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T H E B U L L E T I N

The Trotskyites and the Soviet Union

J. C. HUNTER

The Imperialist Attack on the Soviet Union

G. CRANE

Shachtman as "Trade Unionist"

The R. W. L. "Educates" The Workers

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The Political Morals of the Trotskyite Leaders

How Trotsky "Exposed" Stalin's Krestintern

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THE TROTSKYITES AND THE SOVIET UNION

I F in the first seven or eight weeks of hostilities in 1914 the Kaiser's armies had penetrated beyond Smolensk deep into the Ukraine and had continued their advance as have Hitler's forces into the Soviet Union, there would have been the wildest panic in the Allied camp. It took the Kaiser's armies exactly a year to occupy Poland and reach the border of Russia proper. Hitler's troops, on the other hand, in a few weeks having plunged several hundred miles into the most vital territories of the Soviet Union, are menacing the key cities of Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev and Odessa almost directly. The Stalinist leaders are now "explaining" that there never really was a "Stalin Line," which is the way these swindlers-to-the-bitter-end admit that the Nazi forces have already broken through the main fortified barriers of the Soviet Union.

Only those who have been grossly deceived by talk in the past about Nazi "Blitzkrieg" will fail to realize that the advance of Hitler's armies has been very rapid and that the Soviet Union is swiftly being destroyed. The fantastic speed of the previous Nazi military "victories" was due to the fact that Hitler's path was deliberately opened for him by his "enemies." Most notably was this so in the case of France, where the "democratic" imperialists, acting in collaboration with their German colleagues, turned the country over to Nazi policing to crush the class conscious French proletariat in order to prepare Hitler's march against the Soviet Union. The noise about "Blitzkrieg" has been a cover for the political basis of Hitler's military "miracles" of the past.

From many sides the workers have been deceived by reassuring stories about the "slowness" of the imperialist advance into the Soviet Union and about the "wonders" of the Stalinist army's resistance. Though Stalin's army has been steadily driven back without registering a single significant counter-advance, his "allies," the "democratic" imperialists, are manifesting an unusual calmness of mind. Wall Street's Roosevelt speaks about the "magnificent" stand of Stalin's army. The closer Hitler's forces get to Leningrad, Moscow and other important centers, the more serene are the "democratic" imperialists and the stronger become the Czarist bonds in the British and American markets (New York Times, August 10, 1941).

In order to conceal their responsibility and whitewash the rottenness of their organizations, the Stalinist bureaucrats fill the workers' ears with soothing tales of how Lieutenant X captured Hill Y, and how Captain A held Sector B. All these comforting stories of the bourgeoisie and of the Stalinist bureaucrats who fear to tell the truth to the masses blind the workers to the fact that the imperialist armies have made decisive inroads into the territory of the Stalin-strangled Workers State and are laying the necessary basis for the finishing blow.

The workers throughout the world, and in the first instance the class conscious workers, must be aroused to the realization that, as things stand today, the Soviet Union is facing doom. All those who paint rosy pictures about the "magnificent" defense alleged to be put up by Stalin's army are building a fool's paradise for the

workers, thus dulling the class vigilance of the proletariat. And from more angles than one! Not only from the standpoint that already, concretely, the imperialist forces have cut deep paths into the Soviet Union, but from the view that the Stalinist counter-revolutionary leadership, under which the toilers suffer, opens no prospect for them but ultimate, total defeat and the restoration of capitalism in the former empire of the Czars.

From many sides, we have said, the workers are being misled by the peddlers of cheerful yarns. We do not exempt the so-called anti-Stalinist press of the Socialist Workers Party. For months and years the Trotskyites have been declaring that Stalin's regime has wiped out the initiative and creative energies of the masses of the Soviet Union. For example at the end of 1939, the Trotskyites stated that by crushing all democracy the Stalinist bureaucracy has destroyed the spirit and initiative of the revolutionary period of the first Workers State:-

"The soldiers of the Red Army come from the masses, from the ranks of the workers and peasants; the morale and spirit of the masses is reflected in the army and in the way it struggles. By crushing every form of democracy within the Soviet Union the Stalinist regime has destroyed the wonderful spirit and initiative that characterized the workers and peasants in the early days of the Soviet Union." (Editorial, Socialist Appeal, Dec. 30, 1939, p.4. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Only one month before the attack on the Soviet Union, in an article called "The Soviet 'War Potential'", the S.W.P. declared that of all factors, that of morale is the worst:

"The factor of morale is worst of all. The workers and peasants are no better than serfs." (Fourth International, May 1941, p. 125.)

And even after the attack on the Soviet Union began, the Trotskyites

repeated the theme that Stalinism has crushed the initiative and creative impulses of the masses:-

"Stalin's regime — which has stifled all initiative, every living voice and every creative tendency in Soviet society - must crumble if only for the reason that initiative and creative ability are most indispensable precisely in war-time." (Fourth International, July 1941, p. 170. My emphasis J. C. H.)

Are all these foregoing statements correct? Absolutely correct! It is true that Stalinism has wrecked the initiative and the creative tendencies of the masses of the Soviet Union, that this destruction is reflected in the army and that, as the Trotskyites admitted, the factor of morale is the worst of all.

As we have been constantly pointing out, however, the Trotskyite leaders operate in a certain peculiar fashion. They use their correct statements as a cover for a core of deception which functions in the interests of Stalinism. As we have indicated, the Stalinist line is to mislead the workers with reassuring stories about Stalin's army. The Trotskyites, as usual in every concrete situation of crisis, emit echoes of the Stalinist line. Leaving their correct declarations stand as a protective shield, the Trotskyite leaders, as the attack on the Soviet Union developed its momentum, began to introduce their reflections of the comforting hokum issued by the Stalinist bureaucrats. All of a sudden, the S.W.P. leaders "forgot" about the destroyed initiative and creative abilities and about the morale in the army which is the worst factor of all, and started to spin yarns about "remarkable initiative" and "self-action" on the part of the workers and peasants in Stalin's army:-

"Indeed, it is clear from all reports that the Red Army soldiers are displaying remarkable initiative, self-action, to make up for the weaknesses of the officers

corps, which was so ruthlessly purged by Stalin from 1935 to 1938." (Editorial, The Militant, July 26, 1941, p. 6.)

The Trotskyites in the most brazen fashion disregard their own correct statements and make the claim that the many years of Stalinist poisoning did not and could not dissipate the revolutionary impulses of October:-

"The years of slow strangulation at the hands of the Stalinist bureaucracy could not and did not dissipate the profound energies and resources imparted to these masses by the October Revolution." (The Militant, July 26, 1941, p. 4.)

The founders of Marxism taught the necessity to tell the workers the truth at all times. It is a fact that in all armies and virtually always soldiers have been willing to go into battle and be slaughtered. For the most part, it was compulsion which produced this "willingness," but, in any case, throughout history soldiers have plunged into the bloodiest battles. The willingness to fight does not in itself constitute mass initiative and self-action, as far as Marxism is concerned. The Trotskyites speak about reports which they allege show initiative and self-action on the part of the workers and peasants in Stalin's army. What the Trotskyites are doing is taking the willingness of the masses of Stalin's army to go into battle and painting it up as "initiative," "self-action" and the "profound energies and resources imparted to these masses by the October Revolution." To speak in such terms of the masses who are utterly blinded and paralyzed politically by Stalinism is to spread soothing fantasies which can serve only the Stalinist bureaucrats and the imperialists.

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TWO factors stand out in the present situation of the Soviet Union:- one, the social ownership of the means of production, the basic conquest of the October Revolution, which the im-

perialists hope to destroy in order to reestablish private property; the other, the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy which has usurped power in the first Workers State and has strangled the revolutionary forces which gave rise to the October Revolution. The proletariat must find the correct course with regard to these two factors or the victory of the imperialists over the Soviet Union is assured. The fact that there exists a counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy should not blind the workers to the significance of the historically progressive property structure of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the fact of a socialized property structure should not lead the workers to overlook or to misunderstand the reactionary function of the Stalinist bureaucracy, its criminal, deadly role as the ruling force in the Soviet Union and amongst the class conscious workers on the international scene. The two factors must not be confused in any way. The rule (or rather, misrule) of the Stalinist bureaucracy does not endow the socialized property structure with a reactionary character; this form of economic foundation remains historically progressive. The revolutionary property system, conversely, does not endow the treacherous Stalinist regime with any progressive features; the opportunist usurpers remain the enemies of the masses.

It is always the task and duty of the revolutionary proletariat to defend the progressive social fruits of the October Revolution and to exterminate every obstacle to that defense. The Stalinist bureaucracy is the chief obstacle to the defense of the Soviet Union. It is very easy to fall into the confusion of imagining that because the Stalinist bureaucrats direct the physical resistance against the imperialist attack, they are defending the Soviet Union and must be supported by the workers. A close examination of the bureaucracy's actual role, however, will reveal that to support it is to help it dig the grave of the Soviet Union.

Historical contrasts help to bring out political essentials. The

Bolshevik Red Army of 1918-1920 was governed by the policy of revolutionary class struggle aiming to arouse the workers in the capitalist countries against the imperialists who sought to destroy the Soviet Republic. This was a policy of extending the October Revolution. It was this policy that brought the Red Army, poorly equipped as it was, to victory against enormous military odds. It was the political factor that played the decisive part in saving the Soviet Republic in 1918-1920.

Today, as then, the political factor remains decisive. The political line pursued by the Stalinist bureaucrats is to prevent the extension of the October Revolution. They pursue this political line in order to hang on to their criminally usurped power. While flinging millions of workers and peasants against the imperialists' armies, the bureaucracy, through its "Comintern," binds the toilers of the entire world to a counter-revolutionary political line and therefore fundamentally strengthens the imperialists.

Only the class-conscious proletariat, following a Bolshevik leadership, can defend the Soviet Union. The defense of the Soviet Union is synonymous with the extension of the October Revolution and can be based only on a political line which leads to that extension. In relation to the defense of the Soviet Union, consequently, the revolutionary proletariat and the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy are two diametrically opposite forces. The fact that the bureaucrats hurl armies against the imperialists' forces must not render this fundamental truth obscure in the workers' view. As in peace, so in war the Stalinist bureaucracy undermines the Soviet Union. Only the external form of the Stalinist reaction has changed, not its essence. Since the political factor is the dominant one in every situation the military activity organized by the bureaucrats is governed, and its character is determined by the counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism. This military struggle directed by the treacherous, opportunist Stalinism can

lead the workers only to ultimate defeat by the imperialists. The military factor must not and cannot be isolated from, or assume a greater importance than the political. The imperialist attack on the Soviet Union has not transformed the reactionary Stalinist bureaucrats from underminers to defenders of the Soviet Union. They remain the chief obstacle to the defense of the Soviet Union, regardless of whether the Soviet Union is at "peace" or at war with the imperialists.

Every tendency which obscures this diametrically opposed relationship of the workers and the bureaucrats to the defense of the Soviet Union contributes to the defeat of the remaining conquests of October. Such a tendency plays a reactionary part in the working class regardless of how much seemingly "anti-Stalinist" noise it may make. To becloud the fact that in the defense of the Soviet Union, as in every other function, the Stalinist bureaucracy plays a reactionary role is to lend support to imperialism — directly or indirectly.

It is the very opposite of the truth that the Manifesto of the Socialist Workers Party gave to the workers when it stated shortly after the attack on the Soviet Union:-

"Every blow of the Red Army against German imperialism is a blow for the socialist future of mankind." (Fourth International, July 1941, p. 171.)

This statement would have been true many years ago, when there was a real Red Army under a revolutionary leadership, but it is a gross deception today, for the present "Red" Army is under a counter-revolutionary leadership. The army of the Stalinist bureaucracy does not strike blows for the Socialist future of mankind. Stalin's reactionary policies prevent it from doing so. After the overthrow of Stalinism by the revolutionary proletariat, and only after that overthrow, would there be a real Red Army under a Bolshevik leadership which could actually strike blows against

imperialism and for the socialist future of mankind. If under Stalinist leadership,— and this is the real point of the above-quoted declaration — the "Red" Army strikes blows "for the socialist future of mankind," then Stalinism deserves the full support of the workers. This is the real political import of the S.W.P.'s declaration, however the Trotskyist leaders may conceal it from their followers.

The Trotskyite leaders go to such lengths in their political distortions as completely to obscure the unbridgeable chasm that separates the revolutionary Red Army, which really fought for the cause of the October Revolution, from the caricature into which Stalinism transformed the former Bolshevik Red Army. One of the leaders of the Trotsky group, John G. Wright, has the brazenness to tell the workers:-

"It is the Army of the October Revolution and the Civil War — Trotsky's Red Army — that is now fighting so heroically." (The Militant, August 16, 1941, p.3. Emphasis in the original.)

This is an outrageous, poisonous lie. This despicable lie could originate only in an opportunist political line.

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I N the mind of the Trotskyist workers, the noise raised by their leaders about a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy overshadows many other things. The fundamentally pro-Stalinist line of the Cannons and Goldmans is buried out of sight by this seemingly anti-Stalinist uproar. What, concretely, is the meaning of a political revolution against Stalinism in the politics of the Trotskyist leaders?

The concrete meaning of a political revolution against Stalinism is, in the Trotskyist system, the re-

storation of freedom to — amongst others — proven counter-revolutionaries like the social-democrats, their party and organizations. This revival of the political props of the bourgeoisie passes under the name of "freedom for Soviet parties," a position Trotsky previously fought against for many years. Trotsky indicated plainly that in his new policy, political freedom for the social-democrats was an organic part of what he called a democratic proletarian regime. At first Trotsky limited his slogan of freedom for Menshevism in a proletarian state to Germany, which he cited as a hypothetical case. Addressing himself to German social-democratic workers, Trotsky "promised" them the following:-

"In the proletarian state the technical means of printing will be put at the disposal of groups of citizens in accordance with their real numerical importance. But how is this to be done? The social democracy will obtain printing facilities corresponding to the number of its supporters." (The Militant, April 15, 1933, p. 3. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Later, Trotsky applied this position to the Soviet Union and linked the restoration of a democratic proletarian regime with legality and freedom for what he called "Soviet parties." In 1936, Trotsky stated:

"Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy. A restoration of the right of criticism, and a genuine freedom of elections, are necessary for the further development of the country. This assumes a revival of freedom for Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions." (The Revolution Betrayed, p. 289. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Note that Trotsky spoke of a revival of freedom for Soviet parties "beginning" with the party of Bolsheviks. This indicates plainly that non-Bolshevik "Soviet parties" are also to have freedom in what Trotsky

called "Soviet democracy." Trotsky's followers in the S.W.P. present this slogan to this day:-

"As part of the restoration of workers' democracy in the Soviet Union, all pro-Soviet political parties must be given legal status." (Editorial, The Militant, July 19, 1941, p. 1.)

The term, "pro-Soviet", used by the Trotskyists is a very tricky one. There have been several "pro-Soviet" parties, all of them reactionary to the core. The Mensheviks, Social-Revolutionaries and their various shades and branches were "pro-Soviet." In 1921, even the bourgeois Miliukov's Party became "pro-Soviet," issuing the slogan, "For the Soviets, without the Bolsheviks." The above-quoted editorial continues with this demand:-

"Every political party that is for the defense of the Soviet Union must be given the right to exist as an open political organization, to present its program, and to agitate among the masses for that program."

The Russian Mensheviks, Kerensky, and even some of the White Guard organizations, have issued declarations calling for the defense of the Soviet Union. That the Mensheviks and S.R.'s fall into the Trotskyist category of "every political party that is for the defense of the Soviet Union" is clear. We have mentioned the White Guards, who, as has been reported in the bourgeois press, have been going to their churches lately to pray "for the victory of the Russian Army," only to indicate how deceptive is such a formulation as "Every political party that is for the defense of the Soviet Union." Some of the bloodiest scoundrels in existence have taken up the slogan, "Defend the Soviet Union." However, let us eliminate the White Guards from the Trotskyist formulation and confine it to the "socialist" parties, such as the Mensheviks and S.R.'s, and examine its significance in that light.

The central point in this matter is that in the period of the Russian

Revolution all the non-Bolshevik so-called "pro-Soviet" parties were anti Soviet government and their actual purpose was eventually to liquidate the Soviets, while today it is to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union. ONLY THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY WAS GENUINELY PRO-SOVIET, i.e., PRO-SOVIET GOVERNMENT. All other parties stood and still stand for the bourgeoisie. Their "pro-Soviet" noise of the past was merely a demagogic cover of their counter-revolutionary intent and policy, as is their "defensist" talk of today. The Trotskyists without qualification issue the slogan of political freedom for "pro-Soviet" parties, and Trotsky explicitly indicated that he had in mind social-democracy, for one thing. In view of the fact that only a Bolshevik Party can be actually pro-Soviet, the slogan of "freedom for Soviet Parties" means in reality freedom for anti-Soviet parties. Thus, the Trotskyite version of restoration of democracy in the Soviet Union concretely means bringing back to political life the "socialist" agents of imperialism. We use the term "bringing back to political life" for its literal meaning. Freedom for the so-called "pro-Soviet" parties which the Trotskyite leaders have in mind can be only a matter of reviving corpses. These parties, specifically the several varieties of Menshevism, were long ago exposed and defeated by Bolshevism. The masses of the Soviet Union turned away from these criminal outfits years ago. What purpose can there be in reviving these putrid corpses? There can be no revolutionary purpose. Trotsky's slogan is a matter of turning back the wheels of history. The Trotskyite program is a wedge for opening a return first for the "socialist" agents of the bourgeoisie and then for the bourgeoisie themselves. The cry of "freedom for Soviet Parties" after the October Revolution became the watchword of bourgeois restorationists who began by calling for "freedom for Soviet parties" meaning freedom for their own reactionary machinations and who aimed at the overthrow of the socialized property and the return of the capitalist system.

Such is the concrete content of

the Trotskyist slogan of a political revolution to restore workers democracy in the Soviet Union. It is a shield for reaction in the present and foreshadows protection to reaction in the future.

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THE real historical destroyer of the Soviet Union is not the imperialists but Stalinism which helped the imperialists to their feet and brought on the present attack. It is a Bolshevik Party and International alone which can lead a defense of the October conquests still remaining. Given such a leadership, the defeat of the imperialists would be not merely possible, but virtually assured. The Bolshevik triumph of 1917-1920 would repeat itself, but this time in the form of the international victory of the proletariat. In the removal of Stalin and his clique and the setting up of a leadership armed with a Bolshevik policy, therefore, lies the crux of the problem of actually defending and extending the October conquests.

The Stalinist System are obstacles in the path of a genuine defense of the Soviet Union. To the extent that they influence class conscious workers the Cannons and Goldmans paralyze the forces which are most advanced politically, which already realize the need for the revolutionary overthrow of Stalinism. Time grows rapidly shorter. The fate of the Soviet Union may be decided in favor of the imperialists this year, in the next few months, perhaps in the next few weeks. The Trotskyist line of diverting the anti-Stalinist, class conscious workers from an unrelenting, permanent, concentrated attack on Stalinism is doubly criminal in the light of the narrow margin of time available to the workers to gather their forces against Stalinism in defense of the Soviet Union. The prime requirement of the anti-Stalinist, vanguard workers, if they are to embark on a genuine defense of the Soviet Union, is to see through the "anti-Stalinist" veneer pasted over the pro-Stalinist center of the Trotskyist line and to break with the Cannons and Goldmans, to reform their ranks in a nucleus which will actually create a Bolshevik Party and International.

The Cannons and Goldmans are the nucleus of a fraudulent "Fourth International." These fragments of

J. C. Hunter
August 16, 1941

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WHITHER SHACHTMAN

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THE IMPERIALIST ATTACK

on the
SOVIET UNION

SINCE the rise of the Soviet Union, world imperialism has formulated a series of schemes to crush the workers who succeeded in overthrowing the Russian bourgeoisie and in destroying capitalism in Russia. Again and again, however, the plans of the imperialists fell through, for various reasons, and for many years after 1920-21, an invasion of the Soviet Union could not again be organized. That it is of vital importance for the bourgeoisie of all countries to destroy the system of nationalized property in the Soviet Union for economic and ideological purposes, and to reestablish capitalism to serve as a source of investment and exploitation, is and has been obvious to all class-conscious workers. The destruction of the Soviet Union has been the chief aim of the bourgeoisie of all countries, - regardless of their political form of rule.

One of the main obstacles to the attack on the Soviet Union was the revolutionary crisis in Germany which had been lingering on almost continuously ever since the end of the World War. The immediate task that the world bourgeoisie faced was to save German capitalism. By solving this task, the attack on the Soviet Union could be launched. Due to the conscious prevention of proletarian revolution by the Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaders, the world bourgeoisie succeeded in stabilizing the rule of the German bourgeoisie which, having its hands freed, introduced a bloody regime of terror and suppression against the German working class. With regard to the weak condition of German economy, the problem was quite complex. The economy of Germany had to be so reorganized and equipped as to be able to support a

tremendous military machine capable of destroying the Soviet Union. This reorganization and strengthening of German economy was accomplished by different means and in different stages. First, the British, French, and American imperialists pumped financial resources into Germany. Then they permitted and aided the German imperialists to rearm.

However, additional difficulties arose for the world bourgeoisie in the plan they had been pursuing. Although the German imperialists had succeeded in crushing the German proletariat, a new threat meanwhile arose in France and Spain. Obviously, if the imperialists wished their attack on the Soviet Union to succeed, using the German military machine for the job, they had to eliminate any danger from their rear - especially in France and Spain.

A rapid attempt to change the form of rule from bourgeois democratic to fascist precipitated the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Viewing almost 2½ years of bloody Civil War in Spain, and seeking to avoid a similar situation in France, the French bourgeoisie in their scheme to introduce fascism into France adopted different tactics. The tactic, as history showed, consisted in bringing in an outside fascist force. The fascization of France and the attack on the Soviet Union had the following historical background. At first, the German imperialists were given the Saar, and then were allowed to occupy Austria, the Sudetenland and later all of Czechoslovakia. The Austrian and Czech revolutionary workers were destroyed by the Nazi gendarmes of international capitalism, the great industries and munitions plants were

incorporated into the German military engine, the German imperialists were brought closer and closer to the borders of the Soviet Union — all this under the cover of "appeasement."

A concomitant aspect of the entire situation was the increasing agitation of the masses in the bourgeois democratic countries over what they believed to be Hitler's "victories." The workers never realized that what was happening before their eyes was collaboration among all the imperialists directed against the European proletariat with the object of safeguarding the bourgeois rear for the blow at the toilers of the Soviet Union.

The anti-Hitler sentiment of the masses was growing hourly, and the so-called policy of appeasement was wearing thin.

It is at this point that the imperialists, continuing the identical policy they had been pursuing before, made a paper declaration of war, creating the impression among the masses that now the "democracies" would really stop Hitler. The history of capitalism records many paradoxical phenomena. There have been real wars fought without an official declaration, and sham wars "fought" under the cloak of an official declaration. In the Crimean War, for illustration, and in the major part of the Franco-Prussian War, an official declaration of war was used as a cover for actual but hidden collaboration among the seeming "belligerents." With the declaration of war in September 1939, the policy of the imperialists did not change one iota from what it was prior to the declaration, only the tactics of the imperialists changed. Now, instead of openly handing over territory to Hitler for the dual purpose of quickly crushing the workers and incorporating the industries in the Nazi war machine, the bourgeoisie accomplished their aims in a somewhat circuitous manner.

Under cover of a sham war, the imperialists of the supposedly opposed camps, acting in concert, maneuvered the Nazis into France and through the

establishment of a fascist regime placed a check on the French proletariat. Thus, with their rear temporarily safeguarded from an immediate threat from the French workers, the imperialists went forward with their preparation for the attack on the Soviet Union.

But what of the British imperialists' alliance with the Soviet Union, and Roosevelt's calling for aid to the Soviet Union? Is not this a concrete proof that the imperialist camp is divided, that one section, the "Axis," is trying to destroy the Soviet Union, while the other, the "democracies," is trying to prevent this destruction? There is probably no aspect of capitalist swindling which is more subtly deceptive than its international diplomacy. No other exploiting class in history ever devised such elaborate and cunning devices and machinations on the world arena as have the bourgeoisie. And of all sections of the capitalist class, the British imperialists are the most experienced, the most successful and the most competent diplomatic connivers.

British imperialism is an old hand at the game of playing at "alliance" with a power it intends to destroy. The writings of Marx and Engels contain an elaborate analysis of such tactics used by the British imperialists in past periods of history. In the Crimean War, as Marx and Engels proved conclusively, British imperialism was officially in alliance with Turkey against Russia, but actually in alliance with Russia against Turkey. British imperialism sent aid to Turkey; British bankers lent money to Turkey; British troops and ships fought side by side with the Turkish forces — and the whole purpose of the British imperialists was to divide Turkey with their real ally, the Russian Czar. Why this roundabout maneuver? The increasing anti-Russian sentiments of the masses prevented the open and direct unfolding of the British-Russian alliance against Turkey, hence the British imperialists played at "alliance" with Turkey and "war" with Russia. In their writings during the period of the Crimean War,

Marx and Engels exposed the whole affair as a sham war and warned the workers against taking the diplomacy of the British imperialists literally. (See the Collection of Marx-Engels writings for that period, "The Eastern Question.")

Examples from the past do not prove the facts of the present. We ^{do} not cite Marx and Engels to prove our view of the British-Stalin "alliance," but to illustrate the methods employed by the imperialists when necessary. The sham nature of the British-Stalin "alliance" flows from the concrete unfolding of the present situation, from the whole policy of world imperialism in the present period. The Churchill who in 1918-1920 threw all caution to the winds in his plans to destroy the Soviet Republic and actually frightened the more sober British imperialists by the utter recklessness of his anti-Soviet machinations has grown more skillful, more circumspect, more subtle. In 1918-1920, Churchill lost sight of the danger from the masses which lurked behind a brazen, bull-in-the-China-shop assault on the Soviet Union. Today, he avoids this danger, plays at "alliance" with the Stalin government, thus canalizing the anti-Nazi sentiment of the British masses, - and uses the Nazi gendarme to do the actual work of wiping out the remnants of the basic achievements of the October Revolution.

That the imperialists are not engaged in a life and death struggle to destroy each other and that the "war" in the West was and is a sham is clearer today than ever before, now that the imperialist attack on the Soviet Union has commenced. Some time ago, feeling duty bound to forecast specific details of the imperialists' plans, we stated that Germany would be used as the spearhead for the attack on the Soviet Union but we added, incorrectly, that all the imperialists would participate in a military sense.

Then, when the imperialists permitted Stalin to grab a number of small countries, we suspected that the tactics of the imperialists did not call for an open attack against "Communist" Russia, which would create a danger in the rear from the pro-Soviet masses in all countries, but rather a more elaborate and complex plan in which a fake "peace" conference would be called, Germany would voluntarily disgorge her "conquests" and then, in the name of "freedom" and "democracy" for all the small nations, Stalin would be asked to disgorge his booty - which would not only include his recent grabs, but also the various countries comprising the Soviet Union. Stalin, being forced to refuse, would thus be placed in a position by world imperialism of refusing to "free" the small nations and thus the "logical" casus belli would be established. We assumed that the bourgeoisie did not want to make the attack on Russia seem like an attack against "Bolshevism." We erred in forecasting the specific tactics that the world imperialists had in mind. However, we were absolutely correct in stating time and again that, no matter what the surface appearance, the aim of all the imperialists is the destruction of the Soviet Union. No matter what the bourgeoisie say or seem to be doing, they are all united in their goal of crushing the workers in every country, placing them on slave rations, and wiping out the remnants of the October Revolution in Russia. A Bolshevik defense of the Soviet Union can be effected only through the extension of the October Revolution. The working class can strike such a blow only under a genuine Marxist leadership. The first political requirement for the defense of the Soviet Union is the building of a new Leninist party through the ousting of the pseudo-Bolshevik leaders from the proletarian vanguard.

G. Crane
September 3, 1941

THE R.W.L. "EDUCATES" THE WORKERS

MARXISTS always go to great pains to give the workers the precise knowledge of the history and nature of various political forces which in one way or other affect the proletarian struggle for Socialism. It goes without saying that to teach the workers adulterated history instead of facts is to deceive them, to disarm them ideologically and make them easy prey of their enemies.

The R.W.L. claims to be a Marxist organization standing for the creation of a "new Communist (4) International." It would seem, logically, that an organization calling for a Fourth International would give a correct explanation to the workers as to what exactly has happened to the Third International which Lenin organized in 1919. In direct words it would offer a faithful account of what Stalinism is, when it arose, how it functions, and what the mainspring is behind its policy of preventing proletarian revolution. Let us give a sample of the account the R.W.L. presents to the proletariat.

"SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

"We must not forget that in 1924 Stalin brought forth his theory of 'socialism in one country' and gradually developed it until revolutionary Marxists were exiled and later killed. Contrary to Marxism, Stalin not only proclaimed the possibility of building socialism in one country, but in backward Russia at that. For this Stalinism wanted a long period of peace, hence on every occasion it became a brake upon revolutionary struggles and its 'international line' became

a policy for the 'Status Quo.' Stalinism functioned as an agent for one group and then another of imperialism until the line developed to reformism and social-patriotism.

"The extension of the October Revolution, as presented by Lenin and Trotsky was bitterly fought by the Stalinists. They betrayed one revolution after the other. History proves this to the hilt, as it has done also for the Second International." (International News, August 1941, p. 5. My emphasis — G.M.)

We assert that the above-quoted statement of the R.W.L. is a distortion of truth from the first word to the last; and we shall substantiate our assertion.

As we observe, the RWL statement attributes the Stalinist "brake upon revolutionary struggles" to Stalin's "theory" of building Socialism in one country which he introduced in the Autumn of 1924. The RWL states that Stalin wanted peace to put this "theory" into practice and hence "became a brake upon revolutionary struggles." But facts show that Stalin and his accomplices applied the brake of counter-revolution long before the Autumn of 1924. From the mass of accumulated documentary evidence, we cite a few samples chosen at random.

In January 1923, almost two years prior to the introduction of the "theory," with Lenin ill and the government of the Soviet Union in the hands of Stalin and his allies, an

important member of the Bolshevik Party, A. A. Joffe, met the leader of the Chinese liberals, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, in Shanghai. It must be noted that the Leninist position of world proletarian revolution included the proposition of advancing the idea of Soviets everywhere. Lenin's speech at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920 makes this quote definite. Special discussions which took place in the National-Colonial Commission of the Second Comintern Congress--

"....proved irrefutably that it is necessary to indicate in the theses of the Communist International that Peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a useful weapon, not only for capitalist countries, but also for countries in which pre-capitalist relations exist; we must say that it is the bounden duty of the Communist Parties, and of those elements which are associated with them, to carry on propaganda in favour of the idea of Peasants' Soviets, of Toilers' Soviets everywhere, in backward countries and in colonies; in those countries, also, they must strive to create Soviets of the Toiling People as far as conditions will allow." (V. I. Lenin, Selected Works, Volume X, p. 242. My emphasis - G.M.)

No one can deny that this position includes China, one of the most important of the backward countries.

What, however, was the line that the Stalinist ruling clique applied in China, almost two years before the "theory" of socialism in one country was cooked up? It is to be seen in the acts of Joffe, the official emissary, who, naturally, acted not on his personal account but under instructions from the Kremlin clique. Jointly with Sun Yat-Sen he issued a communique, dated January 26, 1923, which stated:

"During his stay in Shanghai, Mr. Joffe has had several conversations with Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, which have revealed the identity of their views on matters relating to

Chinese-Russian relations, more especially on the following points:-

(1). Dr. Sun Yat-Sen holds that the Communistic order or even the Soviet system cannot actually be introduced into China, because there do not exist here the conditions for the successful establishment of either Communism or Sovietism. This view is entirely shared by Mr. Joffe, who is further of the opinion that China's paramount and most pressing problem is to achieve national unification and attain full national independence, and regarding this great task, he has assured Dr. Sun Yat-Sen that China has the warmest sympathy of the Russian people, and can count on the support of Russia." (The China Year Book, 1924, p. 863. My emphasis - G.M.)

Joffe's issuing this statement together with Sun Yat-Sen, the head of the Kuomintang, was an advance guarantee that the usurping clique, which, in the absence of Lenin from politics due to illness, was then leading the government of the Soviet Republic would refrain from fighting for the creation of Soviets in China. The Stalinist line was the exact opposite of Lenin's, and already in January 1923 showed its counter-revolutionary features. Stalin and his partners, fully conscious of their criminality, tried as far as possible to conduct their machinations in secret, and concealed Joffe's counter-revolutionary guarantee to Sun Yat-Sen from the Russian Party and the rest of the Comintern.

But is this anti-Leninist line so clearly expressed in January 1923 the earliest manifestation of Stalinist renegecy? No, for we find distinct traces of this policy even before January 1923. Let us take another example in the history of the Stalinist leadership in relation to China, a country ripe for revolution. The Chinese Communist Party, at its first Congress in the Summer of 1921, adopted a revolutionary line of organizing the proletariat for the seizure of power. But at its second congress in July 1922, when it was under the direct influence of the Russian Trio (Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev), the Chinese Communist Party cast overboard its

revolutionary line. Instead it adopted a bourgeois-liberal position, in reality a Stalinist Rightist zig-zag for preventing proletarian revolution. In June 1923, the Third Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, following the line of the Executive of the Comintern, headed by Stalin's aide, Zinoviev, issued a manifesto which called for support to the Chinese bourgeoisie declaring that "the Kuomintang should be the central force of the national revolution and should stand in the leading position."

As we see, this Stalinist transformation of the young Chinese Communist Party in 1922 and 1923 from an instrument of proletarian revolution into a tail to the Chinese bourgeoisie, which was a vassal of international imperialism, preceded by almost two and a half years the introduction in the Fall of 1924 of the "theory" of Socialism in one country.

The German Communist Party was Stalinized even before the Chinese. We find that in December 1921, distorting the thesis of the Third Congress, the Trio, through Zinoviev, gave the German party an opportunist "united front," line of supporting the Social Democrats, the lackeys of German imperialism. And at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in November 1922, which the sick Lenin attended only once and in whose work on international policy he did not participate, the Stalinist clique laid down a line of diverting the proletariat from revolution. The line, labelled "Workers Government," was in reality a line of support to a petty bourgeois government agency of capitalism. It was through this line that the German revolution of 1923 was disrupted, when Brandler and two other opportunist leaders of the German Communist Party, under direct instruction from the renegade Russian leaders, entered the Saxon and Thuringian Landtag governments and aided the Social Democrats to stifle the workers. The disruption of the German revolution in October 1923 did not hinge on the "theory" of Socialism in one country advanced a year later, nor did the Stalinist disruption of the revolutionary situ-

ation in Bulgaria in 1923 and in 1924 have any connection with the "theory." One cannot even argue that Stalin had already worked out this "theory" in his mind, for in the Spring of 1924, when Lenin was already dead, Stalin rejected such "theory" and reaffirmed the correct thesis that socialism in one country is impossible. Yet, Stalin's mind was already set against revolution. In August 1923 in the face of the most ideal revolutionary situation in the history of Germany he wrote to his partner-in-the-Trio, Zinoviev and to the tractable Bukharin that "the Germans must be restrained, not spurred on."

What is the true story of the Stalinist counter-revolution and whence the distortion of history practiced by Oehler's RWL?

The fact is that the counter-revolutionary actions of Stalin and his fellow-burecrats stemmed not from any "theory," but from reactionary material interests in a seizure of bureaucratic power in the first Workers State. Having enjoyed tremendous personal power for several years, most of the leaders of the Party degenerated on this vital feature of the revolution and intrigued for personal aggrandizement basing themselves on a large stratum of place-seekers and opportunist elements in the State institutions, in the Bolshevik Party and in the Communist International. It was to safeguard themselves in their bureaucratic plot for power, that the Trio, the original conspiratorial clique, misdirected the world proletariat and disrupted the revolution. The spreading of the revolution to other countries would have eventually brought about the elimination of the bureaucratic power-wielders and the privileged few not only in the first Soviet Republic but in all countries. The "theory" of Socialism in one country, a conscious distortion of Marxism by Stalin, was introduced simply as an attractive bait for the masses and as a cooked up "polemic" to camouflage the intrigues for power.

Why do the Oehlerites distort history, obscure the truth about

Stalinism disrupting revolutions even before the introduction of the "theory," thus dimming the minds of the workers to the true source of Stalinist betrayal of the revolution? The reason is not far to seek. It is rooted in the Oehlerites' former connection with Trotsky. It so happens that, according to incontrovertible documentary evidence, much of which we have already published, Trotsky played an important part in founding the Stalinist system. He collaborated with Zinoviev in setting up the opportunist trap of the "Workers Government" which he popularized among the workers on a number of occasions (speech before the Party Soviet Fraction in December 1922, article Europe and America, June 1923, etc.) Trotsky collaborated with the Trio to conceal the Georgian scandal, to suppress Lenin's letters on the national question, and to transform the Bolshevik Party into a bureaucratic machine. This occurred especially at the XII (April 1923) Congress and XIII (May 1924) Congress of the C.P.S.U. Like Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and other Stalinists, Trotsky, at first a direct collaborator of Stalin's in the bureaucratization of the Soviet Republic, was caught short in his opportunism when power became centralized in Stalin's hands. The best that Trotsky could do was to attempt to live in peace with the Stalin clique. In line with this Trotsky carried out the Stalinist policies. We have cited above Joffe's counter-revolutionary work in China. Joffe was an old Trotskyist, a personal friend of Trotsky. At no time did Trotsky condemn Joffe's counter-revolutionary pledge to exclude the Sovietization of China. Yet Trotsky knew that as early as 1920 Lenin proposed Soviets for China:-

"The slogan of 'Soviets' proposed by Lenin for China as early as 1920...." (L. Trotsky, The Real Situation in Russia, p. 147.)

It is significant that the actual director of Eastern Affairs in the early years of Stalinism was Trotsky, obviously carrying out a Stalinist

policy of betrayal of the proletariat.*

That Trotsky was carrying out the Stalinist policy in China is clearly seen from his statement made after the Chinese Communist Party had adopted a decision to enter the Kuomintang. Here is what Trotsky said to the workers at the time Stalin's agent, Borodin, was "revolutionizing" the Kuomintang into a militarized bourgeois machine:

"We approve of Communist support to the Kuomintang party in China, which we are endeavouring to revolutionize." (International Press Correspondence Volume 4, No. 31, May 29, 1924.)

Trotsky's entire work was directed towards preventing the destruction of Stalinism and thus preventing the detection of his own Stalinist role. He shielded Stalin from Eastman's exposure, and lied to the world proletariat that Lenin left no Testament. He traded his "permanent revolution" in a factional deal with Zinoviev (declaration to the Comintern, December 15, 1926); and in a plea to the Stalinist "Party" he declared that he had no program different from that of the "Party" (December 3, 1927). To the very end Trotsky politically supported Stalinism, aiding to betray the German proletariat in 1932-33 by misleading the workers into imagining that Stalinism is an erring Bolshevik force, which could be corrected, and helping to sell out the masses in Spain by peddling the essence of Stalin's line, the thesis that "democracy vs. fascism" was the issue in Spain.

Naturally, Trotsky had to becloud the minds of the workers in order to conceal his own participation in the Stalinist development. He therefore repainted history and shifted the starting point of the Stalinist

* For evidence from Trotsky himself that in the early years of Stalinism he was the actual director of Eastern affairs, see Fourth International, June 1941, p. 133.

counter-revolution to the Autumn of 1924. That is why Trotsky declared that the Russian "thermidor" began in 1924, thus concealing the previous period of his direct collaboration with the Stalinist renegades.

*
* *

FOR the past almost three years we have been publishing documentary evidence of Trotsky's treacherous role in the rise of Stalinism. We have made sure that the Oehlerites received this material. We have publicly challenged the Oehlerites to refute our evidence against Trotsky, (see, "Why Is Oehler Silent on Trotsky," The Bulletin, February 1940). Nevertheless, the Oehlerites have ignored both our evidence and our challenge.

The Oehlerite leaders were with Trotsky during the period of the second Stalinist betrayal of the German proletariat, 1930-33. They carried out Trotsky's line which in essence was support to Stalinism. They gave the workers the Trotskyist "explanations" for the Stalinist degeneration. This in itself does not yet constitute a crime if honest confusion was at the basis of it, and from this angle the Oehlerite leaders would have nothing to conceal. If the Oehlerite leaders acknowledged Trotsky's reactionary role in the Stalinist development from its origin they would have to repudiate their whole political past and would have to acknowledge the false basis of their present political existence. They would have to make a

clean sweep of things and would not present themselves as consistent Marxists of many years' standing.

For genuine revolutionists such a "come-down" would hold no terrors. Careerists and opportunists, however, view the whole matter from the standpoint of personal prestige and "practical" considerations.

As for ourselves, we may state, as we have done on a number of occasions, that due to the fact that we were blinded and confused by the Stalinist system of pseudo-Bolshevism, for many years we were not following the Marxist path. Like many other workers, at one stage we entered the Trotskyist camp, imagining that this was the genuine Marxist tendency. It was only upon our arriving at an accurate understanding of the Stalinist system as a whole, including above all Trotsky's sham "opposition" role, that we were able to set out upon the true Marxist path. We do not view our repudiation of our non-Marxist past as a burden and a penalty, but consider it an essential and organic part of our political development.

This process of making a clean sweep of all opportunist poisons is the prerequisite for the formation of a new Bolshevik Party and International. The politically advanced, class conscious workers are the first section of the proletariat which must and will go through this cleansing process to create a revolutionary leadership for the toiling masses.

George Marlen
August 30, 1941

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WORD VERSUS DEED - SHACHTMAN AS "TRADE UNIONIST"

MANY politically advanced workers realize the need to destroy the influence of the Stalinist bureaucrats wherever it already exists and to prevent such influence from taking root in spheres where it does not exist as yet, but may intrude itself. The trade unions, in which millions of workers are organized, constitute a rich field of plunder for Stalinism which parades under a "Bolshevik" mask. The trade unions serve the Stalinist bureaucrats as an important organizational medium for effecting their counter-revolutionary policy of preventing the workers from following the Marxist path.

Declarations of a policy of combatting the trade union influence of Stalinism are frequent occurrences in the various "anti-Stalinist" papers. Here is a recent sample declaration from Shachtman's Labor Action:

"The trade unionist alive to the needs and problems of his union will cold-shoulder the Stalinists in a union election and vote for a unionist whose policies are guided solely by the interests of the union." (Editorial, June 2, 1941.)

Further:-

"We have, therefore, and do so again now, urged workers to repudiate the Stalinists, to challenge them where they have power with progressive groups." (Ibid.)

Workers who realize the profound need of eradicating the influence of the Stalinist bureaucrats will agree that a policy of combatting Stalinism in the trade unions must be not only a paper declaration, but a course of concrete action.

A measure of how the Shachtmanite leadership "concretizes" its declarations of "cold-shouldering" the Stalinists in a union election was manifested in the elections which were held some time ago in the New York Food Workers Union, Local 302. We have had occasion to deal with these elections in a previous article, "The S.W.P. and the Food Workers Union," (THE BULLETIN, Jan-Mar. 1941). A statement made by Shachtman after that article was published throws light on the role of Shachtman's Workers Party leadership in those elections.

In Labor Action of March 17, 1941 (about three months after the elections were held), Shachtman recalled the events:-

"A few months ago, the New York Food Workers Union, Local 302, was faced with an election."

The line-up of forces was as follows, according to Shachtman:-

"On the one side, a semi-conservative, semi-progressive group which began making '100 per cent patriotism' and red-bating its main planks. On the other side, the Stalinists, supported by many militants."

And, it is vital to note:-

"In addition, a large, important bloc of real left-wingers, progressives and militants." (My emphasis — J. C. H.)

Recall that in their official declarations the Shachtmanite leaders urge the workers to "cold-shoulder the Stalinists in a union election" and

"to repudiate the Stalinists, to challenge them where they have power with progressive groups." In Local 302 there was, according to Shachtman, "a large, important bloc of real left-wingers, progressives and militants." What, then, was Shachtman's policy concretely in action? How did he "cold-shoulder" the Stalinists?

In his above-mentioned article of March 17, 1941, Shachtman states:-

"The writer, for his part, in discussion with these militants, urged upon them the propriety and necessity of a bloc with the Stalinists."

And this precisely was the line followed by that "large, important bloc of real left-wingers, progressives and militants." The Cannonites in Local 302, whose line was the same as Shachtman's, formed together with the "progressives," an electoral bloc with the Stalinist bureaucrats, supported the Stalinist slate and gave the Stalinist bureaucrats the major positions on this slate in the bargain. In our previous article on Local 302, we showed how this bloc put the Stalinist gangsters back in power in the union, with Dritisas and Kramberg, old Stalinist flunkies, as the new president and secretary-treasurer, respectively.

In his March 17, 1941 article, Shachtman goes on to say:-

"We still believe the bloc we advocated was correct. It united the bulk of the militants, of the most class-conscious elements, of the most underpaid workers. In the given instance, it was a distinct service to the union's best interests."

The "bulk of the militants" were "united," remember, in voting a clique of Stalinist scoundrels into the leading offices in the local. But, says Shachtman, "it was a distinct service to the union's best interests." In the editorial declaration of "cold-shouldering" the Stalinists in union elections, there occurs the sentence:-

"LABOR ACTION makes no bones

about the fact that it looks upon the Stalinists as enemies of the working class, and, specifically in the union field, as wreckers."

Put together this declaration with Shachtman's actions, and what is the sum? A bloc of left-wing workers supporting the Stalinist bureaucrats, who are "looked upon" by the Shachtmanites "as enemies of the working class, and, specifically in the union field, as wreckers," and voting them to power is "a distinct service to the union's best interests"!

Such is Shachtman's "struggle" against the Stalinist wreckers in the trade unions.

This pro-Stalinist poison spread by Shachtman during workers' action is the essence behind the "anti-Stalinist" paper declarations of the Workers Party leaders. Such support to Stalinism is the actual policy of the Shachtmanite leadership (as of the Cannon clique). Right at the time of the elections in Local 302, Labor Action wrote:- "... a bloc with the Stalinists is permissible under certain conditions...." (Dec. 30, 1940). "Under certain conditions" — a very impressive phrase. But specifically, under what conditions? Apparently, according to Shachtman, when such a bloc puts the criminal Stalinist bureaucrats in power, for this precisely is what the electoral bloc in Local 302 accomplished. Support to Stalinist bureaucrats can be nothing but a means of opening the path of counter-revolutionary Stalinism to power. This support may be covered up with a mountain of "critical" phrases, but it still greases Stalinism's bloody path to power. No other outcome is possible.

The Stalinist bureaucrats and their anti-working class political system can be defeated only by combatting them, not by supporting them. The fact that Shachtman's line concretely is the exact reverse of this fundamental political verity points to the reactionary character of his policies. The sham "anti-Stalinist" nature of Shachtman's political line — as of

Cannon's — can and does lead only to the continued victory of Stalinism in the trade unions and elsewhere.

Lenin's line, as he formulated it in the very first stage of Stalinist degeneration, was: No deals with Stalinism! That was long before Stalin and his clique accumulated an

unprecedented record of black crimes against the toiling masses. Today, more than ever, the true Leninist line is:- Unrelenting struggle against Stalinism, and against its sham oppositions, the Cannons and Shachtmans.

J.C.H.

FACT OR MYTH?

- that Trotsky defended the Permanent Revolution against the Stalin clique -
- that Trotsky carried out the line laid down in Lenin's anti-Stalinist writings -
- that the Stalin gang, but not Trotsky, lied about and concealed Lenin's anti-Stalinist documents -
- that Trotsky did not collaborate with the Stalinist renegades -

SEE THE FACTS WHICH EXPOSE THE MYTHS - READ:

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EDITORIAL LOOSENESS OF
THE MILITANT

AS a rule the Trotskyite leaders are very careful to conceal their opportunism. It requires much digging to expose them. But once in a while through sheer heedlessness, they expose themselves in the most striking manner. A good example is the May 24, 1941 issue of the Militant. Here there lie before us on the same page the opportunist machinations of the Trotskyite leaders, both their treacherous pro-Stalinist line and the usual "revolutionary" cover of that line.

To show that the Trotskyite leaders are quite capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between a revolutionary and a counter-revolutionary position, we shall first cite a sample of their "revolutionary" cover. In column 1, on page 6 of that issue of the Militant the Trotskyites say:

"One thing and one thing only will prevent either a fascist dictatorship or a military dictatorship, and that is the proletariat taking power into its own hands."

This thesis is absolutely correct. It is a position correct at all turns of the imperialist epoch. If at any moment the workers are diverted from this position they are betrayed to the bourgeoisie who in this phase of history are introducing the Fascist form of capitalist rule.

In column 5 on the same page another statement is made, no less true than the one we have cited previously. This statement correctly declares that in this stage of capit-

alist decline bourgeois democracy paves the way for Fascism:

"To admit the truth would be to confess that bourgeois democracy is not the opposite of fascism, but paves the way for fascism in this epoch of capitalist decay."

The above position is incontrovertible. When the Stalinist flunkys at the Seventh Congress of the "Comintern" in 1935 successfully foisted the policy of "democracy-vs-fascism" upon the workers, Stalinism guaranteed for the ensuing period the betrayal of the revolution. The counter-revolutionary Stalinist line kept the path clear for the triumph of fascism in Spain and elsewhere.

But what was the Trotskyite line on Spain? In the statement we quoted from column 5, the Trotskyite leaders expressly declared that "bourgeois democracy is not the opposite of fascism, but paves the way for fascism in this epoch of capitalist decay." This, as we have said, is a "revolutionary" cover for the Trotskyite pro-Stalinist line. Here is the actual line of the "revolutionary Marxists," as the Trotskyites style themselves, a counter-revolutionary line which aided Stalin to deliver the Spanish toilers to Franco in the Spanish Civil War:

"In that struggle, by the way, the revolutionary Marxists were in favor of giving material support to the Spanish Loyalists because WE RECOGNIZED it to be a struggle between fascism and capitalist democracy and BETWEEN THE TWO WE PREFER THE LATTER." (My emphasis - G. M.)

This statement is taken from column 6 on the same page of the May 24, 1941 issue of The Militant. It is clear that, since bourgeois-democracy paves the way for fascism, the Trotskyite leaders in teaching the workers to prefer bourgeois-democracy simply helped pave the way for fascism. The Spanish Civil War was, of course, not "a struggle between fascism and capitalist democracy." It was a war of the bourgeoisie against the toiling masses, with the masses misled and poisoned by their leaders, the Stalinists, the Trotskyists, the Socialists, the Anarchists, the POUMists, and the "democratic" bourgeoisie, all of whom tied the workers to the reactionary and treacherous bourgeois-democracy.

Beginning with the publication of our first political document, STALIN, TROTSKY OR LENIN, in May 1937, we laid bare the Stalinist fraud of democracy-vs-fascism which the Trotskyite leaders supported. We indicated the treacherous deceptions in Felix Morrow's work, THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN. In our periodical Vol.1, #5, May 1938, we exposed Trotsky's pro-Stalinist thesis of "democracy-vs-fascism." We quoted then from the Trotskyite Internal Bulletin for October 1937 in which Trotsky in the article "The Spanish Question" wrote: "In the Spanish Civil War the question involves democracy or fascism." This

was simply a repetition of the Stalinist "Seventh Congress" line. In Spain, as well as in Germany, China and elsewhere, the issue was and is: proletarian power vs. bourgeois power, no matter in what form this bourgeois power exists.

Trotsky knew this fundamental truth. Yet, when the Spanish workers and peasants faced the most volcanic revolutionary situation in Spain's history, Trotsky and his henchmen, the Cannons, Shachtmans and Felix Morrows, helped in the destruction of the revolution by preferring capitalist "democracy," that is, the treacherous Stalinist snare, "democracy vs. fascism."

A break with pro-Stalinist treachery in all its forms will free the workers' hands to fight the rapidly advancing fascist menace. Continuation of support to Trotskyist pro-Stalinist opportunism spells inevitable doom for the revolutionary workers as was the case in Russia, Germany, Spain, France and other countries. For the toilers as a whole it spells military industrial slavery unprecedented in the black annals of oppression and exploitation.

George Marlen
June 14, 1941

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THE POLITICAL MORALS
OF THE
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NOT only to revolutionary workers, but even to average persons there is hardly anything more impressive in the pronouncements of political figures than their ability to make correct prognoses of the future course of development of historical events. Indeed, if anything, there is a tendency to overestimate the significance of such prognoses, for they do not in themselves prove the correctness of a political system. All the founders of Marxism at one time or another made inaccurate prognoses, yet their political system is the only one true for the working class. There is nothing particularly reprehensible about making false prognoses and predictions, for genuine leaders of the working class, who must of necessity be honest, will acknowledge and mend their errors. An effort to conceal or deny false prognoses, on the other hand, is a mark of the charlatan and opportunist, and a policy of assuring the workers that predictions and analyses which history disproved are correct is a true sign of conscious deception.

* * *

IN the voluminous writings of Leon Trotsky, even if one confines oneself to the period of Stalinism from 1922 on, one will find a host of prognoses dealing with major problems of politics. Some of them are correct, some are false. It is not the degree of accuracy of Trotsky's prognoses in itself that we are con-

cerned with here. We deal here with the attitude of the Trotskyist leadership toward these prognoses, for in this attitude there is to be found a measure of the political morals of the Trotskyist leadership. That Trotsky made false prognoses on major political problems can be easily established. We shall first list a number of them and then cite the attitude of the Trotskyist leadership toward them. Whether that attitude is one characteristic of genuine working class leaders or of opportunists will be self-evident.

* * *

IN the period of the rule of the Trio, Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev, the greatest political problem facing the capitalists was the profound revolutionary crisis in Germany in 1923. To the immeasurable detriment of the working class, the leadership of the German Communist Party was already Stalinized and pursuing a counter-revolutionary policy. The Trio's puppets in the German Party, Brandler and Thalheimer, following the ultra-Rightist course set down by the renegade Stalinist leadership of the Comintern, were participating in and supporting a bourgeois government consisting principally of social-democratic agents of German imperialism. Through this policy, the Stalinist traitors were stifling the revolutionary upsurge of the workers.

In October 1923, in a speech delivered in public before a meeting of Moscow workers, Trotsky made the following prognosis:-

"In this respect circumstances favor the working class of Germany. They are ready for the struggle, and in order to act they must know that at their head stands a party ready to lead them from struggle to struggle and to final victory... Events are developing as if according to a plan. If all the signs of the struggle do not deceive us we may expect that in the near future power will go over into the hands of the working class." (Reported in Pravda on October 21, 1923, and quoted as given here in The Worker, U.S.A., Dec. 1, 1923. My emphasis — J.C.H.)

History is the witness to the utter falsity of this prognosis. The German working class, due to the treachery of Stalinism, was smashed in October 1923. Power remained in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

* * *

UPON the advent of Hitler to power, Trotsky painted this rainbow for the workers to gape at:-

"It would be patently stupid to believe that the subsequent evolution of Germany will go the Italian road; that Hitler will strengthen his domination step by step without serious resistance." (The Militant, April 8, 1933.)

Contrary to Trotsky's prognosis, Hitler strengthened his domination step by step without serious resistance, indeed, with virtually no resistance, for the German masses were totally paralyzed by their treacherous leadership.

The Trotskyite leaders gave "reasons" for their prognosis that the Nazis would not be able to consolidate their dictatorship. It would seem, according to the Trotskyists, that the situation favored the German workers,

for they had at their head something to which the Trotskyite leaders referred as a "most powerful Communist party":-

"It is entirely unthinkable that the German working class, millions strong, trained in the school of the class struggle for years, having at its head the most powerful Communist sic! party in the world outside the Soviet Union, will permit the Nazi assassins to remain in power without a violent struggle." (The Militant, February 4, 1933.)

Although it was "entirely unthinkable," the German proletariat, for many years in the clutches of the counter-revolutionary Social Democracy and Stalinism was too demoralized and disoriented to put up a struggle against the Nazis. Again the Trotskyist prognosis was utterly false.

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I N line with the above prognosis and in the same period Trotsky predicted that the German bourgeoisie would not hand over the actual power to Hitler and his Nazi hordes. Trotsky alleged that a move to hand over power to Hitler would provoke a civil war with problematic outcome:

"There is no way of getting around without the Nazis. But it is likewise impossible to give over to them the actual power today, the threat on the part of the proletariat is not so acute that the higher-ups should consciously provoke a civil war with problematic outcome." (Leon Trotsky, The Militant, February 24, 1933.)

It should be noted that this prognosis was made after Hitler was already appointed Chancellor! History again disproved Trotsky's predictions. On June 22, 1933 the Nazis outlawed all political parties other than the National Socialist Party. By August 1934 the consolidation of all power in the hands of the Nazis was symbolized in the elevation of Hitler to the

position of "Furher."

* * *

PRIOR to Hitler's rise to power, Trotsky made a prognosis regarding the German workers ability to fight the fascists. In December 1931, Trotsky told the workers the following:

"We are unshakably convinced that the victory over the Fascists is possible — not after their coming to power, not after five, ten or twenty years of their rule, but now, under the given conditions, in the coming months and weeks." (Germany, the Key to the International Situation, p. 31. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

The "given conditions," both "now" and "in the coming months and weeks," were those of the control of the German proletarian vanguard by the Stalinist renegades and by Social Democracy. Yet, despite Trotsky's "unshakable conviction" that under such conditions "the victory over the Fascists is possible," he again proved to be wrong. The given conditions presented only a sure defeat for the masses and the victory of Fascism.

* * *

FOR years Trotsky taught the workers to believe that it was possible to reform the Stalinized "Comintern" and set it back on the course the Comintern had under Lenin's leadership. Trotsky's thesis was that because the Soviet Union is a Workers State, it was not necessary to destroy the Stalinist regime and build a new Bolshevik Party, for, he said, it was POSSIBLE to reform the Stalinist organization into a Bolshevik body:

"The recognition of the present Soviet State as a workers' state not only signifies that the

bourgeoisie can conquer power in no other way than by an armed uprising but also that the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. has not forfeited the POSSIBILITY of submitting the bureaucracy to it, of reviving the party again and of mending the regime of the dictatorship — without a new revolution, with the methods and on the road of reform." (Draft Thesis of the International Left Opposition on the Russian Question, 1931, p. 36. Emphasis in the original. Caps ours — J.C.H.)

This prognosis was another myth. History irrefutably teaches that the deadly Stalinist cancer gnawing at the vitals of the Soviet Union, the bureaucratic regime of the dictatorship, and the powerful instrument of this bureaucratic regime, "the party," can be eliminated only through the method of a new revolution, a forcible action by the workers. Along this line of "reforming" the Stalinized Soviet Union, Trotsky asserted emphatically that the "Comintern" sufficed for the needs of the "Opposition" and that the latter would triumph in the "Comintern." Trotsky's prognosis was that-

".... the Opposition needs no other channel than that of the Comintern. No one will succeed in tearing us away from it. The ideas we defend will become its ideas. They will find their expression in the program of the Communist International." (Third International After Lenin, p. 166.)

No one will deny that the Trotskyites stopped calling themselves a faction of the "Comintern," and declaring for complete independence from it, set up a "Fourth International." As everybody knows, the "Comintern" never accepted Trotsky's ideas which are that he represents Leninism and that Stalin represents opportunism.

* * *

WE have presented a series of Trotsky's false prognoses on some of the most outstanding political

problems of the present historical period. These prognoses were made ever a period of years ranging from 1923 to 1933. One of the above prognoses, that the Soviet State and the "Comintern" could be reformed, constituted a thesis which was fundamental in Trotsky's entire political system. This prognosis, in Trotsky's formulations, was said to govern the existence of the Trotsky movement as a "faction of the Comintern." This prognosis was given by Trotsky as the basis for urging "critical" support to the Stalinist organizations including the "Comintern." The falsity of this prognosis was proof that under Trotsky's leadership the anti-Stalinist workers had been sent on a wild goose chase. How, then, did the Trotsky leadership react to the refutation by history of their false prognoses? Did it take the course of honest, genuine leaders of the working class or that of charlatans and opportunists?

In October 1934, during the crucial period when the Trotsky movement was shifting its line, the Enlarged Plenum of the L.C.I. stated:-

"There has been no major question on which the analysis and prognosis of the Bolshevik-Leninists [i.e., the Trotskyists - J.C.H.] have not been confirmed." (Declaration of Enlarged Plenum of L.C.I., October 1934.)

Here is a clear-cut example of the demagogic effort of the Trotsky leadership to conceal the deadly character

of the false analyses and prognoses it had been giving the workers. The affectation of infallibility on major questions was so strenuously exaggerated precisely because there was so much guilt to conceal. The above specimen of pretentious self-inflation was not an isolated case. Several months before, the Trotsky leadership on another occasion proclaimed:-

"The CORRECTNESS of our methods, our PREDICTIONS and our slogans have been incontestably proved through the entire historic development of the last ten years, that is, the period of the degeneration and decay of the Communist International." (Statement of the International Secretariat of the League of Communist-Internationalists, The Militant, March 31, 1934. My capitals - J.C.H.)

As we have indicated before, there is nothing criminal in making a mistake in analysis and prognosis. But it is downright dishonesty to palm off wrong predictions as correct. The above statement, in a wholesale, sweeping, most brazen manner does precisely that. With this deception and trickery fashioned in the typical style of Stalinist bureaucrats, Trotsky's "Fourth International" was launched. On the basis of such conscious and deliberate fraud, it exists today and continues its function of misleading the workers.

J. C. Hunter
August 27, 1941

HOW TROTSKY "EXPOSED"
STALIN'S KRESTINTERN

FROM the early years of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Comintern, Stalin and his aides have been manufacturing auxiliary traps for the world toiling masses. One of these traps was the Peasant International (Krestintern). It provided

jobs for a host of Stalin's bureaucratic flunkies. It spread illusions among the workers that the most nationalistic class in capitalist society, the peasantry, could be internationalized. On the whole the Stalinists distorted and exaggerated the political role of

the peasantry, giving the impression that it could play an independent part and possess a revolutionary party of its own instead of following the proletariat - or the imperialists, as the case might be.

In Trotsky's Bulletin of the Opposition, #15-16, p. 6, we read the following sarcastic remark regarding the creation of the Krestintern:

"What is happening with the Krestintern? It was created by the epigones especially to show what politics are carried out by the people who correctly estimate the peasantry.

"From the very outset we considered that the entire enterprise is dead, and if not dead -- reactionary." (Bulletin of the Opposition, September-October 1930, #15-16, p. 6.) (Militant, Nov. 15, 1930, p. 8.)

According to the above statement, Trotsky and his group "from the very outset" considered the organizing of a peasant international as dead and reactionary. That it is reactionary is true. The reader gets the impression that Trotsky and his group "from the very outset" stood in opposition to Stalin's reactionary outfit labelled the Krestintern.

Let us see if the impression created by the Trotskyists is true to fact.

Stalin and his clique made use of their "Krestintern" chiefly in the year of 1924. At the Fifth Congress of the C. I. held in the Summer of that year, the Stalinists issued a ringing Manifesto filled with the most destructive illusions. Hardly any Stalinist deception was omitted in that Manifesto. Here is what it said about the Stalinist concoction called the Krestintern:

"And you, plundered and oppressed peasants, adhere to our great union. The Krestintern, created last year, fully and completely contributes its energies to the

struggle against militarism and danger of new war.

"Peasants of Europe! Farmers of America! Tillers of the entire world! The fate of your economy and the lives of your sons are involved." (Manifesto of the 5th Congress of the C.I. Pravda, July 6, 1924. On the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Imperialist War.)

As we notice, the Stalinist opportunists lied that their bureaucratic stooge organization, which had existence mainly on paper, was fighting imperialism. The Stalinist bureaucracy was actually fostering the deep-rooted attachment of the peasants of the entire world to their economy, that is, to bourgeois property, by dangling before their eyes the fake concoction called the Krestintern.

One might ask, What has that poisonous Stalinist drivel contained in the Manifesto of the Fifth World Congress, issued on the Tenth Anniversary of the War of 1914, to do with Trotsky? Well, in the first place Trotsky was present at the Congress, unanimously elected to its presidium, and did not with as much as one single word oppose the line of Stalinism as expressed in the Manifesto. And secondly, here is what Trotsky himself let slip some years later concerning the authorship of that counter-revolutionary Stalinist Manifesto:

"At the Fifth World Congress (1924) I WROTE the manifesto on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the imperialist war." (Leon Trotsky, The Stalin School of Falsification, p. 162. My emphasis - G. M.)

We believe that comment is superfluous, for Trotsky's collaboration with Stalin in spreading deceptions is quite obvious.

G. M.

June 14, 1941