

FIVE CENTS

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# **T H E** **BULLETIN**

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## **The Trotsky School of Falsification**

**The Political Nature of the Trotsky-Zinoviev Bloc**

**Tricky Phrases Cannot Hide the Truth**

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## T H E   S H A M   B R I T I S H   B L O C K A D E

I N 1914 the big imperialist powers fought a desperate battle for markets, colonies, and for greater shares in the exploitation of the world toiling masses. The pseudo-Marxists of those days, the leadership of the Second International, aided the imperialists by hiding the truth about the robber nature of that war. There was only a small group of people led by Lenin who gave the correct evaluation of the war and laid down a correct policy for fighting it.

Much blood has run under the bridge of history since the treachery of the Socialist parties in August 1914. An entirely new opportunist force has arisen within the international proletariat. The first proletarian State became diseased, and this disease - Stalinism - has poisoned the international workers vanguard concentrated in and around the "Comintern." Since the birth of this new opportunist plague the revolutionary workers have been miseducated and blinded by the Stalinist perverters of truth.

Today, England and various small governments are officially at war with Germany and Italy. Officially the American imperialists are supposedly aiding England and other "democracies" against Germany and Italy. What is the appraisal of the situation given by the usurpers of the first prolet-

arian State, by the utterly corrupt, treacherous and deceitful Stalinist bureaucrats who disguise themselves as Leninists? Their evaluation is that today the big imperialist powers are engaged in a war of the same nature as the war of 1914. "The war that has broken out in Europe is the Second Imperialist War," shout the Stalinist bureaucrats (Declaration of the National Committee, C.P.U.S.A.). They speak of "...the scramble of the rivals, German and Anglo-American imperialism....." (Daily Worker, May 20, 1941).

We reject this "thesis" as a Stalinist swindle. We discern in the present situation not a war of the nature of 1914-1918 but a sham war under the cover of which all the imperialist powers are closely collaborating in rapidly exterminating the class-conscious workers and in planting the fascist form of capitalist rule in one country after another as a preliminary phase to the partitioning of the Soviet Union.

Let us examine a few points to ascertain the reality of this "war." No one possessing at least an average knowledge of war strategy will deny the importance of the weapon of the blockade. In a number of wars this weapon proved among the most formidable ones. In the war of 1914-1918 it was a powerful factor in the hands of England and her Allies. Owing to the

blockade, Kaiser Germany, despite many military victories, became a camp of organized hunger. German imperialism finally yielded to the Allies because it faced a revolutionary explosion of the hungry masses at home. Since the beginning of this "Second Imperialist War," as it is called by the Stalinist bureaucrats, we have given many instances of cooperation between the Axis and the "democracies." Here are some worthwhile additions.

Not long ago an item appeared in the New York Times (May 3, p.4) which showed that a certain American firm, the Pioneer Import Corporation, is engaged in importing merchandise from Nazi Germany. That the German manufacturers must sell their wares in order to continue running their capitalist industry and State, is obvious. An industrial crisis at this time would bring the Nazis to a crash. Yet, with British "democracy" ostensibly determined to stifle the Nazis, and with American "democracy" seemingly aiding to destroy the "totalitarian states," it is quite astounding that this business goes on with the knowledge of the United States and of the British governments:

"The Pioneer Import Corporation declared that its activities were carried on with the knowledge of the State and Treasury Departments and of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare...." (New York Times, May 3, 1941.)

But far more sensational is the amazing fact, incautiously revealed by the president of this firm, that the British Government, in appearance fighting for its very existence against the apparently victorious German imperialists, actually issued a permit to this firm to trade with Nazi Germany!

"This corporation has in the course of the last year been repeatedly in communication with the British Ministry of Economic Welfare through a well-known firm of British lawyers and succeeded in securing from this Ministry one of

the largest permits for the shipment of German merchandise ever issued by the British Government while engaged in warfare with Germany." (Ibid. My emphasis - G.M.)

Note that the report speaks of "one of the largest permits" ever issued by the British government for shipment of German merchandise. This indicates plainly that other such permits have been issued.

That is how "serious" the "democratic states" are in their much-advertised intentions to crush the brutal Nazis!

\* \* \*

**I**t is a well-known fact that in the present disturbed capitalist conditions, British and American imperialists view Spain under Franco as a "neutral" with whom it is permissible for the "democracies" to carry on business transactions. The trading is very successful, especially with respect to nullifying any British blockade efforts, that is if there were any genuine efforts. The goods sent to "neutral" Spain are of such kind as the Nazis need. An Associated Press dispatch from Hendaye, France, disclosed that the Nazis are doing considerable business with the Spanish landlords and capitalists:

"A steady stream of goods is being exchanged between Germany and Spain through this small border city on the German-occupied French coast." (The New York Herald Tribune, April 11, 1941.)

The interesting fact is that the bankrupt Spanish rulers, who are acting as middlemen between the British and the Nazis, are aided in this function by being financed by the British. On the 9th of April an announcement was made in Madrid that the British "democracy" was lending the Fascist butchers two million pounds sterling, that is about ten million dollars! Next day this was admitted in London.

The hypocritical British labor leaders and other false critics who pretend that there is a real war between the "democracies" and the Axis made a show of pressing Churchill for an explanation. Churchill covered up the fact that Franco is acting as an errand boy between the British imperialists and the Nazis by pretending that he was very much concerned about the starving workers and peasants of Spain:

"Parliament reflected today the feeling of many persons that this is not the time for extending credits of two million sterling to Spain, as contemplated by a loan agreement, or for feeding and helping Spain. There were demands today that the loan should be debated before it was completed, but Mr. Churchill refused such debate and said that the agreement would be published when it had been made. There were statements in the House that all this money would go straight to Germany, and there were severe criticisms of Sir Samuel Hoare, Britain's Ambassador to Spain, but Mr. Churchill remained unmoved, paid tribute to Sir Samuel, saying that he had improved Anglo-Spanish relations, and added: 'We consider that the starving position of Spain fully justifies this assistance being given by Britain and the United States, if they choose so to act, irrespective of whether any expression of gratitude is forthcoming or not.'" (Robert P. Post, New York Times, April 23, 1941. My emphasis - G.M.)

Not only do the British imperialists, and probably also the American imperialists, support the Spanish Fascists with capital, thus facilitating the flow of trade between Spain and Nazi Germany, but they go much further. They directly furnish the Nazis with iron ore from the British-owned and controlled Bilbao mines in Spain. The fraudulent and utterly irrelevant explanation for the shipment of ore from Bilbao to the Nazis, is that the British "successfully bombed the Ruhr"!

"British bombing attacks on the Ruhr have been so successful that Germany is now importing considerable quantities of iron ore from Bilbao and in addition is drawing heavily on Swedish ore, it was learned today." (T. J. Hamilton, New York Times, January 15, 1941)

It is quite striking that in the same dispatch Hamilton lets slip the fact that "the most important mines in Bilbao are British owned or controlled."

\* \* \*

The farce of the so-called blockade is further illuminated by the amazing news that the British government is sending cash - not "merely" to the dictator Franco, - but also, and what is most revealing, to the Hitlerites, into Germany direct! The dispatch inadvertently revealing this remarkable proof of the fraud of the "war" between the British and German imperialists is worth citing in full:

"The startling revelation that British money, after nineteen months of war, is still being sent into Germany by British government departments is made today by the newspaper 'Financial News.'

"In a special article, the newspaper's political correspondent states that British concerns pay to custodians of enemy property for the right to use German patents but that when the patent rights expire the renewal fees are actually remitted to the owners in enemy territory. The procedure is sanctioned under a general license under the Trading with the Enemy Act.

"British owners of patent rights argue that it is cheaper in many instances to maintain existing rights by means of renewals than to take out new patents, the correspondent said. They do not consider it is their business to know whether the money directly assists the war effort of an enemy engaged in a life-and-death struggle [sic!]

with Britain, as long as they are legally obligated to pay for renewal of patents.

"The question will be raised in the House of Commons, the correspondent reported.

"It is pointed out by the correspondent that in the World War German patents and manufacturing secrets were seized outright as enemy property. 'The Financial News' for months has been trying unsuccessfully to bring about a tightening of exchange control regulations, charging that private individuals and firms are still sending funds abroad which this government urgently needs to purchase war materials in the United States." (New York Herald Tribune, March 26, 1941. My emphasis - G.M.)

Let the reader imagine that "Financial News" is some inconsequential, two-by-four sheet, the above-quoted dispatch is followed by the remark:-

" [ 'The Financial News', London's most influential financial paper, is published by Brendan Bracken, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Prime Minister Winston Churchill. ] "

The murderous German imperialists have been doing business collecting American dollars and even shipping the currency to the United States "running" the so-called blockade, with the permission of the American government, obviously. This has been revealed by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York:

"For the fourth consecutive month Germany has shipped United States currency to New York — currency that it had gathered in Europe and shipped here to swell its dollar balances. This was revealed yesterday by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in its monthly report on exports and imports of United States currency." (N.Y. Times, Mar. 8, 1941. My emphasis—G.M.)

Blockade is a siege tactic. Its

aim is to shut up the enemy territory so as to obstruct the reception and shipment of supplies. It is a cordon drawn around the enemy, and is a powerful means of breaking down the sinews of war of the opponent. The present "blockade" has nothing in common with that formidable war weapon, except the name.

\* \* \*

Few facts throw a more glaring light on the myth of the "blockade" than the one of the development of the Nazi automobile market in Latin America. It has now leaked out, quite accidentally of course, that big American manufacturers of automobile parts have been shipping their products to the Nazis thus breaking the "blockade." These parts have been assembled in Germany and the complete cars shipped again across the Atlantic through the "blockade" to Latin America. Here with the aid of the American financial oligarchy the Nazis have not only done good business but have actually been on the way to securing control of the automobile trade in the Latin American countries:

#### "NAZI GRAB CONTROL OF LATIN CAR SALES

#### "USE OF AMERICAN-MADE PARTS TO COMPLETE CHEAP AUTO TO UNDERSELL OURS

"With the help of some of the biggest corporations in the United States, Germans have made a good start toward control of the automobile trade in Latin America.

"The Germans have been delivering a light automobile in Santo Domingo for \$350 in competition with the lowest American price of \$650. But inquiry disclosed that the Nazi automobile was largely operated by parts manufactured in the United States, sent to Germany for assembly and then shipped back here to knock American low priced cars

virtually out of the market." (New York Times, May 20, 1941.)

American sales agents, obviously not of the same company shipping parts to Germany, were probably amazed at the unexpected competition from what seems to be a blockaded dictatorship. They addressed an inquiry to the Detroit manufacturer of the American parts of which these Nazi cars are built, but received no answer. The only reply to their wonderment and resentment was the arrival of another German ship with more Nazi cars, again breaking the "blockade."

"They wrote to the American manufacturer of the Detroit parts they found in the car, to ask about it.

"The inquiry brought no response and the next German ship brought more of the Nazi cars." (Ibid.)

The salesman then wrote to the American Department of Commerce, which, as many people imagine, is very much "concerned" about balking the Nazis. They are still waiting for a reply:

"Sales agents of American cars in Santo Domingo then wrote to the United States Department of Commerce. They have not received a reply to that letter, either." (Ibid.)

The reader might wonder how it happens that American manufacturers apparently have been following so seemingly suicidal a policy as actually helping the Nazis "drive out" American cars from the Latin American market. There is really no mystery involved. It is a known fact that American manufacturers have factories in Germany where they can assemble cars at far lower cost than in America due to the availability of cheap German labor. Hence, more profits can be made by the American manufacturers on the lower-priced cars shipped from Germany than on the higher-cost American products. The American capitalists watch out for their interests no matter what complex machinations are required. The Nazis have been making only part of the profits

in this Latin American automobile trade.

\* \* \*

In our article "Mysteries" of the Second World War," (THE BULLETIN, January 1941), in the section "The British 'Blockade' the Axis" we cited reports to the effect that an Italian owned and operated air line has been one of the standing links between the Axis powers and the Western Hemisphere. Since that report appeared, nothing has been done by the British "blockaders" to cut the line. In March it was disclosed that in addition to the Italian there are a German and also a British air line, all criss-crossing the supposed blockade. We read in the New York Post a dispatch by Allen Haden that the Italian line is operating regularly across the Atlantic:

"A three-motored Savoia-Marchetti plane loaded with a crew of five, a few passengers and a ton of mail and an expensive cargo, takes off once a week from Natal, Brazil. Ten hours later it is due at the Cape Verde Islands." (New York Post, March 24, 1941.)

Naturally people who know of this, and who sincerely believe that there is a war between the British Empire and the Axis cannot understand how it is possible that the British navy and air force permit the operation of this line:

"Many people wonder why the British allow this line to operate without interference. British warships dot the Atlantic. A careful watch could be kept and the occasional airplane brought down as it tries to land. Two interceptions and the line would be broken." (Ibid.)

It is interesting that the gasoline supply, without which the operation of this Axis line would be impossible, is supplied by the American capitalists with the permission of the British Government:

"Furthermore, how does U. S.

gasoline get to the Cape Verde Islands? British navicerts (permission to go through the blockade) could be refused when requested to export this gasoline from the U.S. But the navicerts are not refused." (Ibid.)

This Axis airline is of tremendous importance to the Nazis. Not only does it function as a link between the Axis and the Western Hemisphere, conveying mail and currency, but it brings to the Nazis very essential materials, such as diamonds, quartz and platinum which play a part in keeping alive the Nazi war machine.

"Every time a Lati plane takes off from Natal, it carries an average of 300 pounds of mail, nearly \$17,000 in precious foreign exchange to buy diamonds, platinum, mica and quartz. Nearly 1,500 pounds in these precious minerals is carried." (Ibid.)

This Italian line works in cooperation with the German Condor line in Brazil. The Nazis thus receive these valuable war supplies with the full knowledge and permission of the British and the American imperialists. The steady transportation of these precious materials to the Nazis constitutes a tremendous aid in their carrying on the work of occupation of different countries and of policing them. These materials are used in airplanes and in oil production, and therefore are of utmost significance:

"The superimportant points of hard-wearing gears in airplane engines can be coated with platinum. Diamonds and quartz are bought in Minas Geraes, Brazil. All drilling equipment whereby the oil fields of Rumania and Silesia can be made to produce precious fuel must be pointed with commercial diamonds." (Ibid.)

\* \* \*

Something extremely illuminating can be observed from another angle. Everybody knows that the life-nerve of

a modern army is oil. Without oil the Nazi air force and Panzer divisions would have been so much dead metal. One of the principal sources of oil for Hitler's war machine is Rumania. This is acknowledged by all who are familiar with the question of German oil supply. The Nazi war machine uses up a tremendous quantity of oil shipped from Rumania. Since last year the British were reported to have established their air bases in Greece within striking distance of the Rumanian oil fields, Hitler's chief source of fuel. And with Yugoslavia drawn into the orbit of the situation, the British, if they really meant to fight the German imperialists, had an unusual opportunity to deliver a telling blow to the German war machine by bombing Rumanian oil fields. Dr. Walter Levy, director of the Intelligence Division of the British Petroleum Institute, on a visit to the United States, declared shortly before the Nazi occupation of Greece and Yugoslavia:

"There is not the slightest doubt that the Yugoslav campaign offers a unique opportunity to the British to upset the whole carefully planned oil program of the Nazis, Dr. Levy said. 'If the Rumanian oil fields, refineries and the rail and port installations in Southeastern Europe could be destroyed and disorganized, Germany would have to supply the whole continent from her own domestic production and from her rapidly decreasing stocks. Available supplies would be less than 15 to 20 per cent of total peacetime requirements and in such a case the day when the Axis would be immobilized by an oil shortage might not be too far distant.'" (New York Times, April 13, 1941.)

Why, then, did not the British imperialists order their RAF to pour tons of incendiary bombs upon this life-nerve of the German war machine? We have been unable to find a single word reporting even an attempt of the British air force to cripple the Rumanian fuel supply which flows steadily and in enormous quantities to the Nazis. This is but another "mystery" of this



"strange" war. The imperialists and their diplomats know exactly the meaning of all these "mysteries," although their ideological flunkys, the newspaper correspondents, try to convey the impression that no one seems to have the key to these "mysteries":

"There have been many mysteries in this war - many riddles to which even the most astute diplomat does not possess the solution." (Ben Lucien Herman, The World-Telegram, May 2, 1941.)

Are we to believe that the editor of the Turkish newspaper, Yeni Sabah, does not understand these "mysteries," among which are the British refraining from bombing Rumanian oil fields and the Nazi transportation of Panzer divisions into Africa?

"Points we do not understand," complained an editorial in Yeni Sabah, 'are why the British do not bomb Rumanian oil fields, why repeated attacks on the German cruisers Gneisenau and Scharnhorst apparently are unsuccessful, and how a large German army was transported safely to Africa when the British are masters of the sea?'

"There had been some points in the course of the war that had made Britain's allies 'doubt if the war is following an altogether wise leadership,' said the Yeni Sabah." (New York Times, May 1, 1941.)

The imperialists have plenty of agents who very ably conceal the monstrous fascistisation scheme which is being palmed off upon the masses as a "war against the totalitarian aggressors." Hanson W. Baldwin, the New York Times "war expert," could not help discussing the peaceable attitude of the British imperialist air force with respect to the Nazi's fuel sources, the Rumanian oil fields. He, of course, offered an excuse for that "strange" behavior - not a very plausible excuse, it is true, but in a situation when the Marxists' voice does not reach the ears of the masses it is easy for the capitalist and opportunist writers to cover up the most

obvious crimes with the most illogical excuses. Baldwin said:

"The Rumanian oil fields have been, and still are, one of the principal German sources of supply. The British have had air bases in Greece since last Fall, yet the Rumanian fields have uninterruptedly pumped their 'black gold' into refineries, whence it has been shipped by rail and river to Germany. This failure to bomb the German oil supply has puzzled many persons; yet there are definite reasons for the British restraint." (New York Times, April 14, 1941. My emphasis - G.M.)

A sample of the reasons given by Baldwin is the following:

"A primary reason has been lack of enough bombers adequate for the job." (Ibid.)

Thus Baldwin is trying to convince his readers that the British empire is lacking bombers to carry out so important a military task - that is, a task vitally important in a real war but not in the sham which the Stalinist bureaucrats and their aides palm off as the "Second Imperialist War." Yet there were numerous reports in the press that England possesses a major sized air fleet composed not only of British but also of American-made planes. Only about three weeks earlier one could read in the New York Post that the British could even spare increasing numbers of bombing planes for the Singapore area:

"Neutral observers are amazed by Britain's ability to spare increasing numbers of fighting and bombing planes for this area, despite the great demands of the African campaign and home defense - a tribute to the growing productive power of British and American factories." (A. T. Steele, New York Post, April 22, 1941.)

No, there was no lack of bombers, as Baldwin would make his readers believe, but something else, and about

this other matter Baldwin says nothing. The truth behind the "mystery" of Rumanian oil fields is that the British ruling class and the Nazis are not really fighting each other. They conduct a sham war under the cover of which they are bringing Hitler into virtually every country of Europe and very probably are planning to bring him into countries outside Europe. The Nazis are a universal police force used by the imperialists to destroy the trade unions, do away in a bloody fashion with the workingclass vanguard, and prepare the attack upon and the partitioning of the vast territories of the Soviet Union. To make it appear that they are really fighting each other the imperialists must make sacrifices in life and property, while refraining from incapacitating the actual nerve centers of their military machines.

\* \* \*

Without question Stalin and his bureaucrats understand the picture before their eyes. But they cannot admit the truth because they opportunistically grabbed what the imperialists temporarily permit them to hold to make it look to the masses as if Stalin and Hitler are partners. Lest the workers become electrified and attempt to escape falling into the terrible trap set for them by the imperialists, Stalin and his crew, dreading a proletarian revolution, distort reality, as they did in Spain and

elsewhere. Just as there is not a word of truth in the flimsy explanation of the imperialists for the so-called "mysteries" of the "Second World War," so is there not a word of truth in the Stalinist thesis that the bourgeoisie are engaged in an imperialist war of the type of 1914. The imperialists and Stalin have their "oppositional" supporters. The Social Democrats and the trade union fakers who feed the masses with the fable that the "democracies" are fighting Hitler, are but lackeys of the imperialists. Cannon, Shachtman, Oehler, and Stamm, who are duping the most advanced workers with the same criminal fakery spread by Stalin's Comintern, that this is an imperialist world war, are but political props of the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy and are objective aids to world imperialism.

The first condition for stopping the imperialists, for the awakening of the politically paralyzed masses, is the destruction of the pernicious influence of Stalinism in all its political ramifications. The key section of the proletariat that has already broken away from Stalin subjectively is the section which is misled by the pseudo--anti-Stalinists, Cannon, Shachtman, Oehler, and Stamm. The workers who follow these misleaders must unite in a truly Marxist party and start the fight against Stalinism to clear the road for an attack upon world imperialism.

George Marlen  
May 22, 1941

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THE SHACHTMANITES "EXPLAIN"  
THE IMPERIALISTS' POLICY

THE present period, possibly more than any previous one, is a welter of confusion for the masses. Confronted since September 1939 by an international situation having so many fantastic features that periodically it evoked denials that it is a "phoney war," the masses have had surprise after surprise hurled at them to an unprecedented degree. For the first eight months an unexpected "Sitzkrieg" in the West filled the air with mystery which all the "explanations" in the papers and on the radio could not dispel. This "Sitzkrieg" resolved itself in the whirlwind occupation of France, during which the huge French army was withdrawn intact. Cries of "Betrayal" and a torrent of "explanations" followed. Miracles and mysteries on a lesser scale ensued in Africa and the Balkans. One moment the British in Africa were advancing at break-neck speed and the numerically superior Italian forces were melting away. The next moment Nazi Panzer divisions appeared in Africa as if by magic - this alone required a world of "explanations" - and the British were retreating even faster than they had advanced. One moment the insignificant Greek army appeared to be shattering Mussolini's streamlined divisions, the next moment the Greeks were surrendering, the British were executing a "second Dunkerque," and Churchill was again leading the chorus of "explanations." All of a sudden, the deputy leader of the Nazi Party is reported to have turned up on a farm in Scotland "looking for a Duke," all under the most mysterious circum-

stances, followed by a deluge of conflicting "explanations."

Indeed, the so-called "Second World War" has been one of the most "explained" affairs in history. A clue to the true character of the "Second World War" can be found in the fact that all these "explanations" have had as their purpose not to explain, but to explain away the phoney features which have so persistently appeared.

In the camp which passes amongst most of the class conscious workers as the camp of Bolshevism, the fundamental thesis on the "Second World War" is that it is an imperialist war for world markets, colonies and economic domination similar in character to that of the war of 1914-1918. Thus, Dimitroff, the Stalinist General Secretary, trumpets:-

"In its character and essence, the present war is, on the part of both warring sides, an imperialist, unjust war, despite the fraudulent slogans being used by the ruling classes of the warring capitalist states in their endeavor to hide their real aims from the masses of the people." (Daily Worker, Nov. 4, 1939. Emphasis in original.)

Echoing his master, Browder proclaims:

"The 'family' of capitalist nations are again locked in the fierce embraces of a new war, a new 'family quarrel' to decide at the

price of misery and death for their peoples, how to redivide the world among themselves." (Daily Worker, November 14, 1939.)

For many years in the past, the Stalinist bureaucrats were shouting that the imperialists were plotting to attack and carve up the Soviet Union. But now, the Stalinist renegades are saying that it was something else which the imperialists were plotting. What is it? "Both sides plotted this imperialist war for years Communist International says, urging end of conflict." (Headline, Daily Worker, Nov. 5, 1939. My emphasis - J.C.H.) How did such an alleged transformation in the imperialists' policy from plotting to attack the Soviet Union to plotting to have a "family quarrel" amongst themselves, take place, according to Stalin and his flunkys? It was Stalin's "wise foreign policy" which is said to have brought about this alleged alteration:-

"While engaged in negotiations with the U.S.S.R., they were surreptitiously trying to incite Germany against the U.S.S.R. By concluding a non-aggression pact with Germany, the Soviet Union foiled the insidious plans of the provokers of an anti-Soviet war." (Ibid.)

Thus, Stalin signs a "pact," and Presto! the years' long and fundamental policy of world imperialism changes. Such is the story of the "Second Imperialist World War" which the Stalinist counter-revolutionaries would have the masses believe. As for the phoney features of the so-called "Second Imperialist War" which so persistently appear and which point to a policy not of war but of collaboration on the part of the imperialists, the Stalinist bureaucrats simply cover them up by intensifying their cry that the imperialists are engaged in a life-and-death struggle amongst themselves as in 1914-1918.

The thesis of the Stalinist bureaucrats is echoed in the various sections of what passes for the Bolshevik camp. Among those who in the course of their "explanations" heap

scorn on the position that the "Second Imperialist War" is a phoney war is the Shachtmanite Workers Party:-

"After the swift German blitzkrieg in Poland, the imperialists had settled down to what was thought to be a 'sitzkrieg.' There were those who thought the war a 'phoney.' How foolish these people were has been made amply clear." (Labor Action, April 28, 1941.)

According to the Workers Party, which proclaims itself a Marxist tendency, the "Second World War" is of the same character as the war of 1914-1918 and the imperialists are said to be fighting "for the same reasons they fought in 1914":

"The Second Imperialist War is a continuation of the First which lasted from 1914 to 1918. The great powers had divided the world before 1914 between them, and when there was no more new territory to divide, they fought for each other's possessions. In 1929 came the great economic crisis, and, unable to recover from it, they prepared for war and are fighting again for the same reasons they fought in 1914." (Labor Action, July 1, 1940.)

In the imperialist war of 1914-1918, as those familiar with its history know, the two camps, the Allies and the Central Powers, fought ruthlessly, unhesitatingly, limitlessly, each for its own supremacy. In those years, contrary to the present situation, the bourgeoisie and their opportunist supporters did not have to "explain" the war, for there was nothing phoney about it, they had simply to try to justify it in the eyes of the masses.

In the "Second World War," therefore, the Workers Party, which like Stalin's "Comintern" equates it to the war of 1914-1918, would have the workers believe the imperialists are conducting a war amongst themselves for markets, colonial empires and world economic domination. Obviously, the German imperialists, according to this line, are the driving force, with the "democracies," particularly England

and France, (the latter formerly a "democracy"), striving to hang on to their booty of the war of 1914-1918. With this as the Shachtmanite thesis, it did not take long for reality to compel the Shachtmanites to issue "explanations" of certain mysterious events.

On June 10, 1940, the Shachtmanite paper, Labor Action, stated in an editorial:-

"Yes, it is possible for England and France to defeat Hitler's armies."

With this as the Shachtmanite prognosis, the occupation of France was a situation which required a vast amount of "explaining," especially in view of the fact that during the occupation both the French and the British armies remained intact. Since an actual military defeat of the French and British armies had not occurred, the Shachtmanites had to place their "explanation" on a political footing. Here is the Workers Party's story given through a feature article full of "inside information" which Labor Action says was deliberately suppressed by the bourgeois press:

"France's capitulation was planned and engineered by a powerful group of politico-industrialists whose leaders and spokesmen were such notables as Pierre Laval, Etienne Flandin, George Bonnet, Jean Prouvest, Paul Baudoin and a host of bigwigs from France's 200 families." (Labor Action, July 15, 1940.)

That the deal leading to the Nazi occupation of France was the policy of the French imperialists, and of their "Allies"; it is very necessary to add, is beyond doubt. But right at this point there are facts indicating that the situation which passes as the "Second World War" is something quite different from that of 1914-1918.

In 1914, the Germans at the outset came very near smashing the French army. The advance of the German army to Paris represented a genuine mili-

tary victory. But the policy of the French imperialists and of their then Allies at that time was altogether different from what it has been in the "Second World War." Facing the danger of actual defeat in 1914, they rallied every ounce of their forces and stopped the German advance. In the "Second World War," on the other hand, though not defeated, with their armed forces on land, in the air and on the sea intact, the French bourgeoisie and their "Allies" opened the door for the entrance of the Nazi forces. The Shachtmanites "explain" that the French imperialists feared Communism and preferred - the fascists:

"Why did the Politico-industrialists of France sell out to Hitler and Mussolini? The reason, above all others, was their passionate hatred and fear of communism.... they feared the immediate danger of Communism in France and extended control over their interests if France continued to fight." (Ibid. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

We have underscored the word "continued" in the phrase "if France continued to fight" for this word "continued" is a subtle distortion. Something can be continued only if it has been begun. The phrase "if France continued to fight" is a fraud because "France" never began to fight. There was no actual war as far as the French imperialists' policy was concerned. For eight months, the notorious "Sitzkrieg" took place. Then the path for the Nazis was opened by the withdrawal of the intact French and British forces first in the Lowlands and then in France. The two armies never met in anything that even remotely resembled a genuine, decisive struggle. At no time did the "Allies" wage war against the German imperialist's forces. The newspaper headlines about some alleged "Battle of France" were out-and-out fabrications, for no such Battle ever took place. Indeed, not even the foremost imperialist spokesmen could entirely conceal this. Less than two months after the mythical "Battle of France" was "fought" in the newspaper headlines, the Wall Street organ, The New York Herald Tribune, declared:

"It now seems quite clear that there never was a Battle of France, a battle for Paris, or whatever it was called in the days before the country's collapse." (July 23, 1940.)

The Shachtmanite story about the French imperialists' fear of "continuing" the alleged fight because of the danger of Communism makes it look as if the French imperialists had a policy of fighting the German imperialists. This is sheer invention, for there is no evidence of such a policy, unless the pretenses of the imperialists be taken as evidence. Reality and objective facts point to only one policy of the imperialists, the policy of bringing the Nazis into France to crush quickly the vanguard of the workers through the establishment of a fascist regime with the Nazis as the military-police instrument.

It will be recalled that the July 15, 1940 issue of Labor Action gave political reasons for the occupation of France. The above-quoted feature article of that issue states that the French imperialists "capitulated" for fear of the danger of Communism. In the same issue, however, there will be found an entirely different "explanation." Dwight Macdonald borrows his "explanation" from the magazine Fortune and sets it forth in an article called, "Why is Hitler Winning?" According to the Macdonald "explanation," the Nazi occupation of France was due to some alleged superiority of the Hitler war machine:-

"Why, then, did the Allies fail? Fortune answers quite frankly (sic): because they did not have totalitarian regimes which kept down wages, smashed unions, organized national production without paying too much attention to private property interests, and generally converted the nation into a barrack camp. The Nazis built this sort of war machine, and won the war." (Labor Action, July 15, 1940.)\*

In Macdonald's "explanation" there is no word about the French imperialists' "capitulation" based on fear of "the immediate danger of Communism." Macdonald has a magic formula, the "totalitarian regime," which, it would seem, can invariably twist the tail of the "democratic regime." But how does Macdonald know that the Nazi war machine was superior to that of the "democratic" French imperialists? Neither war machine was tested, for there was no actual war, no battle in which such a test could occur. The "war" was a continuation of politics, of the policy of collaboration which the imperialists camouflaged with a pretense of war. All talk about the military superiority of the "totalitarian regime" is unadulterated deception, for no proof whatever has been presented. The policy of collaboration of the international imperialists in the present situation makes impossible a genuine, decisive test.

Thus do the Shachtmanites "explain" the mysterious course of the "Second World War" in its most crucial phase to date, the Nazi occupation of France. Two utterly contradictory stories are presented by the Workers Party:- one, that France "capitulated" because of fear of Communism; the other, that Hitler "won" because of "totalitarian" superiority. Both stories can serve only to confuse the workers and help the capitalists camouflage their collaboration.

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planation is, obviously, that the "democratic" regime of France did not keep down wages and smash unions, and that the Nazis are not particularly concerned about private property interests. Macdonald has already "forgotten" the vast noise made by the Trotskyites for years that the "democratic" French imperialists were crushing the workers in every respect and converting France into a barrack camp. As for the Nazis being relatively unconcerned about private property interests, this is an out-and-out fantasy. In reality, the whole purpose of the Nazi regime, and of every other bourgeois regime, is to safeguard and preserve the structure of bourgeois private property.

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\* The implication of this "frank" ex-

In July and August 1940, the occupation of France was still in the limelight and, pressed by the demands of reality, the Shachtmanites were "explaining" with might and main. At that time, it was obviously impossible for the Shachtmanites to press their story that the "Second World War" was an epoch-making, titanic struggle amongst the imperialists fought "for the same reasons they fought in 1914." "Diplomacy" compelled the Shachtmanites to devote their efforts chiefly to "explaining" why the imperialists are not fighting. In fact, in this period, the Shachtmanites wrote a virtual Finis to the "Second World War." Labor Action stated:

"The war abroad is almost over, but the real war has not yet begun, the war of the masses against their oppressors." (August 5, 1940, My emphasis - J.C.H.)

By September 1940, the French situation had subsided somewhat. Hence, the Shachtmanites began to press the thesis of the "Second World War" which was alleged to be fought by the imperialists "for the same reasons they fought in 1914," While in August 1940, Labor Action stated that "the war abroad is almost over," in September 1940 it reversed the sense of that statement:

"Despite the blows that Hitler has dealt his imperialist rivals the end of the war is nowhere in sight." (September 9, 1940. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Observe <sup>how</sup> an opportunist defends his thesis. When reality tears that thesis to shreds, <sup>he</sup> gives "explanations" which for the moment conceal the more obvious fakery contained in the thesis. When things have subsided enough, <sup>he</sup> returns to harping on the original thesis, contradicts today without repudiating what was said yesterday, and trusts to the inability of his victims to see through the whole fraud.

The Workers Party proclaims that the "Second World War" is being fought for colonial empires and world econo-

mic domination in the manner of the war of 1914-1918. On this line, the German imperialists are supposed to be struggling for the conquest of the British Empire. Yet the Shachtmanites declare that Hitler fears the demolition of the British Empire! During the period when the Shachtmanites were crying "the war abroad is almost over," in fact in the very same article in which this declaration occurs, they stated:

"Hitler not only fears 'trouble' in his rear, in France, if he invades England. He also fears what may happen if his armies shatter the British Empire too suddenly and too completely... So we have Hitler hesitating to demolish the British Empire for fear, once that mighty prison Bastille were destroyed, the millions of African and Asiatic and Near Eastern peoples who are now safely under British lock and key will blow the lid off the whole imperialist structure. And Hitler is just as anxious as Churchill is to keep that lid firmly on." (Labor Action, August 5, 1940.)

But, again, when the French situation had cooled down sufficiently and the need was no longer to cry "the war abroad is almost over," the Shachtmanites, contradicting their previous statements, "forgot" all about their story of Hitler fearing "trouble" in France and hesitating to demolish the British Empire, and in November 1940, stated:-

"This time the Axis powers are directing their efforts against the British Empire proper." (Labor Action, November 14, 1940.)

Once more, Labor Action roared the thesis of the imperialists battling "for the same reasons they fought in 1914." In the pages of Labor Action, the "hesitating" Hitler was now slashing unrestrainedly at the British Empire. Why had Hitler apparently given up so rapidly his "hesitating to demolish the British Empire"? Discreetly, Labor Action refrained from going into this ticklish matter. By

carefully avoiding an accounting of their contradictory "explanations," the Shachtmanites pulled themselves out of a tight spot and came out with the thesis on the "Second World War" saved for further use.

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Contrary to the opportunists' "explanations" the line of the imperialists today is the Munich line in amplified form. The "democratic" imperialists could not openly continue placing the masses of Europe under the Nazi boot as a preparation for an assault on the Soviet Union as was done in the Munich days. The Munich policy had to be continued under a different form - the "war" form - so as to prevent an explosion amongst the class-conscious workers throughout the world and especially in such a revolutionary center as France. The "democratic" demagoguery of the Anglo-French-American imperialists required sooner or later a pretense of war against Hitler. In September 1939, this pretense was officially placed on the pages of history in the form of a declaration of war by the Anglo-French imperialists. But from the "democratic" camp, no real war against Nazi Germany was forthcoming. While Poland was being demolished by the Nazi forces, the Anglo-French imperialists, holding their huge military forces in idleness, reported that their aviators were dropping leaflets on German cities. These colossal swindlers were actually pretending to be arousing the German masses against Hitler! This was the Anglo-French "war" against Germany during the actual Blitzkrieg against Poland! Then came the "Sitzkrieg," a period of preparation for the next major step. The Nazi occupation of France, followed immediately by the crushing and decimation of the French proletarian vanguard, was not a defeat for the "democratic" imperialists. It was an enormous victory for them, forming the materialization of one of their fondest dreams and the realization of their most pressing immediate need. The fascization of France with the Nazis as the spearhead was a major purpose of the pretense of war which since September 1939 has received the false label of the "Second World War."

Since May-June 1940, the Nazi murderers have rolled over vast areas of Europe. In every instance and all along the line, the "democratic" imperialists have deliberately opened the path for the Nazis under a pretense of war. In other articles in THE BULLETIN, much material has been presented demonstrating the methods used by the British imperialists to facilitate the advance of the Nazi forces. We have analyzed and exposed the fakery of the various "campaigns" which served as a cover for bringing in Hitler's troops. Some of this fakery has been so obvious that even in the imperialist press questions about the situation were raised, naturally to "explain" it away. It is a significant fact that the Shachtmanite press has maintained a total silence on all this imperialist fakery. To cite an outstanding instance. Out of a clear sky, Nazi Panzer divisions were reported to be in Africa and to be driving the British back. They had to pass over about 270 miles of British-controlled Mediterranean to get from Sicily to Tripoli. Numerous transports were required for this feat. This was an event which in a real war would have resulted in naval action in the Mediterranean so gigantic that it would have rocked the whole world. Yet to the world at large, the appearance of Panzer divisions in Africa was a sharp surprise. Nothing had been previously reported, and the first questions that came to mind were:- How in the name of Black Magic did the Nazis manage to get a large mechanized army to Africa? Had they been simply allowed to go there? As usual, Churchill "explained" the affair. In a previous article in THE BULLETIN (May 1941, pp. 4-6), the utter incredibility of Churchill's "explanation" was shown. Indeed, a week after Churchill "explained," the editors of the New York Times declared:- "How they [i.e., the Nazis-J.C.H.] transported to Africa the armored divisions and supplies for the expedition against Egypt is still a puzzle . . . ." Did the Shachtmanite press have anything to say about this puzzle? Not a word! This highly significant event which, like so many others,



clearly indicated the collaboration of the British and German imperialists, was passed over in complete silence by the "Marxist" leaders of the Workers Party. And naturally! To meddle with the numerous instances of military fakery perpetrated by the imperialists in their pretense of war would go against Shachtman's thesis of the "Second Imperialist War."

Such is the character of the Shachtmanite "explanations." Distorting reality, evading troublesome facts, contradicting itself to conceal its opportunism, the Workers Party leadership functions to mislead and confuse the workers who follow it.

Opportunists never give a correct explanation of reality, for a fundamental means of betraying the workers is to confuse them as to the character of the world in which they live. In the war of 1914-1918, when the imperialists were engaged in a real war for world markets and economic domination, the opportunists of those days, primarily the social-chauvinist leaders of the Second International, deceived the workers with fables about a "war to defend the fatherland" and a "war for democracy." Only Lenin and a handful of genuine Marxists exposed the actual character of that criminal, predatory, imperialist war. Today when the imperialists are pursuing a policy of collaboration under a pretense of war, the Social-Democratic traitors simply repeat with the necessary modifications their deceptions of 1914-1918. Their stories about a war of "democracy against Hitlerism" are the old tune with a few new words. The Stalinist bureaucrats, posing as Bolsheviks and Leninists, on the other hand, feed the workers poisonous fantasies which sound very revolutionary. The Stalinists shout about the "Second Imperialist War." They pretend that "Stalin's wise foreign policy" pushed in the background the basic need of the imperialists to organize an attack on the Soviet Union and gave rise to

an inter-imperialist conflict like that of 1914-1918. By this deception, they conceal the fact that the so-called "Second World War" is a disguised preparation for the forthcoming imperialist assault on the Soviet Union, that the pretense of war camouflages the preliminary stages of this assault, the fascization of the major capitalist countries and the crushing of the world proletarian vanguard. Obviously, by this trickery, the Stalinist bureaucrats are playing the game of the imperialists and helping them — objectively speaking — to prepare the attack on the Soviet Union. Is this a suicidal policy for Stalin and his henchmen? Yes, undoubtedly. But opportunists always play a suicidal game. The Social-Democrats, with their support of bourgeois-democracy, open the path to fascism and their own destruction. Stalin, the renegade and opportunist, has to pretend that his policies are immense successes for the masses. Hence, Stalin proclaims that his foreign policy has embroiled the imperialists in a struggle amongst themselves and so has warded off an attack on the Soviet Union.

The sham anti-Stalinists, like the Shachtmanites, fundamentally repeating Stalin's fakery, play Stalin's game, and like Stalin, objectively aid the imperialists in putting over the fraud of the "Second World War." The workers who follow Shachtman are in the main class conscious and desire a revolutionary way out of the present nightmare of reaction in which the masses live. They will never find this way if they continue to follow the Shachtmanite leadership. An understanding of Shachtman's opportunism, of his sham anti-Stalinist character and the break with Shachtman on the basis of this understanding are the first steps toward concretizing the revolutionary desires and interests of the workers who are in the toils of the so-called Workers Party.

J. C. Hunter  
May 22, 1941.

OEHLER'S "MARCH SEPARATELY AND STRIKE TOGETHER"

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OEHLER PRESENTS A SLOGAN

HERE are very few opportunist traps that have been used to betray the proletariat which have worked as successfully as the treacherous assurance that the "democratic" bourgeoisie fight Fascism. Social-democracy has been peddling this deadly lie for many years. The central idea in the Stalinist "Seventh Congress" (Popular Frontism) was precisely this deception that the "democratic" bourgeoisie put up a struggle against Fascism, politically, or militarily, or both. A classic example of a betrayal of the workers by means of this trap is found in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. In Spain, every political tendency operating within the proletariat misled the working class by means of one variety or another of this deception. Some peddled this swindle even under the guise of "condemning" it.

One tendency, which seemingly opposed the line of the Stalinist "Seventh Congress" and in appearance even opposed Trotsky's policy of "critical support" to the Stalinist line, while in reality peddling a version of the Stalinist "Seventh Congress" deception, was the group headed by Hugo Oehler, the Revolutionary Workers League. A concrete example of the form in which Oehler's organization advanced the deceptive notion that the "democratic" capitalists fight Fascism is the following which was applied by the Oehlerite R.W.L. to the Spanish Civil War:-

"When the class war reaches the

stage of open armed conflict against Fascism it is correct in our line of march towards the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to use a two-fold strategy of marching separately (from the 'democratic' capitalists) and striking together with them against the Fascists." (Fighting Worker, Mar. 1, 1939. Our emphasis.)

It should be noted in the above statement that the R.W.L. speaks of striking together with the "democratic" capitalists against the Fascists, thus clearly giving the impression that the "democratic" capitalists actually fight the Fascists.

The Oehlerite R. W.L. considers this such a basic position that it has incorporated it into the Fourteen Points of its International Contact Commission. The R.W.L. feels that in order to make this position look correct, it must place it on a "Leninist" foundation. Hence, it attributes this position to Lenin and the Bolsheviks of 1917. The R.W.L. states that:-

"Under certain conditions where the breakdown of the economy creates an armed struggle on the part of certain sections of the bourgeoisie to crush the rising proletarian threat, certain other sections of the bourgeoisie for their own economic and political interests, may be forced into an armed opposition to the decisive section of the bourgeoisie. The working class may use parallel action with such 'democratic' sections of the bourgeoisie as did the Bolsheviks

in 1917 in the struggle against Kornilov." (The Marxist, August 1939, p. 2. Our emphasis.)

Let us list the chief points that are made in this formulation:- 1) that in a critical situation during an effort by the bourgeoisie to crush the proletariat, the bourgeoisie itself may become divided and a part of the bourgeois class, with whom the proletariat may act in parallel, may enter into an armed opposition to a decisive section of the bourgeoisie; 2) the R.W.L.'s formulation holds that such a situation obtained in 1917 during the Kornilov attempt and that the Bolsheviks used parallel action with the "democratic sections of the bourgeoisie" against the decisive section; 3) proceeding from the proposition that the above two points are correct, the R.W.L. formulates them into a general policy for the workers to follow today. What is necessary, therefore, in order to determine whether the R.W.L. offers the workers a Marxist policy, is to examine the historical facts both of the Kornilov situation and of the present.

The Oehlerite position implies that there was a "democratic" section of the Russian bourgeoisie in 1917 with which the Bolsheviks struck together against Kornilov. It is a fact that classes and sections of classes are led or represented by political parties. Everyone familiar with the history of the Russian Revolution knows the division of classes and parties in Russia in 1917. The bourgeoisie was "divided" into two main sections; the Conservative Octobrists and the Liberal Constitutional Democrats (Cadets) known in 1917 as the Peoples Freedom Party. The Cadets passed for the "democratic" bourgeoisie during the Kornilov situation. The "democratic" bourgeoisie struck <sup>not against Kornilov, but</sup> against the proletariat during the Kornilov situation. Writing in October, not long after the Kornilov attempt, Lenin clearly and definitely stated that the Kornilov insurrection was supported by the entire capitalist class:-

"The uprising of Kornilov and

Kaledin was supported by the ENTIRE LANDLORD AND CAPITALIST CLASS, headed by the Party of the Cadets (the 'People's Freedom' Party). This has been fully proved by the facts published in the Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee." (V. I. Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. VI, p. 247. Our capitals.)

We see, therefore, that Oehler's presentation of history, insofar as his story of the Bolsheviks striking together with some "democratic" sections of the bourgeoisie is concerned, is not true to facts.

Let us establish with whom the Bolsheviks struck together at Kornilov.

There were 1) the petty-bourgeoisie in Russia, primarily the peasantry led at that time by the Socialist Revolutionaries, and 2) the Russian aristocracy of labor led by the Mensheviks. What role did these sections and parties play in the Kornilov situation? They entered into a bloc with the Bolsheviks ostensibly to fight against Kornilov. That bloc lasted five days, September 8-13, during the time of the Kornilov affair. Although formally the Mensheviks and S.R.'s presented a united front with the Bolsheviks against Kornilov the situation within the Menshevik and S.R. parties was not what one would gather from the formal aspects of this united front. History establishes that these parties themselves were divided on the Kornilov question. The right wing of the S.R.'s, represented chiefly by Kerensky and Savinkov who were members of the S. R. Party at that time, not only did not strike at Kornilov, but actively and concretely formed a conspiratory alliance with Kornilov. The Centre of the S.R.'s, represented by Chernov, vacillated in supporting Kerensky and Kornilov. The Right Mensheviks, represented by Tseretelli, in reality sided with Kerensky and the bourgeoisie who backed Kornilov. However, it must be noted that these people gave every appearance of putting up a fight against Kornilov. The same holds true for some of the "democratic" bourgeoisie, as for example the Liberal, Filonenko, assistant

governor-general of Petrograd, who made a pretense of fighting Kornilov by issuing an order in which he called upon the workers to strengthen the defenses of Petrograd. Marxists, however, do not take pretenses at their face value, but base themselves on the concrete class character and deeds of the political parties and leaders.

There remain the Left S.R.'s and Left Mensheviks who in September 1917 actually followed the Bolshevik lead in fighting Kornilov.

Let us establish several other historical facts in connection with the Kornilov-Kerensky plot. The Kornilov insurrection petered out almost immediately after it began. It is clear from Lenin's writings that at that moment he was not informed of the fact that the S.R.Kerensky was one of the plotters and that the Mensheviks and S.R.'s were in reality pro-Kornilovists. In his letter to the Bolshevik Central Committee during the Kornilov insurrection, Lenin did not speak about exposing Kerensky's treachery and duplicity, but spoke about exposing merely Kerensky's weakness:-

"But we do not support Kerensky, on the contrary, we expose his weakness." (Selected Works, Vol. VI., p. 201.)

If Lenin at that time had known the full story, he certainly would have insisted on exposing Kerensky's treachery. Indeed, later Lenin frequently referred to Kerensky as "the Kornilovist, Kerensky." It was only after the Kornilov affair that Lenin definitely and conclusively recognized that these petty-bourgeois opportunist parties were friends of the Kornilovists:-

"Down with the Mensheviks and S.R.'s! Struggle against them ruthlessly. Expel them ruthlessly from all revolutionary organizations. No negotiations, no communications with those friends of the Kishkins, the friends of the Kornilovist landlords and capital-

ists." (Collected Works, Vol. XXI, Book 1, p. 254. Article dated October 5, 1917.)

A careful analysis of the Kornilov situation presents a picture altogether different from that painted by those who, like Oehler, do not provide a precise view of parties and classes. Oehler says that a tactic of "marching separately and striking together" with the "democratic" sections of the capitalists against Kornilov was the line pursued by the Bolsheviks in 1917. As a matter of fact, not "democratic" capitalists, as Oehler says, but only the extreme Left elements of the petty-bourgeois parties actually lined up against Kornilov and struck together with the revolutionary workers and soldiers under the guidance and leadership of the Bolsheviks. Since in capitalism the intermediate classes, the petty-bourgeois sections, cannot have an independent policy, but must support either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat, the meaning of the five-day bloc of the proletariat with the petty-bourgeoisie was that for the moment the latter marched toward the proletariat. For the moment, the proletarian policy dominated. The Left sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, as well as their political parties, fell in with the Bolshevik line against Kornilov. If the Bolshevik line against Kornilov had not dominated in the "five-day union," the whole affair would have been a piece of rank opportunism from top to bottom and would have opened the way for the victory of Kornilov. This rising Bolshevik tide continued its force and swept the proletariat into power only a few weeks later.

The cleavage of class interests in the Civil War which followed the Bolshevik seizure of power was a continuation in enlarged and intensified form of what had occurred in the Kornilov situation. All masks dropped and the true political face appeared in full view. The whole landlord and capitalist class sided with the White Guards; the tissue paper separation "dividing" the "democratic" from the

"fascist" sections of the capitalist class disappeared at the first decisive impact of the class struggle. In the course of the struggle the petty-bourgeois parties solidly lined themselves up with the bourgeoisie and their "White generals." The poorest peasantry cast off its former political leadership, the treacherous Left S.R.'s and accepted the Bolshevik leadership.

Oehler poses his slogan for situations which might arise in the present. The political lessons which the petty-bourgeois parties have learned since the October Revolution is completely omitted from Oehler's line. Yet those lessons must be taken into consideration by Marxists. The petty-bourgeois parties, even the "Leftest" of them, have come clearly to understand their mistake (from the bourgeois standpoint) of following the Bolshevik lead for even a moment in the Kornilov situation. Having never seen the proletariat seize power prior to October, the petty-bourgeois parties did not believe that such a thing could ever take place. The evolution of these parties throughout the Civil War in Russia, when they became the direct agents of the "White Guards," proves that never again will they even for a moment aid the proletariat in a struggle against a Kornilov. There has been proof galore that even the most Left sections of the petty-bourgeois parties are agencies of imperialism, always selling the interests of the most oppressed petty-bourgeois masses to the imperialist rulers. To point out the most crucial cases. The Left Social-Democrats in Germany in 1923 and in 1932-33, and the Left Social Democrats in Austria, Spain, France, Italy, betrayed the masses to the Kornilovs. This is due to the class lessons which the Left petty-bourgeois parties learned from the October Revolution — to work consistently and invariably on the side of the bourgeoisie.

#### OEHLEK'S SLOGAN IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

**A**s every student of Marxism knows,

slogans may be correct for one period of history and utterly incorrect and even counter-revolutionary for other periods. The proletarian strategy and tactics must of necessity differ in the period of decaying capitalism from those of the epoch of ascendant capitalism. Unquestionably, it was correct and a tremendous step forward on Marx's part to organize the First International and to include petty-bourgeois and national revolutionary elements such as the followers of Mazzini, Blanqui and Proudhon. But today it would be utterly incorrect and downright counter-revolutionary to include petty-bourgeois nationalists in the new international, which has yet to be created by the Marxists. Today, moreover, not even tendencies which style themselves Marxist and Leninist can always be regarded as revolutionary on the strength of their mere say-so, as for example the Stalinist and Social-Democratic organizations. Similarly, what was correct for 1848 or even for 1905 became incorrect in 1917 and thereafter.

During the unification of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in 1906, the question of "marching separately and striking together" with the "democratic" bourgeoisie was taken up. The Mensheviks presented a vague position, definitely leaning, however, towards the Cadets. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, led by Lenin, argued that to "march separately and strike together" was permissible at that time only with the peasant democracy, or as Lenin called it, the revolutionary democracy. In his report on the Unification Congress in May 1906, Lenin made this clear:

"Thirdly, said I, the resolution of the Mensheviks does not give a clear division of the bourgeois democracy from the point of view of the tactic of the proletariat. The proletariat must go to a certain degree together with the bourgeois democracy or — 'march separately and strike together.' But with what particular section of the bourgeois democracy must it 'strike together' at the present time in the epoch of the Duma? You, your-

selves, comrades Mensheviks, understand that the Duma puts this question on the agenda, but you are trying to wriggle out of it. But we said straight and clear: with the peasant or revolutionary democracy, neutralizing by our agreement with it the vacillation and inconsistency of the Cadets." (V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Russian Edition, Vol. VII, p. 213.)

Later, as we know, there occurred a complete separation between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, with the latter evolving to their present position of an outright agency of imperialism. The petty-bourgeois organizations leading the peasantry (the S.R.'s) betrayed their own program. The leadership of the peasantry was assumed by the Bolsheviks. In consequence, there was no longer a situation of "marching separately" while striking together. The proletariat and the peasantry marched together and struck together under the leadership of the revolutionary Marxists (Bolsheviks). It may be stated as an established general historical principle that in the present epoch of the intensification of the decay of capitalism, the slogan "march separately and strike together" represents an impossible relation of forces. While the masses are under the leadership of non-Marxist organizations and therefore must "march separately" from the Marxists, they cannot strike at the bourgeoisie. It is only when the masses are under the leadership of the Marxist Party that they can strike at the bourgeoisie. In that case, they march together with the Marxists and strike together with them at the bourgeoisie.

The opportunists, of course, obscure this historical development. They do their utmost to prevent the proletariat from seeing that the ancient slogan of "march separately and strike together," issued when the Marxists could still find themselves in one Party with petty-bourgeois opportunists, has become not merely obsolete, but actually a dangerous snare.

As we have seen, Oehler supports

this slogan with a falsified analogy to Lenin's tactics in the Kornilov situation. What is the real source of Oehler's falsified application of this slogan to the present situation? Oehler inherited it from Trotsky.

Trotsky used this slogan as a cover for his peddling the deadly notion that a united front between Stalinism and Social-Democracy could prevent the victory of Fascism. During the Stalinist "Third Period," Trotsky and his lieutenants declared they were "a faction of the Comintern." He pretended to believe that the Comintern could be reformed. Hence, he issued "advice" to the Comintern. One such piece of "advice" was that the Stalinists should form a united front with the Social-Democrats. Trotsky concealed the fact that both the Stalinist and Social-Democratic Internationals had as their purpose to bring about the defeat of the workers before the Fascist onslaught. He did this by issuing as the slogan of this proposed united front the one used by Lenin many years before in the "Bolshevik-Menshevik" Party, when Social-Democracy had not yet conclusively demonstrated its utter treachery, and Stalinism had not yet appeared on the scene. In December 1931, Trotsky wrote under the guise of giving "advice" to the Stalinist "Comintern":-

"No common platform with the social democracy, or with the leaders of the German trade unions, no common publications, banners, placards! March separately, but strike unitedly!" (Germany, the Key to the International Situation, "p.37.)

At the time Lenin issued this slogan, i.e., in the period of 1905, what went under the name of Bolshevism was a genuinely revolutionary current. But in 1931, when Trotsky wrote the above "advice," what generally passed for Bolshevism was the renegade Stalinist bureaucracy and its international organizations whose interests were — and are — diametrically opposed to those of the workers and which had to its "credit" a whole series of bloody betrayals. Poisoning the workers' mind

with the fraudulent idea that this renegade tendency could be reformed, Trotsky dangled Lenin's old slogan of the united front before the workers.

Similarly, during the ultra-Rightist zigzag of the Stalintern, known as the Popular Front, Trotsky again used Lenin's old and now obsolete slogan to deceive the workers. During the ultra-Leftist zigzag (Third Period) when the Stalinist bureaucrats refused to have any negotiations with the Social-Democratic bureaucrats, Trotsky stood a little to the Right and "urged" a united front. During the ultra-Rightist, Popular Front zigzag when the Stalinist renegades talked about organic unity with the Social Democratic traitors, Trotsky stood a little to the Left and in March 1936 again shouted to the Stalintern, pretending to "advise" it:-

"The rule of Bolshevism on the question of blocs reads: march separately, strike together." (Whither France, p. 134. Emphasis in the original.)

In both cases, Trotsky palmed off the Stalinized "Comintern" as an organization which could possibly function in the interests of the masses.

Trotsky used this slogan as a "left" cover of his peddling the Stalinist Popular Front fakery of "democracy versus fascism." The Stalinist bureaucrats, stupefying the workers with ultra-Rightism, were shouting that in Spain, in France, in England, everywhere, the issue confronting the workers was "Democracy Versus Fascism." The Stalinist renegades used this slogan to divert the workers from the

path of proletarian revolution by tying the workers to bourgeois-democracy ("democracy"). Trotsky gave his followers the same deceptive policy, tricking it out with "criticism." For example, during the Spanish Civil War, Trotsky wrote:

"In the Spanish Civil War the question involves democracy or fascism." (Internal Bulletin of the S.W.P., October 1937.)

Trotsky supported the Stalinist-Socialist-Anarchist-bourgeois "Popular Front" bloc with "criticism." Using the phrase, "march separately, strike together," Trotsky deceived his followers into imagining that he was "exposing" the Stalinists, that the Trotskyist line was basically different from the Stalinist Rightist snare. Unfortunately, the Trotskyist workers by and large were trapped by Trotsky's "critical" phrases and so accepted what was essentially the Stalinist line of "Democracy Versus Fascism."

Oehler, who pretends he has broken with Trotsky politically as well as organizationally, has in reality carried with him the fundamental forms of Trotsky's opportunism. In certain cases, Oehler even took with him Trotsky's deceptive use of phrases from Lenin, as in the case of the slogan "march separately, strike together." As the S.W.P. pretends to be something basically different from the "Comintern" outfit, so Oehler pretends to be something different from the Trotsky tendency. Facts show that Cannon's S.W.P., Shachtman's W.P. and Oehler's R.W.L. are all organic parts, politically speaking, of the Stalinist degeneration of the October Revolution.  
George Marlen  
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T R O T S K Y, the U K R A I N E and the O E H L E R I T E S

WHY DID STALIN BETRAY  
THE SPANISH WORKERS?

THE leaders of the S.W.P. seek to instill the impression that they pursue a policy of exposing and combatting the Stalinist reaction as an integral aspect of their program. Therefore, the Trotskyite leaders are constrained to explain, from time to time, what Stalinism is and how it operates. As a touchstone for testing the validity of the Trotskyite explanations of Stalinism, let us view their explanation for the gigantic Stalinist betrayal of the Spanish Revolution in 1936-39.

It is well known that the Stalinists pursued a counter-revolutionary Rightist line in betraying the Spanish workers. Support to bourgeois democracy, crystallized in the capitalist Popular Front government, served as the medium for paralyzing the forward movement of the Spanish workers and handing them over to Franco. Now what, according to the S.W.P. leaders, prompted the Stalinist leaders to pursue the counter-revolutionary Rightist course in betraying the Spanish workers?

The October 1938 issue of the New International explained that Stalin sabotaged Spain for the sake of an alliance with the "democratic" imperialists:

"The keystone of the entire Kremlin policy - the Franco-Soviet Pact, for the sake of which Stalin stopped the French revolution, sabotaged Spain, and handed Czechoslovakia to Hitler: dissolved by a three hour conversation in the Bavarian Alps." (The New International, Oct. 1938, p. 292. My emphasis - A.B.)

Thus, according to the Trotskyite leaders, it was Stalin's orientation to "democratic" imperialism which determined his counter-revolutionary RIGHTIST course in Spain.

After the Hitler-Stalin pact, the Trotskyite leaders, without a word of repudiation of their earlier explanations, promptly about-faced and hinted that it was Stalin's desire to come to terms with the Hitler imperialists that induced him to sell out the cause of the Spanish workers:

"Was it a coincidence that, as Stalin was coming to terms with Hitler, Stalin's hirelings were abandoning the fight against fascism in Spain? We did not then know the facts about the secret agreement with Hitler, although we then predicted a pact between them." (Editorial, "Why Catalonia Fell," Socialist Appeal, Oct. 31, 1939. My emphasis - A.B.)

It should be noted that a year previously, in October 1938, the S.W.P. leaders were telling the workers that Stalin was sabotaging Spain for the sake of his alliance with the "democratic" imperialists. That Stalin sabotaged Spain is true. However, a year later the Trotskyite leaders "forgot" all about the Stalinist sabotage and implied that Stalinism had been fighting against fascism but was later "abandoning" this fight against fascism in Spain. It was only by introducing this contradiction in their line that the Trotskyite leaders could switch from their original story that Stalin was sabotaging Spain for the sake of his alliance with the "democ-



atic" imperialists to the new story that he sold out in Spain for the sake of an alliance with the fascist imperialists.

Both the old and the new explanations of the Trotskyite leaders are false to the core. Stalin's Comintern policy is not organically connected with his foreign policy. The Comintern policy, irrespective of any and all diplomatic pacts which may be signed or in the offing between Stalin and the imperialists, is explicitly designed to prevent revolution at all times. To prevent genuine revolutionary development amongst the toilers, Stalin's Comintern uses the ultra-Rightist and ultra-Leftist zigzag maneuvers as its mode of operation. The Comintern zigzags at times coincide, but as a rule are at variance with the turns of Stalin's foreign policy. One has but to recall that Stalin's foreign policy from 1923 to 1933 was consistently oriented towards Germany as against the "Allies" - yet during this period, the Stalinist party in Germany carried out both the Rightist and Leftist zigzags.

If it was necessary for Stalin, according to the line of the Trotskyite leaders, to sell out the Spanish toilers by a Rightist zigzag in order to placate the "democratic" Anglo-French imperialists with whom he sought an alliance (Trotskyite explanation October 1938), and to pursue exactly the same line when he sought an alliance with the fascist imperialists (Trotskyite explanation October 31, 1939), then obviously the Trotskyite identification of the Rightist Stalinist zigzag with the orientation of Stalin's foreign policy toward "democratic" imperialism is seen to be a fantasy.

\* \* \*

In order to forestall any disillusionment which might arise amongst the workers as a result of the inevitable consequences of the Rightist zigzag, the Stalinist leaders, as far back as November 1938, cleverly began to cover their tracks and prepare for a new zigzag.

In late August 1939, Stalin turned from the "democratic" imperialists to Hitler - that is, some nine months after the beginning of the present Leftist swing. Immediately, the Trotskyite leaders performed another 180 degree turn and now stated that Stalin's pact with Hitler caused the present Leftist swing:

"The revolutionary phrase-mongering of the Stalinist bureaucrats is only a new deception, a transitional mechanism designed to bridge the abrupt change from a pro-democratic to a pro-axis policy and carry the workers along." (James P. Cannon, Socialist Appeal, September 29, 1939.)

If we now put all the Trotskyite stories together we find this absurd picture. Stalin had a certain line in Spain. That line was ultra-Rightist throughout the Spanish Civil War. The Trotskyites declare that the earlier part of that line hinged upon Stalin's diplomatic orientation to "democratic" imperialism and that that portion of the Rightist line was expressed in the Stalinist sabotage of Spain. The latter part of that Rightist line is declared to have been an "abandonment" of a suddenly implied Stalinist fight against fascism in Spain, caused by the shift in Stalin's diplomatic orientation towards Hitler. On the top of all this, the present Leftist swing is declared to be a transitional mechanism of Stalin's reorientation toward Hitler. Such is the Trotskyite ideological gibberish passed off as "scientific Marxist" analysis!

As a matter of fact, as we have shown previously ("The Change of the Comintern Line," THE BULLETIN, Vol. II, No. 5, October-November 1939) the present ultra-Leftist swing of Stalin's Comintern had the Autumn of 1938 as its starting point. The ultra-Rightist line had served the purpose of the Stalinist bureaucracy in crushing the proletarian revolution in Spain and in France. It had to be abandoned for the Leftist line, as in the previous revolutionary situations in China 1927 and in Germany 1923, in order to cover up the betrayal engineered by the

foregoing Rightist maneuver.

Since the Trotskyite line is at variance with reality, it twists and turns, contradicts itself, criss-crosses at every point and finally doubles back on itself. Suddenly, the hint that the Stalinist "abandonment" in Spain was due to the then future pact with Hitler is dropped and the original yarn about Stalin's fawning upon the "democracies" is dragged forth again to account for the Spanish betrayal. Here it is of January 1941:

"The People's Front regime of Blum and the French Stalinists helped strangle the cause of the Spanish workers' revolution from without, just as Stalin, INTENT UPON PROVING HIS WORTH TO HIS PROSPECTIVE ANGLO-FRENCH ALLIES, helped strangle it from within." (Fourth International, p. 6. My capitals - : A.B.)

People, like the Trotskyite leaders, who blur the workers' vision and prevent them from seeing clearly the method and purpose of the Stalinist Comintern, can never lead the workers in any kind of struggle against the Stalinist system.

Every revolutionary worker must become aware of the burning necessity to be precisely clear as to the nature, function, and mode of operation of the Stalinist system. Without attaining a comprehensive understanding of Stalinism, all desires to combat and defeat it will prove of no avail, just as the desires of the rank-and-file Stalinist workers who wish to struggle against capitalism prove of no avail to them under their present leadership. Unless the advanced workers learn to synthesize inflexible revolutionary will with scientific understanding, they will never rise to meet the historic tasks of their class.

Arthur Burke  
May 5, 1941

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ON TROTSKY'S TRUE ROLE IN THE BUREAUCRATIC DEGENERATION OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE COMINTERN --- R E A D

THE CANNONITES "ANSWER" THE  
SHACHTMANITES

DID TROTSKY COLLABORATE WITH  
STALIN

TROTSKY and the SUPPRESSION of LENIN'S  
TESTAMENT

AFTER SIXTEEN YEARS OF SILENCE

THE MURDER OF TROTSKY AND THE  
FIGHT AGAINST STALINISM

\* \* \* \* \*

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I. The Political Nature of the  
Trotsky-Zinoviev Bloc

I N the Tzarist days during the struggle of various currents of thought within the Russian working class, there were formed theoretical prognoses of the nature and course of the Russian Revolution. The Menshevik conception was that the Russian revolution, which had to fulfill the bourgeois-democratic tasks, would be led by the bourgeoisie supported by the proletariat. In plain words, the Menshevik position represented the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Lenin's position was that there would take place neither the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie nor the dictatorship of the proletariat, but a midway, sort of transitional power, which he designated as "the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." This position proved incorrect, and sometime after the October Revolution, Lenin's correct evaluation was formulated as follows:

"In a capitalist society, when it is developing, when it stands solid or is perishing, all alike, there can be only one out of two kinds of powers: Either the power of the capitalists or that of the proletariat. Every intermediary power is a dream." (L e n i n , Collected Works, Vol. XVI, p. 297. Russian Edition. My emphasis - G.M.)

In 1905, as opposed to the Mensheviks and to Lenin, Trotsky presented his position, which declared that the Russian revolution could succeed only as the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. Trotsky's prognosis allowed the possibility of the proletarian revolution taking place in Russia prior to the seizure of power by the proletariat in Europe. Trotsky summed up his prognosis under the formula "The Theory of

the Permanent Revolution." As history has incontrovertibly established, the Russian Revolution followed the course marked by Trotsky.

With the formation of the conspiratory Trio, (Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev), revolutionary theories and the history of the October Revolution became distorted. The Trio invented a "polemical" target labeled "Trotskyism" for the purpose of tearing down Trotsky and consolidating themselves in power. Zinoviev was the spearhead in this game, and the chief falsifier of history. At the end of 1925, Stalin, having considerably consolidated his personal dictatorship, pushed Zinoviev and Kamenev out of power and compelled them to go over to a sham opposition. In 1926, Zinoviev and Kamenev were in touch with the Trotsky 1923 "Opposition" group in the problem of organizing the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Kamenev Bloc. Zinoviev, who previously had been teaching his followers that Lenin had been right as against Trotsky on the prognosis of the Russian Revolution, faced a dilemma:

"Zinoviev's position at that time was truly tragic. Only yesterday a recognized leader of anti-Trotskyism, he on the next day bowed to the banner of the 1923 Opposition. At the sessions of the C.C., all the speakers took every occasion to fling in his face his own declarations of yesterday to which he could say nothing in reply. The same thing was done day in and day out by Pravda. On the other hand, the advanced Petrograd workers, followers of Zinoviev, who had engaged honestly and seriously in the struggle against 'Trotskyism' could by no means reconcile them-

selves to the sudden turn of 180 degrees. Zinoviev was confronted with the danger of losing the best elements of his own faction." (Leon Trotsky, "Archives of the Revolution," The New International, February 1938, p. 57.)

Zinoviev required a face-saver. This face-saver could be no less than Trotsky's rejection and repudiation openly, officially, in public, of the Theory of the Permanent Revolution.

"With my acknowledgement of Lenin's correctness, Zinoviev sought, if only partially, to throw a veil over the previous criminal 'ideological' work of his own faction against me." (Ibid.)

At the Seventh Plenum of the ECCI Trotsky made the declaration necessary for Zinoviev, putting it in writing to be presented to the entire Communist International. This declaration, signed by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, was later made part of the political Platform of the Opposition. Here it is:

"It is not true that we are defending 'Trotskyism'. Trotsky has stated to the International that in all those questions of principle upon which he disputed with Lenin, Lenin was right — and particularly upon the question of the permanent revolution and the peasantry." (My emphasis - G.M.) \*

After Trotsky had been exiled abroad, he was asked by Albert Treint, an expelled leader of the French Communist Party, to explain this business of agreeing to supply Zinoviev with a cover for Zinoviev's previous lies and deceptions. Treint evidently was aware of the proved correctness of Trotsky's Permanent Revolution. In the reply to Treint, Trotsky presented

two points to justify his act. First, that this was really not a principled question, and secondly, that in the Trotsky group of 1923, where Radek and others weighed the question of repudiating the correctness of Trotsky's permanent revolution, Trotsky voted against the proposition.

About eight and a half years after he wrote his letter to Treint, Trotsky inadvertently made two admissions. One admission was that the question was really an important principled question. The second admission throws a revealing light on Trotsky's assertion that he voted against the proposition, for that assertion conveyed the impression that he had been outvoted by a majority in his group. Here are these two points:

"In certain important questions, it is true, the 1923 opposition made principled concessions to the opposition in 1926 — against my vote — concessions which I considered and still consider impermissible. The circumstance that I did not protest openly against these concessions was rather a mistake. But there was generally not much room for open protests — we were working illegally. In any event, both sides were very well acquainted with my views on the controversial questions. Within the 1923 opposition, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand if not more stood on my point of view and not on the point of view of Zinoviev or Radek." (Leon Trotsky, The New International, March 1940, p. 61. My emphasis - G.M.)

Trotsky says that he "voted" against accepting the proposition of Zinoviev. Very possible. But then, one can readily perceive what sort of people were at the head of the Left Opposition if they could press a decision that their leader prostitute himself and distort the great historical truth of the Permanent Revolution. More, if we accept Trotsky's statement that 999 out of 1,000 in his group

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\* For the inclusion of this statement in the Platform of the Opposition, see Leon Trotsky, "The Real Situation in Russia," p. 180.

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were with him against Zinoviev's proposal, one can recognize the stripe of these leaders of the Left Opposition. Obviously, they were cynical bureaucrats who completely ignored the thoughts, the wishes, and the feelings of the overwhelming majority of their rank-and-file followers.

Trotsky may have "voted" against the leading circle which he says insisted on his accepting Zinoviev's proposition. The fact remains that he carried out the unprincipled line of Zinoviev and of his own colleagues of the 1923 Left Opposition, and at the 7th Plenum of the ECCI made a public repudiation not of Zinoviev's crooked proposal, but of the Marxist position of permanent revolution. And he did that, he knew well, not in the interests of the proletariat, but in order to provide a whitewash for Zinoviev who previously had criminally attacked this very principle! Several months later, Trotsky included this outright and shameful repudiation in the Platform of the Opposition.

Moreover, his excuse that he "voted" against Zinoviev's proposition is a piece of deception in the following sense:- Zinoviev's and Trotsky's own friends presented him with a proposal which no principled person would have accepted. Trotsky's "vote," insofar as the interests of the proletariat are concerned, was an irrelevancy, to put it mildly. After all, the proposition of Zinoviev was that Trotsky appear before the workers on a crooked program, and that Trotsky did. When Zinoviev came around with his proposition, he came as a crook and should have been kicked out and exposed. To an honest person, there could have been no question of entering into formal relations with such a renegade or of playing at democracy with him by voting and adhering to parliamentary procedure. The workers were not concerned with Trotsky's vote; they were concerned with his program, and that program represented a factional horse-deal between Trotsky's Left Opposition and Zinoviev.

It is clear from the above that Trotsky participated in unprincipled

concessions. The latter Trotsky himself admits. It is interesting, therefore, to observe how politically dishonest is such a person as Max Shachtman who, concealing the true political history of Trotsky, is brazen enough to make the following fraudulent statement:-

"Trotsky's record of struggle is a single unbroken line from which he never departed. It would have been fairly easy for him to retain his enormous power in the Soviet Union at the expense of principle, but that was a cost he could never pay for anything." (M. Shachtman, New International, September 1940, p. 150.)

No one can pretend that Shachtman was unaware of Trotsky's participation in carrying out the unprincipled line of the Left Opposition. Trotsky's admission that the line of the Left Opposition was unprincipled is contained in an article published in a magazine of which Shachtman was — and still is — an editor. Nor can there be any doubt that Shachtman is aware that the Platform of the Opposition published under Trotsky's name (as The Real Situation in Russia) contained a repudiation of the Permanent Revolution (page 180). Shachtman's pretense that Trotsky was a consistently principled Marxist is simply a cover-up of an opportunist by an opportunist.

In view of the fact that Trotsky officially distorted the historical facts and surrendered to Zinoviev in a factional deal the basic principle of Permanent Revolution, and the Zinoviev "Opposition" accepted such unprincipled surrender, it is obvious that the so-called "opposition bloc" did not stand upon Marxian grounds. Therefore, the statement by the Cannon gang that "The Bolsheviki-Leninists, the Left Opposition, fought the degeneration at every step" (Statement by the Political Committee of the S.W.P., New International, Feb. 1940), is an unadulterated lie. The "Left Opposition" led by Trotsky was part of the degeneration of the first proletarian revolution, and the Cannon and Shachtman cliques are organically tied

to that reactionary process.

\* \* \*

## II.

### TRICKY PHRASES CANNOT HIDE THE TRUTH

Trotsky surrendered the historical correctness of the Permanent Revolution in the Fall of 1926 at the height of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. Instead of this basic principle of proletarian dictatorship which Lenin together with Trotsky applied in 1917, Trotsky, during the great upheaval in China, advanced the formula of "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," the old, incorrect, discarded formula of Lenin, with which Stalin and Kamenev in 1917 almost killed the Russian revolution. It was only in the Summer of 1928, after the betrayal of the Chinese revolution and the collapse of the Zinoviev-Kamenev-Trotsky bloc, that Trotsky unblushingly, as if nothing out of the ordinary had occurred, introduced the Permanent Revolution once again as his fundamental "position."

In doing so, Trotsky began to pass the buck for his 1926-27 unprincipled substitution of the utopian formula of "democratic dictatorship" for the tested position of the Permanent Revolution. He charged that its application to the Chinese revolution was handled in the Platform of the Opposition by Zinoviev:

"In the Platform, the question of the Chinese revolution is dealt with very insufficiently, incompletely, and in part positively falsely by Zinoviev." (L. Trotsky, "Third International After Lenin," p. 128.)

As though Trotsky himself did not share responsibility for the Platform of the Opposition!

Trotsky's lieutenants, Cannon and Shachtman, fully aware of Trotsky's juggling with the Permanent Revolution,

tried their best to conceal the fact that Trotsky, as well as Stalin, betrayed the Chinese revolution. Shachtman employed very subtle terms in doing this crooked job. Here are Shachtman's phrases:

"In the later articles, comrade Trotsky counterposes the permanent revolution to the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, whereas the early articles do not make such a contrast; indeed, the 1927 Platform of the Opposition speaks for the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The conflict is more apparent than real and is derived from two sources. The first is that in the bloc established in 1926 between the 'Trotsky' and the 'Zinoviev' Oppositions (The Moscow Opposition of 1923 and the Leningrad Opposition of 1925), formal concessions of this kind were made by the former to the Left Centrists of Leningrad in the interests of maintaining the bloc against the Menshevik policy of Stalin and Bukharin. The second is that in 1925-1927, the slogan of the 'democratic dictatorship,' borrowed literally and purely formally from Lenin's pre-1917 writings, had not yet so clearly been filled with the reactionary content which the epigones poured into it." (M. Shachtman, Introduction to Trotsky's "Problems of the Chinese Revolution," p. 18.)

As we see, Shachtman seeks to convey the impression that Trotsky inserted the formula "democratic dictatorship" into the Platform in order to fight Stalin's policy. But we know from Trotsky's own words that the whole affair involved the problem of supplying Zinoviev with a face-saver to appease his followers. As far as Shachtman's fairy tale that this was done to fight Stalin's policy is concerned, the truth is that the slogan of "democratic dictatorship" was made use of in 1924 by the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev clique to fight Trotsky and was therefore part of Stalin's own "theoretical" fakery. Such was Trotsky's "fight" against Stalin!

It must be pointed out that when Lenin coined his formula, "democratic dictatorship," in the pre-1905 period, it was actually a theoretical error, whereas when <sup>Trotsky</sup> inserted this formula into the Platform of the Opposition and tried to foist it upon the proletariat, he did this not because of an honest error, but as a result of a factional deal with Stalin's former partner, Zinoviev.

Cannon, like Shachtman, uses deceptive words to cover up Trotsky. He tries to make his followers imagine that Trotsky had a correct line on China in 1925-27. Did Trotsky and his followers propose the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry? No, Cannon admits that they spoke about the "democratic dictatorship":

"They wanted complete independence for the Communist Party and in general a course toward the establishment of a DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP\* through the workers' and peasants' Soviets." (J. P. Cannon, Introduction to Trotsky's Criticism of the Program of the Comintern, in "The Third International After Lenin," p. 354. My emphasis - G.M.)

The asterisk after the phrase, "Democratic Dictatorship," is not ours, but Cannon's. It refers to a little, innocent-looking footnote which reads as follows:

\*\* The incorrect formula of the 'democratic dictatorship' was put

in the platform of the Opposition Bloc through the pressure of the Zinovievists in the bloc." (My emphasis - G.M.)

While Cannon tries to create the impression that Trotsky and the "Oppositionists" fought in the interests of the Chinese revolution, he is constrained to mention that their position was incorrect, and, concealing the truth about Trotsky's unprincipled horse-deal with Zinoviev, Cannon buries the whole matter in a footnote.

When one realizes that the difference between the correct principle of Permanent Revolution and the wrong formula of "democratic dictatorship" is the same as the difference between a life-saver and a noose, one can measure the distance that separates Cannon and Shachtman from honesty. Weasel words cannot forever hide the truth about Trotsky's two-faced machinations and the political trickery of his disciples, the Cannons and Shachtmans.

G. M.  
May 1941.

\* \* \*

NOTE: For additional material on Trotsky's repudiation of his theory of the Permanent Revolution, see "DID TROTSKY COLLABORATE WITH STALIN" and "THE CANNONITES 'ANSWER' THE SHACHTMANITES." These can be obtained free. Send for them to P. O. Box 67, Station D, New York City.

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