "Labor party" to struggle for their interests. Stalinism invariably advances this penetrating piece of fakery every time it executes a turn to the Right. And when Browder returned from Moscow in 1935 and in his brazenly demagogic manner declared "We must change our negative position towards the Labor party question" (Daily Worker, January 19, 1935), the Trotskyite leaders showed that they are quite aware of the fact that the whole hullabaloo about the rise of Labor parties today as being a progressive factor is in reality a vicious deception of the workers. They declared that Marxists have no business in helping to build Labor parties:

"For, it is not the business of the revolutionary Marxists, above all in the present stage of the relationship between capitalist disintegration and social reformism, to initiate or to help organize and found in addition to their own party another party for the 'second class

citizens', for the 'backward workers', a 'Labor' party, i.e. a third capitalist party, even if composed predominantly of workers." (M. S., The New International, March 1935, p. 36. Emphasis in original.)

And although holding incorrect views and outright opportunist positions on a whole series of questions, the Trotskyites quite correctly stated that

".....as all history proves, a Labor party, even when it has a genuine trade union base, is a reformist party and nothing else can be expected from it.....Its main function would be to canalize the discontent of the working class into more or less futile reformist endeavors and to swerve the movement from the revolutionary path." (Arne Swabeck, The New International, August 1935, p. 146.)

It required three more years of universal capitalist decay and intense crisis which has brought the world to the brink of a new imperialist war, for the Trotskyite leaders to cast overboard the correct view on the Labor Party. Precisely at this grave historical hour the labor agents of American imperialism have founded a Labor party which is a cog in the vast political machine of Wall Street—a fact patent to every revolutionist. But the Trotskyite leaders in their "theoretical analysis" have distorted the real meaning of this reactionary development within the American workingclass. They brazenly call it a "progressive movement" and declare that "the problem of creating a labor party is placed upon the order of the day through the whole course of development." (Internal Bulletin #2, p. 17.)

Not for the workers but for the American bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants is the question of having a functioning Labor party definitely on the order of the day. This reformist engine will be brought into play in the next war, and should the capitalists come to the decision that Fascism is an unavoidable necessity, the Labor party will help paralyze the workers while

Wall Street effects the change of rule.

It is a Leninist axiom that no opportunist party, not even the Leftist of them, can pursue independent labor politics. The British Labor Party, the Russian Mensheviks, the Social Democratic parties of Germany, Austria and other countries, in the most critical situations never broke their ties with the capitalist state, but rather vigorously backed the bourgeoisie in its desperate attempt to continue its domination. Under the pressure from the Right, German Socialists voted confidence in Hitler. Bending to the revolutionary storm of 1919 the German Social Democracy agreed to the Soviet form of government but went ahead with the formation of the bourgeois parliamentary republic, thus saving German capitalism and laying the basis for the Fascist regime. Any party which is not the party of proletarian revolution is attached to and dependent upon the capitalist class politics.

But the Trotskyite leaders reject this Leninist truth which has been conclusively proven by the entire history of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They deceive their followers with the fable that political independence of a labor party is possible:

".....as against the present attempts of the bureaucracy to subordinate the workers to the Democratic Party, we counterpose the slogan of independent labor political action through a labor party." (Internal Bulletin #2, p. 15.)

The crass opportunism of Cannon and Co. is further strikingly shown in their pledging all their strength to push the labor party on the road of independence. In plain words, they have plotted to squander the energies of their trusting followers in the labor of erecting air-castles on the sands of illusion.

"We are now confronted with the necessity of concretizing this general point of view and of taking a direct part in the present developing movement for a labor party and

of working with all our strength to push it on the road of independence." (Internal Bulletin #2, p. 15.)

Concealing the fact cited by them before, that essentially the present movement for a labor party is reactionary, that "as all history proves, a labor party....is a reformist party and nothing else can be expected from it." Cannon and Co. at length introduce a perfectly obvious dupery. In skilfully carved phrases which would call forth admiration even from such an adroit manipulator as Earl Browder, they unblushingly declare:

"The Socialist Workers Party advances its program of transitional demands in order to fructify the mass movement in favor of a labor party and lead it in a revolutionary direction." (Ibid., p. 17.)

The wizardry Cannon and his colleagues displayed in carrying through the liquidation of the Workers Party is being repeated in the work of finishing off the Socialist Workers Party. Then it was:

"We obligate ourselves to work loyally and devotedly to build the Socialist Party into a powerful, united organization in the revolutionary struggle for Socialism." (New Militant, June 6, 1936.)

Now it is "push" and "lead" the bourgeois Labor party movement "in a revolutionary direction!"

In their official publications the Trotskyite paladins in America with windy enthusiasm emphasize their opportunism:

".....we are positively in favor of the political organization of the American workers as a class, that is, of a Labor party.....it is entirely correct, however, and fruitful for our movement, to fight at the conference for a candidate put forward by labor itself, for a Labor party, organized and controlled by the workers." (James Burnham, Max Shachtman, The New International, August 1938. Our emphasis.)

This outrageous deception is written plainly for all thinking workers to recognize. Even the Bolshevik Party and the First, the Second and the Third Internationals were not organized by the workers but by groups of revolutionists most of whom were not of the working class. As to reformist parties, they are being organized and controlled by opportunist leaders, lackeys of capitalism. To state that the bureaucratic candidates of a bourgeois Labor party are put forth "by labor itself" is to spread the worst sort of political swindle.

A revolutionist speaking to workers is duty-bound to enlighten them that only that party can they call their own which leads them to struggle for liberation from wage slavery. This understanding must be firmly fixed in mind. The revolutionist must make it plain that every party which is not Bolshevik is invariably an instrument serving the capitalist exploiters and in one way or another helping them preserve capitalism. A non-Bolshevik party the workers must be taught never to consider as their own. Clarity on this matter is of supreme importance to the workers. But opportunists within the proletariat becloud and pervert this fundamental Leninist thesis. The Stalinists during the Right zigzag with easy cynicism assist the reformist fakery to corrode the minds of the workers with the poisonous notion that a Labor party is the "workers own." At the close of the first Rightist zigzag they wrote—

"There is but one way to end the visible and invisible capitalist tyranny and that is for the workers and farmers to send both capitalist parties to the scrap heap, organize their own farmer-labor party on a class basis, fight for the establishment of a workers' and farmers' republic, and set up a proletarian dictatorship to take over the industries and natural resources." (Daily Worker, April 4, 1924.)

In 1935, the second Rightist swing, this was repeated:

"While fighting for more relief,

for higher wages and lower prices, the people must organize their own Farmer-Labor Party as the only trustworthy weapon against the predatory interests." (Daily Worker, November 23, 1935. Our emphasis.)

And after the Seventh Congress:

"Toward a Labor Party. The workers must have a political party of their own. A Labor Party....." (Wm. Weinstone, Daily Worker, March 18, 1937. Our emphasis.)

The synthetic "Bolsheviks" Burnham and Shachtman, instead of exposing the charlatanism of the Stalinists and of the reformist agents of Wall Street, and instead of warning the workers against the pitfall labelled "Labor Party, your own," actually lend support to this vicious falsification:

"We say to the workers: You want to break from the capitalist parties, to FORM A PARTY OF YOUR OWN? Excellent! That is a step forward..." (The New International, August 1938, p. 229.)

Burnham and Shachtman realize that their followers know that the proletariat cannot take power through a reformist program. They, therefore, attempt to beguile their membership with a pseudo-Marxist "program of revolutionary transitional demands....If the workers do not adopt it as a whole, or at all, we continue to give support to the Labor party, but critical support."

History is the testing ground of policies, and history has already abundantly recorded how the Trotskyites through their "critical" support assisted Stalin in delivering the German masses to Hitler. In going over the records of "critical" support given by "revolutionists" to reaction the inescapable conclusion is that such policy is treacherous and counter-revolutionary.

But it is highly instructive to discuss some of the salient features of the "program of revolutionary transitional demands," a program, which, the Trotskyite leaders assert, is intended

to reform reformism, or in their own words, "to advance the Labor party movement toward class struggle and not class collaboration."

Of cardinal importance, every revolutionary worker will agree, is the question of the State, the problem of government.

It is worth noting that since Lenin's death, and especially since the "Seventh Congress" of Stalin's Comintern the distortion of the teachings of Marx and Lenin on the vital question of State power has been the principal pursuit of the planet's choicest "revolutionary" hypocrites and swindlers.

A State can be either bourgeois or proletarian. Any political force, any government which is being instituted in the seat of power not upon the basis of shattering the capitalist state is a capitalist government. There is no middle, no transition government from the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Labor government of England, the Socialist governments of Germany, Austria and other countries were nothing but bourgeois governments furthering the interests of capitalism.

When Lenin spoke of workers and peasants (or farmers) power, he regarded this formulation synonymous with that of the dictatorship of the proletariat:

"Soviet power assists the toilers, struggles with the landlords and capitalists. That is the reason why Soviet power is called workers-peasants power...there is no middle. There is no choice: either the power of the workers and peasants or the power of the capitalists and landlords!" (Lenin, Collected Works Vol XVI p. 303)

Trotskyist leaders quite readily and without the slightest reservation recognize that the agitational term Workers' and Farmers' Government means the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. They state:

"This formula, 'Workers and Farmers Government', first appeared in

the agitation of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and was definitely accepted after the October Insurrection. In the final instance it represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 18.)

The statement above is distinct, is entirely free from anything that would dim or obscure its content. But only a couple of pages further, in faithful accord with their traditional contradictoriness, confusion and defilement of Bolshevism, they attempt to span the gap between truth and untruth and proceed to whisper strange legends:

"Of all parties and organizations which base themselves on the workers and peasants and speak in their name we de... and that they break political-ly from the bourgeoisie and enter upon the road of struggle for the workers and farmers government. On this road we promise them full support against capitalist reaction." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 20. Our emphasis.)

Instead of telling the workers that never will Social Democracy, Stalinism, Anarchism "enter upon the road of struggle for the workers and farmers government" that is, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, instead of pointing out that these anti-Marxist forces within the workers camp, particularly Stalinism, promote reaction, the Trotskyites give rise to a deadly illusion.

"Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers organizations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.) the petty bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case one

thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbable variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the 'Workers and Farmers Government', in the above mentioned sense, is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 21. Our emphasis.)

Here is a vivid example of the peculiar pattern of Trotskyist distortions, ideological chaos and outright emasculation of Leninism. It is difficult to imagine a more hopeless tangle than the one the Trotskyist leaders present, and yet, it must be kept in mind that they are no amateurs in politics. Instead of unequivocally stating that the establishment of the workers and farmers government (dictatorship of the proletariat) by "traditional workers organizations" is absolutely out of the question, Cannon and Co. leave a loophole by asserting that it is "highly improbable." Instead of forewarning the workers and forearming them with Leninist clarity, the Trotskyite leaders spread the lethal poison that creation of a workers' and farmers' government by the Stalinists and Social Democracy, these perpetrators of unexampled treachery and betrayal, "somewhere at some time becomes a reality." Only a few paragraphs above they speak in plain words that:

"The experience of Russia demonstrated and the experience of Spain and France once again confirm that even under very favorable conditions the parties of petty bourgeois democracy (SR's, Social Democrats, Stalinists, Anarchists) are incapable of creating a government of workers and peasants, that is, a government independent of the bourgeoisie." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 20. Our emphasis.)

The Trotskyites advance the "new" and "striking" idea that a war crisis, defeat, mass pressure, will push opportunism towards the revolutionary path. As a matter of fact the exact opposite is true. Social Democracy is inseparable from the bourgeois State, as the entire war and post-war period conclus-

ively established. As to Stalinism, its basic line within the international proletariat is to prevent proletarian revolution. And it is precisely at the moment when the capitalist class faces the grave emergency of war, and the conflict of class interests becomes intensified to a marked degree leading to a revolutionary crisis, that reactionary Stalinism and Social Democracy, steeped in crime and bespattered with toilers' blood, "go further than they themselves wish along the road" not to break but towards closer cooperation with the bourgeoisie. Russia, Germany, Austria, China and Spain have proved this beyond the peradventure of a doubt and no amount of wishful lying and tricky verbiage can alter this incontrovertible fact. Cannon and Co. instead of pointing out that the progressive degeneration of Stalinism and Social Democracy

runs parallel with the decay of capitalism, instead of striking a sharp note of warning, are rendering the workers unconscious of the terrible danger. Cannon and Co. are thus assisting Stalinism and Social Democracy to hatch new monstrous crimes against the masses.

It is really amazing how many falsehoods and contradictions people can pack into a single document. On page 18 of the Internal Bulletin #1, as we remember, they admitted that "'Workers and Farmers Government'...represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat." But on page 21 "Workers' and Farmers' Government" is no longer regarded as synonymous with the formulae Dictatorship of the Proletariat but "would represent merely a short episode on the

(Continued on Page 8)

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**STALIN, TROTSKY OR  
LENIN**

By GEORGE MARLEN



road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat."

Like a bird hopping from twig to twig, the Trotskyite leaders have finally alighted upon the possibility of a "transitional government" formed "by the petty bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists" as a mere "episode" leading towards "actual" dictatorship of the proletariat! This is purest deception of the workers. It is a brazen distortion of Leninism, for Lenin stressed that "there can be no middle ground between dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and dictatorship of the proletariat. Any dream of a third possibility is a reactionary lamentation of a petty-bourgeois" (Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Dictatorship, Thesis adopted by the First World Congress of the Communist International, 1919).

In order to show that on this point of basic importance the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party are in complete disagreement with Leninism and in a sense are tail-ending Browder, we shall subject their "theoretical" contradictions to a closer inspection. They speak of the establishment of a "Workers and Farmers Government." Should the workers support such a government? According to the position in the document on page 18—Yes! for that is the dictatorship of the proletariat. But according to the premise on page 21 such a government is not actual dictatorship of the proletariat but an episode on the road to such a dictatorship, and since Lenin points out that there is either dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, it is clear that the "Workers' and Farmers' Government" of page 21 must be overthrown in order to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Trotskyites, however, do not say that the "short episode" must be removed by revolution. Consequently they are ready to support bourgeois dictatorship — in some Left bourgeois democratic form.

The matter is far more serious than it appears at first sight. The Stalinist reaction in the first proletarian State to preserve its bureaucratic system has been preventing the spread of the revolution in other countries. Holding an

enormous section of the international proletariat under their sinister spell the Stalinists have been betraying the workers through their zigzag line of ultra-Leftist adventurism and ultra-Right People's Frontism. They block the path to the revolution by setting up a deadly trap—the People's Front Government—which preserves in tact the power of capital. The Stalinist Judases in their cold-blooded design to betray the masses depict their "united front government," a snare to paralyze the workers, as a government serving the interests of the proletariat:

"If with such an upsurge of the mass movement it will prove possible and necessary, in the interests of the proletariat, to create a proletarian united front government, or an anti-fascist people's front government, which is not yet a government of the proletarian dictatorship, but one which undertakes to put into effect decisive measures against fascism and reaction, the Communist Party must see to it that such a government is formed." (Resolution of the Seventh Congress, Daily Worker, September 14, 1935. Our emphasis.)

The experience in Spain where the "anti-fascist people's front government .....put into effect decisive measures against fascism and reaction" by maintaining the entire staff of Fascist generals and the bloodthirsty cutthroats of the Foreign Legion is a conclusive proof of the base treachery of Stalinism.

The Stalinists presented the "united-front government," — a counter-revolutionary trap — as a bridge leading towards the establishment of a workers republic — or as the Trotskyites put it, "a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat."

In view of the Stalinist present ultra-Rightist zigzag, the scandalous work of Cannon and Co. of spreading the deadliest Stalinist poison, such as contained on page 21 of their document "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" stands out clear in the noon-day sun.

Let us examine briefly the follow-

ing point in that document.

"The Fourth International demands employment and decent living conditions for ALL" (p.4. Our capitals.)

This is the position of a petty-bourgeois society of the Brotherhood of Man, not of the revolutionary proletariat. In the process of ruthless class conflict the workers are not concerned with insuring decent living conditions to their enemies, the modern slave-holders. And even after the workers overthrow the bourgeoisie they are not particularly worried about the condition of the bourgeois generals, munition makers, stock exchange sharks, jailers, detectives and other scum. Class struggle exacts sacrifices. As a matter of policy the toilers must strive with all their might to shift the burden of sacrifices upon the shoulders of other classes before and also after establishing their own government.

"But we say that when it is the question of freeing millions of toilers from exploitation, the government which would stop short of placing the sacrifices upon other classes would be not a socialist but a traitorous government." (Lenin, Report to the VII Congress of Soviets, Dec. 1919.)

But the Trotskyite leaders, while wage slavery and the power of the exploiters are very much in evidence, are bent upon insuring "decent living conditions" for all, which naturally includes the bourgeois vermin. And this, the workers are told, is a line leading "toward class struggle and not class collaboration"!

On page 7 of Bulletin #2 we meet the demand "Reopen Idle Plants." This is but paraphrasing Browder's reactionary cry "Put America back to work", and recalls to mind the old reformist demand "Open the factories!"

The "transition program" is fairly reeking with reformism and petty-bourgeois notions of "right" of labor. Liberals who imagine that the capitalist system is the final word in the evolu-

tion of mankind, and sly watchdogs of the bourgeoisie fearing the workers' threat to capitalism, urge the removal of the vices and abuses of their system and become highly articulate in promoting the workers' "right" to employment. The Trotskyite "Marxists" write: "The right to employment is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based upon exploitation. This right today is being shorn from him at every step." (Internal Bulletin #1, p.5).

Thus the "right" to be exploited in a society based upon exploitation is a "serious right" declare quite seriously the Trotskyites.

Strangely enough, the capitalists, under Roosevelt, are also bending their efforts to reestablish this "right" of the toilers and reemploy the millions of jobless. And even Fascist Germany is striving to reduce unemployment to a minimum, thus "protecting" the workers in their "right to employment."

The workers through a century and a half of struggle which claimed frightful sacrifices on their part did win certain rights for themselves. But the "right to employment" could never be among them because it is not a right, it is the basic condition of their enslavement.

The Stalinists during the "Third Period" did not hide the fact that Roosevelt is a tool of the most powerful trusts and Wall Street bankers. It is only after the Seventh Congress which gave "official" sanction to the ultra-right zigzag that the Browders began to represent Roosevelt as impotently retreating before the big magnates of finance and today as occupying a position of struggle against Wall Street's interests. The Trotskyists are giving full support to the early Rightist Stalinist fakery:

"All the world was witness to the impotence of President Roosevelt and Premier Blum against the plottings of the '60' or '200 families' of their respective nations." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 8. Our emphasis-L.L.)

Thus both the Stalinists and the

Trotskyites paint Roosevelt, who is a conscious agent of American finance capital, as an impotent representative of the "people." This treacherous illusion every revolutionist must blast away through merciless exposure.

To divert the workers' attention from the fact that society is divided into classes, that the proletariat is exploited and oppressed by the entire bourgeoisie, not only by the multimillionaires but also by the "cockroach" capitalists, the Stalinists, during the ultra-Right line, blurred, almost obliterated, class lines by reducing the entire capitalist class of America and France to 60 and 200 families, respectively.

"The Communist Party of France yesterday concluded its Eighth Congress with the issuance of a ringing manifesto entitled 'For the Welfare of France,' calling for the uniting of the French people on the basis of a program of action, against the 200 families of financiers that today dominate France, for a happy, free, strong France." (Daily Worker, January 27, 1936.)

The "unity of the people" "against" the families of financiers is supported by Socialists and some other opportunists and misleaders of the workers. The Trotskyites carry this sugary deception a step further and push the Stalinist "program of action" forward by introducing the following "transitional demand":

"Thus, in answer to the pathetic jeremiads of the gentlemen-democrats against the dictatorship of the '60 Families' of the United States or the '200 Families' of France, we counterpoise the demand for the expropriation of these 60 or 200 feudalistic capitalist overlords." (Internal Bulletin #1, p. 9.)

Anyone who studied Lenin's writings on imperialism knows that financial oligarchy through interlocking directorates and participation in thousands of commercial, industrial and banking enterprises is rooted in the complete control of the State machinery.

There can be no expropriation of the "60 Families" without the overthrow of the capitalist system, the establishment of the proletarian State and the expropriation of the entire class of exploiters. To separate the "60 Families" from the rest of the capitalist class, to present the question of the expropriation of finance capital as a "transitional demand" on the basis of existence of the capitalist State is to stifle the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, is to practice purest political fakery.

The trump card in the "revolutionary transitional program" of Cannon, Shachtman and Co. turns out to be the following all-too-familiar reformist baggage:

"Both to provide jobs to all those unable to find work in ordinary industry and to supply the immediate allotment of twenty billion dollars (one-half the cost to the U.S. of the last war) for a large scale program of useful public works and for low rental modern housing, such rental to be at a figure to cover the cost of upkeep alone, with all other costs covered by public funds; all work done on the public works program to be governed by union standards of hours and wages, not to be less than \$30 per week." (Internal Bulletin #2 p.8)

It is only too startlingly obvious that, when it is thoroughly sifted of lofty abstractions and pompous revolutionary-sounding verbiage, the concoction entitled the "revolutionary transitional program" is nothing more nor less than an odd assortment of reformist panaceas for saving the capitalist system. "For a Bigger and Broader New Deal" would be perhaps a thousand times more appropriate title. Despite Roosevelt's heavy borrowings from practical reformism, it must be frankly said that in his demagogic reference to "the forgotten man" he does not resort to "Socialist" language, neither does he wrap his program for the recovery of American capitalism into Red cellophane.

Trotskyite "Bolshevik—Leninism" today, it is obvious, boils down to

nothing more than a weary repetition of Stalinist Popular Frontism.

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WHAT is the fundamental nature of Cannon's and his colleagues' opportunism? Why this vicious circle of "independence," liquidation, "independence" again and fresh liquidation? What are the fundamental tasks of the revolutionary proletariat today which are shunned by Trotsky and the Trotskyist leaders?

As we have brought out some time before, Cannon's becoming a Trotskyite was induced not by an inner political conviction. After the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, there are conclusive indications that Cannon became certain that Lovestone would for sometime remain the master of the American Party. It appeared that only with Trotsky's return to leadership was there a possibility of hoisting Lovestone out of the seat of power. In such event one did not need to be too perspicacious to grasp that a leader standing with Trotsky before victory would without doubt reenter the Communist Party to become its titular head. When Cannon and his group were expelled, neither the party members nor the workers outside were in a position to suspect his objective in supporting Trotsky. They knew only what Cannon told them in his paper *The Militant*, and in his speeches, namely, that he and his faction had been gestating within the Stalinist Party to become supporters of the Trotskyist International Left Opposition. "We were 'prepared by the past' for our place under the Banner of the International Left Opposition....The rich experience of the international struggle were realized for us, as it were, in advance..." (*The Militant*, May 10, 1930.)

This was necessary, for it was very puzzling to many people how it was that from a position of voting at the VI Congress against the reinstatement of Trotsky (July 1928), Cannon in a few brief weeks had become a Trotskyite supporter.

But inside the Trotskyist organization the truth was known. A very illuminating internal document "The Situ-

ation in the American Opposition: Prospect and Retrospect" by Max Shachtman, Albert Glotzer and Martin Abern, June 1932, revealed certain unpleasant things, the very opposite from what Cannon was telling the workers outside.

"The Cannon group stood upon the platform of international Stalinism, sometimes a little to the Right of it and sometimes a little to the Left of it.....if anything, it was the least 'international' of all the party groups, and concerned itself less than any others with such questions as the British General Strike, and the Anglo-Russian Committee, the Chinese Revolution, or the struggles within the Russian Party....it spent more time upon secondary tactical questions in this country than upon a discussion of the theory of socialism in one country, upon which it did indeed spend no time at all."

Thus according to the leading members of his own organization who had been together with him in the Stalinist Party, the Cannon clique of opportunists made their unprincipled jump toward Trotsky without even the necessary deep delving research and study of the political issues involved. Cannon and his collaborators even after their expulsion for a very long period were up to their ears in the Stalinist muck. To prove that there was no principled separation from Stalin either, we shall show that it is a matter of record that Cannon's policies had nothing in common with the real issues facing the workers.

Stalin's ultra-Rightist line having brought ruin and havoc to the Chinese masses, the Usurper in the Kremlin was introducing his harrowing "Third Period", the policy of building "Red" unions, and other ultra-Leftist features. But Cannon and other Trotskyites then were so wide of the truth as to render valuable assistance to Stalin. In the process of gathering power into his hands Stalin, after crushing Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek and others, proceeded with his machinations against the "Rights," Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Uglanov, employing organizational repressions. With a touch of

satisfaction Cannon and his collaborators gave the following misleading explanation of Stalin's persecutions:

"The activities of this right wing, have already necessitated organizational measures in the Moscow and other organizations of the Party - a proof of the awakening of the proletarian masses of the Party to this danger." (The Militant, Nov. 15, 1928)

Tightening his grip upon the Comintern, Stalin was making ready to kick out the Lovestone gang who sought a measure of autonomy for themselves, and replace them with Browder of the Foster gang. Cannon, Shachtman and Co. wholly subjective in factional matters, "warned" the Party membership in the following manner:

"The Lovestone group leadership, by opportunist political outlook, its petty-bourgeois origin, its corrupt factionalism, its careerism and adventurism in the class struggle, IS THE GREATEST MENACE TO THE PARTY." (Ibid. Capitals ours—L.L.)

Had Cannon written this in 1925 when Stalin through his agent, Gussev, bureaucratically imposed the unprincipled petty-bourgeois intellectual Lovestone and the putrid international adventurer John Pepper as leaders upon the American section of the Comintern, there would have been a measure of truth in his warning. But at that time, after he had bitterly fought Pepper-Lovestone — and his articles in the Daily Worker prove to the hilt that he was fully aware of Lovestone's careerism and corruption — he went over to Lovestone-Pepper-Wolfe. But near the end of 1928, when Usurper Stalin was preparing the setting for the campaign against the corrupt Lovestone clique in order to place at the helm the power-thirsty political sharks and criminals of the Foster-Browder band, Cannon and his fellow "revolutionists" hastened to "warn" the membership against Lovestone! What greater service could Stalin ask of the leader of the American Trotskyists!

And that wasn't all. Cannon further facilitated matters for Stalin —

and not out of rank idiocy either. He manifested a perceptibly positive attitude towards the Foster-Browder-Bittelman bandits. Although in their attitude towards Cannon and other Trotskyites, the Fosterites had acted the role of informers Cannon continued clinging to the Fosterites politically. In the first place he printed in the Militant the document "The Right Danger in the American Party" which had been submitted to the Sixth Congress by Foster, Bittelman, Cannon and others of the Foster-Browder clique. It was a purely factional paper directed against Lovestone, utterly devoid of political content bearing upon the vital problem growing out of the bureaucratic centralization of the first workers State and the Comintern. In the same issue of the Militant Cannon attempted to convince his former allies and cronies in the Party of the impossibility of breaking or even weakening Lovestone's grip. Later he criticised the Foster-Browder clique for retreating from the position of the document "The Right Danger in the American Party" and attempted for a while to absolve the Foster "comrades" from responsibility for the gangster attack on the Trotskyites. "None of the Foster comrades participated in the shameful gangster attack." (The Militant, December 15, 1928).

We have no means to ascertain what passed in correspondence between Cannon and Trotsky but it is an interesting fact that Trotsky also made a favorable gesture toward Foster, who had distinguished himself during the war by selling Liberty Bonds and delivering patriotic speeches, whose entire record in the C.P. was that of an outright opportunist, and who was among the first to denounce Cannon as a Trotskyist. Trotsky wrote:

"Foster.....seemed to me made of more trustworthy material than Lovestone and Pepper. In Foster's criticism of the official leadership of the Party there was always much that was true and acute. But as far as I understand him, Foster is an impericist. He does not want to, or is not able to carry his thinking through to the end." (L. Trotsky, The Militant, June 1, 1929.)

Thus Cannon and Trotsky were clearing the way for Stalin to discard Lovestone and give the Party to the "Foster comrades." Foster himself was put on probation, because Stalin held him responsible for the alliance with the Trotskyites in the Party. Objectively the Trotskyist leaders assisted the Stalinist process of bureaucratic centralization of the Comintern.

Cannon gave political support to some of the worst features of the Stalinist turn toward ultra-Leftism. He and his group were favoring the policy of dual-unionism and self-determination for Negroes. "The Negro question is also a national question, and the Party must raise the slogan of the right of self-determination for the Negroes." (Militant, Feb. 15, 1929). Their "ideas" led them to the conclusion that the Negro masses must be led not by the American proletariat as a whole but by Negro proletariat as against Negro petty-bourgeois. (Ibid.)

Lovestone drew upon himself the fire of criticism of the Trotskyist leaders because he was slow in making the leftist turn in the trade union field, and because, in organizing a Stalinist-controlled union in the needle trades he "unduly delayed while opportunities were lost and the Right Wing advanced." (Militant, February 15, 1929.) All this dove-tailed perfectly with Stalin's sly campaign to oust the "Rights."

There ensued a lengthy period of opportunist attempts at "correcting" Stalin and his Browders. Essentially it was a policy of explicit intention of unification of the Trotsky and the Stalin forces: at the bottom of this policy lay the hopeful waiting for the return of Trotsky to power. Meanwhile Stalinism was taking shape, rising in an ascending spiral of Stalin's personal dictatorship.

The Cannon clique without giving an analytical attention to the development of the bureaucratic pyramid and the constant systematic centralization of the power of the Usurper within the Soviet Union and the Comintern, took seriously Trotsky's empty hopes and be-

lieved that the reunification with the Foster-Browder bandits was a dead certainty. Since Trotsky's utopian line was "reinstatement into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with full rights, of Trotsky and the other imprisoned and exiled members of the Russian Opposition" (Militant, Nov. 15, 1928), it was necessary to speak of Stalin's conscious and deliberate betrayals as "mistakes" in order to leave the door open for reconciliation.

There began the spread of the costly illusion that the Stalinized Comintern and Stalin's bureaucracy are two distinct entities. "We do not identify the Communist International with the Stalinist bureaucracy" (L. Trotsky, Tasks of the American Opposition).

And even when Stalin's Comintern became a highly efficient instrument for preventing proletarian revolution and bringing on Fascism, the Trotskyite opportunists blinded the workers' political vision with the following statement:

"Our differences with the Party's policy, which isolates it from the masses and impedes the revolutionary movement in this and other countries, cannot eliminate the fact that the Communist party is the only working class party in the field, the only revolutionary party, the only party which stands for the interests of the working class TODAY and TOMORROW." (The Militant, Oct. 29, 1932.)

This powerful pro-Stalinist poison was given to the workers at the moment when Stalinism was consummating its betrayal in Germany, exactly three months before Hitler came to power! What more effective aid could Stalin ask of the "Bolshevik-Leninists"!

There has been established between Trotsky and his opportunist hangers-on a system of mutual shielding and complete political unanimity - unprecedented in a genuinely Leninist organization. It is an historical fact that in the Bolshevik Party, which Lenin founded, there were continual differences and disagreements with Lenin. Lenin him-

self never hesitated openly to criticize members of the Party even of the highest rank and those closest to him. But one has yet to live to discover Trotsky criticizing Cannon or vice versa. Like Stalin's line the line that Trotsky lays down for his opportunist satellites is always "correct."

After Germany the absurd and criminal nature of the policy of "critical" support of Stalin became all too palpable. Stalinism stood out as a gruesome counter-revolutionary force of terrific power. All the theories evaluating Stalinism, including Trotsky's, were subjected to the test and proved wanting. The proletariat was hopelessly at sea. History, on peril of new catastrophes for the toiling masses, demanded that an exhaustive analysis be made of Stalinism to determine its precise character to trace its development and make a thorough study of the interplay of its two-fold methods in order to fight it correctly. It was necessary to draw a balance of Trotsky's policies, recognize their opportunism and discard the laboriously preposterous theoretical confusion with which they were backed. It was imperative to acquaint the workers with the shameful role Trotsky played since Lenin's last illness.

But people who exchange Bolshevik boots for opportunist ones and leave the solid ground of Leninism cannot extricate themselves from the muck by their own boot-straps.

Trotsky not only did not make an attempt in the direction of a penetrating, sober and frank examination of his policy since 1922 — a policy which assisted Stalin to the seat of power and brought tremendous injury to the world toiling masses — but in actuality covered up both Stalin's and his own basic policies, particularly on Germany. Without cutting the umbilical cord that united him with Stalin, Trotsky added to his bewildering structure of half-truths and outright falsehoods a scandalous re-evaluation of Social Democracy, thus becoming politically tied to both reactionary Internationals.

Meanwhile Cannon and his clique

without doubt must have perused all or nearly all of Trotsky's writings and also the Stalinist documents and materials and have become fully acquainted with the hard, imperishable facts which told the shocking story of Trotsky's wretched policy of covering up, peace-making and capitulation. Were they revolutionists whose actions were motivated exclusively by the interests of the proletariat and all oppressed, they would long ago have broken with Trotsky, would have revealed the whole truth about him, and have cleared the clutter and confusion with which he has encumbered the path to revolutionary clarity and policies. They would have oriented toward advanced workers and consistently fought all opportunism, particularly the Stalinist machine which is the main enemy within the workingclass. They did none of these things. They still cling to Trotsky in the vague hope of Stalin's eventual fall and Trotsky's return to power, which hope is a substitute for the original "beautiful" dream of peace-making and reconciliation. It must be kept in mind that while Trotsky was dreaming of "correcting" Stalin the latter plunged the masses in the Soviet Union and the masses of China, Germany, Austria and Spain into a ghastly nightmare. And if a Leninist force strong enough to defeat Stalinism, Trotskyism and all other opportunist currents does not arise in time, there can be no doubt that the present Trotskyist speculation will help bring equally ghastly results to the workers of America, France and other countries.

By the law of antithesis to the grim historical reality, the Trotskyist leaders, lacking Marxist armor and the Leninist sword of truth, are unable to run the gauntlet of fire of Stalinism. With Stalinism growing more bloodthirsty and ferocious, and Trotskyism being its perennial target, Cannon and Co. have no illusion of the possibility of continuous organizational independence without the danger of facing a head-on collision with the Browder machine. To pursue the central task facing the workers and put up an effective struggle against Stalinism, without at the same time exposing Trotsky, is out of the question. On the other hand, an attempt to carry on independ-



ent "mass" work inevitably must lead to an open clash with Stalinism. Finding themselves caught in an insoluble contradiction, there is really no other escape for Cannon and Co., no safe "participation in the class struggle" except to take refuge in some "comfortable" swamp for a year or two. It is under the stress of this contradiction that Cannon strangles in their infancy the parties he creates, and leads off his trusting followers on "strange" tangents as the entry into the Socialist Party and now into the American Labor Party. The basic Trotskyite nucleus will not be liquidated of course. Visualizing their cherished dream of Trotsky returning to power eventually taking form, the Trotskyite leaders will endeavor to keep their forces intact within the A.L.P. To afford an outlet for the pent-up emotions, they will be periodically mobilizing their followers for a public meeting to "defend" Trotsky against new Stalinist frame-ups. Once they burrow into the A.L.P. they will attempt to remain there for a couple of years--if they are not kicked out before. Holding their own private opportunist objective in view, they will in picturesque Shachtmanite language give a vague outline of "revolutionary" work to their unsuspecting followers. And if "independence" is again imposed upon them they will resume their game, spinning it into the familiar grooves.

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**A** word about the line of Cannon's loyal "opposition" is in place. Hal Draper and others do not show an inkling of realization that there is a hidden motive in Cannon's position. Failing to grasp that Trotsky's entire post-Leninist policy is inseparable from the line laid down in the "revolutionary transitional program" and on the labor party question, they divide Trotskyism, accepting the premise without a note of doubt, support the reformist "revolutionary transitional program" but imagine they are executing a stroke of Marxist strategy by balking at the acceptance of Cannon's Labor Party line which is the conclusion drawn from that "program" and which flows directly from the entire position of Trotskyism. Such incredibly naive

"opposition" can be only welcomed by Trotsky and his satellites. Its existence "proves" that there is "democracy" within the Trotskyist organization. However, such spurious "democracy" is practiced with alacrity by Lovestone and all other cunning bureaucrats who have secured an unshakeable control of the organizational apparatus. Executing a carefully conceived plan, Cannon Shachtman and Co., whose resourcefulness of transforming myth into fact one can only marvel at, will go on asserting vehemently that the movement for a labor party even in the period of collapse of capitalism is progressive. Weeling up their batteries of sophistry, employing Cannon's superb technique they will with relative ease demolish their timid "opposition."

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O the sincere members of the S.W.P. who are vitally concerned with the revolutionary interests of the masses we say: Trotskyism is occupying an opportunist position on every important issue confronting the proletariat. On the question of organizational independence, on Social Democracy, on the nature of a Labor Party, on war, Trotsky has broken with Bolshevism. Trotskyism sows confusion concerning Stalinism and is spreading deception about its own movement. Break with Trotskyism! Help build an independent Marxist Party!

The road toward the building of a new Communist Party today lies not along the lines of "mass" orientation advocated in various forms by the Trotskyists, the Lovestoneites and all other pseudo-Marxist groups. There are no ultra-short roads to the masses. The historical bridge to the masses is the proletarian vanguard. The utopian "mass" orientation is advanced for the sole reason that its advocates are unable or unwilling to stand against the aggressive Stalinist tide. The correct path to the building of a new Communist party with a view to reaching the masses lies exclusively in the direction of class-conscious workers distributed within and around the Stalinist, Trotskyist, Lovestoneite, Socialist and other organizations. Above all, the policy must be directed toward freeing



the workers from the deadly grip of Stalinism. Without destroying the Stalinist machine of counter-revolution in at least one important country an imperialist war and the continuous rise of Fascism are not merely a possibility but are a certainty.

In the conduct of imperialist war and in the process of introducing Fascism, the American bourgeoisie will receive from the Labor Party valuable assistance. Revolutionary workers must exercise keen vision in their politics. It is madness to believe Cannon, Smachtman and Co. that the Labor Party can be led "in a revolutionary direction" "toward class struggle not class collaboration"; that they are people performing miracles.

These people whose policies are rooted in opportunist considerations; who care nothing whatever about the revolutionary direction; who never themselves practiced genuine political independence, for years hanging on to the Stalinist "Party" who have been "pushing" Stalinism toward the "Leninist path" in reality assisting the Stalinists to betray the masses to Fascism ("All eyes to the Communist Party," etc; see IN DEFENSE OF BOLSHEVISM #3 and 5); who in 1934 got busy "pushing" also the Social Democracy; these people who with machine-like precision are marching in a reactionary direction have set out to perform miracles and "push" themselves and a reformist party which is allied with Republicans and Democrats, to independence, to "lead" it in a revolutionary direction! It is a thousand pities that many honest workers remain prisoners of the opportunists who expertly handle foggy, spectacular phrases and for whose crimes the world proletariat is paying a staggering price in agony and blood.

Once more: break with bankrupt Trotskyism! Join the Leninist League! Help to develop a powerful campaign of

exposure of Stalinism and every other opportunism within the working class:

Remember Lenin's guiding words which, tested in life, were brilliantly proven correct in Russia in 1917 and, in a negative way, in other countries

"The imperialist epoch does not tolerate the existence in one party of both the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat and the semi-petty-bourgeois aristocracy of the working class which enjoys crumbs from the privileges of 'its' nation situated as a Great Power'. The old theory about opportunism being a 'legitimate shade' of a united party, a party that avoids extremes<sup>9</sup> has now turned into the greatest deception of the workers and the greatest hindrance to the labor movement." (Lenin, Collapse of the Second International.)

FIGHT FOR THE POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF REVOLUTIONISTS AND AGAINST ORGANIZATIONAL AND THEREFORE POLITICAL UNITY WITH OPPORTUNISM!

AGAINST THE DECEPTIVE "MASS" LINE AND FAKE POLICIES OF "REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITIONAL DEMANDS" CONDUCTED BY PEOPLE WHO TRAMPLE UPON LENINISM, AND FOR A LENINIST LINE OF UNRELENTING STRUGGLE TO WREST THE WORKING CLASS VANGUARD FROM THE OPPORTUNISTS!

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE REMNANTS OF OCTOBER - THE SOCIALIZED INDUSTRY - AND A MERCILESS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE USURPING STALINIST BUREAUCRACY - BE THERE PEACE OR WAR!

AGAINST THE SUPPORT OF IMPERIALISM ALLIED WITH STALIN AND FOR ITS REVOLUTIONARY OVERTHROW!

FOR A LENINIST - NOT A TROTSKYIST - FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!