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THE BULLETIN

False Defenders of the Soviet Union

GEORGE MARLEN

Supporters of Stalinist Demagogy

J. C. HUNTER

The Invasion of Iran

The Cannonites and John L. Lewis

ARTHUR BURKE

The "Comintern" and the Trotskyites

The Trotsky School of Falsification

Shachtman fails to finish a story

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FALSE DEFENDERS OF THE
SOVIET UNION

WHILE the "democratic" imperialists feed the proletariat fairy tales that they are fighting Hitler and are aiding Stalin's Red Army, there are other ideological poisoners who prevent it from saving the few remaining conquests of the October revolution. Despite the fact that every day, more conclusively than the day before, life establishes that the "war" between the "democratic" and Fascist imperialists is a sham one, a smoke screen behind which there goes on collaboration of all imperialists to aid the Nazis in the drive into the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucrats spread the illusion that there is a real war going on between the British and German imperialists. They strengthen this illusion by calling on the British to attack Hitler and by asking aid from the "democratic" imperialists.

It does not require much effort to understand why the Stalinists act thus. Experience shows that opportunists in general, and Stalin in particular, fear the revolutionary workers more than they fear the Fascists. Obviously, should the Stalinist bureaucrats reveal to the Russian workers that all the imperialists are in cahoots, it would cause consternation among the masses. The workers would begin to grasp that they stand alone facing the whole imperialist world. If this shock awakens them politically then they will begin to realize that only the international proletariat could stop the Nazis and that it is Stalin and his gang who paralyze the workers and prevent the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. There is no hope except in the arrest of the Stalin clique by revolutionary workers

and in the introduction of Leninist policies under a revolutionary proletarian leadership.

In the defense of the Soviet Union and the furthering of the proletarian revolution, the task of the revolutionary workers in the bourgeois countries is to combat the international ramifications of the Stalinist cancer. There already exists a body of revolutionary workers, subjectively anti-Stalinist, who realize the need of destroying the Stalinist system of counter-revolution. These workers are the key to the organization of an immediate struggle against Stalinism. Unfortunately, the anti-Stalinist revolutionary workers are almost exclusively under the influence of the various Trotskyist tendencies. Chief amongst these is the so-called "Fourth International" headed by Cannon.

At the very moment when it has become only too obvious that the Soviet masses are facing a major catastrophe due to Stalin's "leadership," when the failure to remove the Stalinist vultures spells sure death for millions of toilers and for the Soviet Union itself, Cannon and his aides in a manifesto on the "defense" of the Soviet Union present to the revolutionary workers the following thesis:

"For the defense of the Soviet Union, form soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers! That is our rallying cry.

"But our struggle against the bureaucracy remains subordinated to the war against imperialism. That is true on the political plane,

where we consider our criticism of the parasitic oligarchy as the method of best arming the country against imperialism, and it is also true on the military plane where practical actions against the bureaucracy are subordinated to the needs for defense of the country." (Fourth International, October 1941, p. 231. My emphasis - G.M.)

This line which Cannon lays down to the workers in reality chains them to Stalin and to imperialism. The trick is embodied in the words, "But our struggle against the bureaucracy remains subordinated to the war against imperialism." A war against imperialism can be no other than a revolutionary war, carried on under a Marxist leadership. The masses of the Soviet Union are fighting not a revolutionary war against imperialism, but a war completely dominated by the reactionary Stalinist policies. To carry on an actual war against imperialism it is necessary to arm the proletariat with a revolutionary policy, which is possible only by setting up a new revolutionary leadership. All talk about subordinating the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy to the war against imperialism is tantamount to preventing the war against imperialism.

There can be no war against imperialism with the Stalinist bureaucrats strangling the Soviet Union. And no one knows it better than Cannon and his aides. In a number of documents they show this plainly. "The interests of the Soviet defense have been sacrificed in the interests of the self-preservation of the ruling clique." (The Militant, October 4, 1941.)

But such expressions are mere anti-Stalinist-sounding "criticisms" which Cannon throws out as bait to his followers. On the question of what to do in this most tragic of all situations, Cannon and his companions teach the revolutionary workers to "subordinate" the struggle against the criminal Stalinist clique which is preventing the revolutionary war

against imperialism. They send the anti-Stalin revolutionary workers on a wild goose chase of "fighting" imperialism "first" which in fact means no struggle against imperialism.

Cannon and his colleagues tell their followers that "the Soviet Government," or in plain words, the Stalin clique, should act in a revolutionary manner:

"The masses want socialism, peace, bread, freedom from exploitation. But Stalin appeals to them only in the language of a church father, without reference to their material needs and aspirations. Such an appeal can only repel the masses.

"Instead of this reactionary claptrap, it is necessary for the Soviet government to issue a direct revolutionary appeal to the masses of occupied Europe, and to the workers of Germany, calling on them to join hands with the Soviet Union for the creation of the Socialist United States in Europe.

"This is the only road to final victory for the Soviet Union. This is the only hope for the free future of the oppressed peoples of Europe." ("Road to Victory," The Militant, October 11, 1941. My emphasis - G.M.)

This is the old Trotskyist line of "advising" Stalin to be a revolutionary. This line was used by Trotsky chiefly prior to 1934. With this pretense of "advising" the Stalinist renegades to act like Leninists, Trotsky deceived his followers into imagining that he was conducting a fight for Leninism. Trotsky led his victims on a wild goose chase, for the idea of "reforming" the Stalinist bureaucrats was sheer fakery. While after the rise of Hitler to power, Trotsky for the most part discontinued this particular form of deception, it crops up from time to time in the Trotskyist press.

* * *

THE Trotskyite line on the ques-

tion of overthrowing the Stalinist bureaucracy and on the defense of the Soviet Union is opportunist through and through. This line is rooted in Trotsky's political history during the Stalinist period of the first workers State. On the question of destroying the Stalinist bureaucratic malady, already widespread in 1922, Trotsky's policy at the very outset was the direct opposite of the policy pursued by Lenin. In March 1923 when Lenin broke all personal and comradely relations with Stalin, having earlier written the Testament which definitely proposed Stalin's removal, Trotsky told one of Stalin's partners: "I am against removing Stalin..." (Leon Trotsky, MY LIFE, p. 486.)

A close survey of Trotsky's entire political life during the Stalinist period unmistakably reveals not a struggle to remove Stalin, but an attempt at peace and conciliation. This is seen from Trotsky's action at the XII Congress of the Russian Communist Party (April 1923), where, instead of opening a fight against the Stalin clique, as Lenin had proposed, Trotsky gave Stalin complete, unconditional support. This is seen in the Trotskyite line of support to Stalin's "Comintern" with "criticism" in the German situation on the eve of the rise of Hitler to power. This is seen in the fraud of the Trotskyite line of Democracy-versus-Fascism in the Spanish Civil War, (a line openly admitted in the May 24, 1941 issue of The Militant).

Trotsky prevented the overthrow of Stalin by the revolutionary workers who were aroused by the massacre of the Shanghai workers in April 1927. Stalin in his speech at the October 1927 Plenum said that he had presented his resignation more than once, but that his resignation had not been accepted by Trotsky and other leaders of the "Opposition." Trotsky never refuted this statement by Stalin.

Although there was fierce personal hatred between the two, politically Trotsky always collaborated with the renegade and usurper Stalin, aiding Stalin in the betrayal of the world

proletariat. An intricate system of colossal deceptions about his own past in the Stalinist degeneration was constructed by Trotsky and supported by his opportunist hangers-on, the Cannons and Goldmans. (See our column, "The Trotsky School of Falsification," running periodically in THE BULLETIN.) The Trotskyite leaders would never survive politically once Stalin were arrested by the revolutionary workers and the hidden facts bearing upon the degeneration of the Russian leadership were brought to light.

Cannon and his gang will do all they can to appear anti-Stalinist and at the same time will divert the workers from the revolutionary overthrow of Stalin, which overthrow could not only create a possibility of saving the Soviet Union but would open the eyes of the revolutionary workers to the true nature of their misleaders.

For years Trotsky and his Cannons sowed the illusion that it was possible to fight imperialism without first destroying the Stalinist counter-revolutionary bureaucracy. Now in the concrete situation of the actual invasion of the Soviet Union, Cannon is peddling the deception that a fight can be carried on against the imperialist invasion while Stalin and his Voroshilovs are holding the Soviet Union in their clutches.

There is only one possible road to victory over imperialism: the revolutionary removal of the Stalinist cancer from the body of the world proletariat. If Stalin and his gang are not removed, the Soviet Union is doomed. Every day which passes with Stalin remaining in control of the Soviet Union, and with the "Comintern" paralyzing the masses internationally, brings this doom closer. Revolutionary anti-Stalin workers must reject Cannon's soothing opium of "subordinating" the struggle against Stalin. They must realize that under opportunist leadership there is nothing in store except more defeats, oppression and enslavement.

NOT very long ago the Trotskyite leaders wrote the following:

"Without Stalin there would have been no Hitler, no Gestapo! It was Stalin who aided Hitler to get astride the German working class. And in this historically much more profound sense, Stalin is an agent of the Gestapo-- " (Bulletin of the Russian Opposition #52-53, p. 42.)

How many Stalinist workers will agree with the above-cited statement? Yet this statement is historically absolutely correct. And how many Trotskyite workers will agree that without Trotsky there would have been no Stalinist dictatorship, no G.P.U., that it was primarily Trotsky who maintained Stalin in the saddle of personal power? Yet this is a fact, incontrovertibly proven by authentic documentary material.

Today, historically, Stalin is aiding Hitler to destroy the Soviet Union. The Trotskyite leaders, by laying down to the anti-Stalin workers a policy of "subordinating" the struggle against Stalin, supposedly in the interest of the military fight on the battlefields of the Soviet Union, are, historically, assisting Stalin to deliver the Soviet Union to Hitler and the imperialists.

There are two sharply drawn political lines dividing the enemies of the proletariat from Marxism. There is not a single tendency within the pseudo-anti-Hitler camp, be it the British Laborites, Russian Mensheviks, Kerensky, the Comintern bureaucrats or the Trotskyites who would urge the immediate revolutionary removal of Stalin by the Russian masses as the only condition for creating the possibility of victory. This is no accident. All these are enemies of the proletariat, each on a different footing. Each one of them for different reasons, fears the unfolding of the truth which would inevitably occur with the unfolding of the might of the

proletarian revolution.

As a political tendency, present-day Trotskyism is different from Menshevism. But on some of the most vital problems confronting the proletariat the Trotskyites hold positions which in essence are held by the Mensheviks, although each tendency reaches these positions from its own premises. For many years Trotsky upheld the principle of dictatorship of the Bolshevik party. In the course of his down-sliding, Trotsky dropped this principle and adopted the position of legalizing "all Soviet parties" in Russia. The Mensheviks, of course, have been clamoring for legal status in Russia ever since Lenin, and also Trotsky, illegalized their party. Today, the leader of Russian Menshevism, Raphael Abramowitch, adopts the following policy on the defense of the Soviet Union:

"Without altering our position, we subordinate the struggle for the liquidation of Stalin's despotism to the supreme requirements of the war against world fascism as the most malevolent enemy of all mankind." (New Leader, June 28, 1941, p. 2. My emphasis - G.M.)

Like all the other sham defenders of the Soviet Union, the Mensheviks give the workers demagogic pretexts for "subordinating" the fight to remove the Stalinist bureaucrats, and thus act as the grave-diggers of the Soviet Union.

Against the sham defenders of the Soviet Union! For the political destruction of the counter-revolutionary "Comintern" and all its "critical" supporters! For the proletarian removal of the treacherous Stalin clique and the organization of a genuinely anti-Stalinist revolutionary government in the Soviet Union as the only road that opens the possibility for saving the Soviet Union.

George Marlen
October 18, 1941

SUPPORTERS OF STALINIST DEMAGOGY

THE workers of the Soviet Union have in their history the most profound revolutionary traditions of all sections of the world toiling masses. Unfortunately, these traditions and Bolshevism have been trampled upon and ground into the dirt for many years by the bureaucratic regime which usurped power in the first workers State. Thus it happens that the present-day references to the traditions of the October Revolution, when they do appear, emanate overwhelmingly from fraudulent, demagogic sources. The October traditions have been reduced to a ghost which various political swindlers conjure up, when they find it convenient, in order to win the support and allegiance of the masses.

Due to the ascendancy of Stalinism, the situation in the working class is so chaotic that even such reactionary demagogues as the British imperialists can afford to permit themselves "stirring" references to the revolutionary traditions of October in the course of pretending to back the masses of Leningrad against Hitler's armies. The Churchills in 1919 were the inspirers of Yudenich's White Guard hordes which strove to destroy the city that was the birthplace of the October Revolution. Today, the same Churchills, feigning concern for "revolutionary Leningrad," shout over the British radio:-

"Lion-hearted Leningrad, city of the revolution, London is with you." (Reported in New York Post, September 9, 1941, My emphasis - J.C.H.)

This "revolutionary" phrasemongering coming from the mouths of the imperialist demagogues is equalled

in deceptiveness only by that emanating from the Stalinist bureaucrats themselves. The Stalinist usurpers whose criminal, opportunist policies have brought the "city of the revolution" so close to annihilation by the imperialists, are now making frantic efforts to hold off the attack. In desperation, Stalin is mobilizing every available person and all materials in and around Leningrad, hoping to beat back the assault by sheer weight of physical force. This purely military struggle is the only one available to the Stalinist bureaucrats. Not even fear for its very existence can compel the Stalinist bureaucracy to revive the traditions of October, for a revolutionary political struggle, the really decisive weapon against the imperialists, is anathema to Stalinism. In order to conceal the disastrous end to which the Stalin gang is bringing Leningrad - and the Soviet Union in general - by its counter-revolutionary political line, the bureaucrats on a recent occasion reintroduced their "revolutionary" phrasemongering in Leningrad. The Stalinist demagogues have been reported making references to Leningrad's revolutionary past in their appeals to the masses to respond to the Kremlin's directives. In words not much different from the above-mentioned British radio broadcast, Voroshilov reportedly declared that Leningrad was and always will be the "city of the great October Revolution."

This "revolutionary" dust which the Stalinists threw into the eyes of the Leningrad workers has been hailed by the Trotskyist paper, The Militant, as an actual appeal to the traditions of October. The Militant declares that Voroshilov's "revolutionary" noise is nothing less than the very

thing the masses of Leningrad have been waiting for:

"Up to the last moment, Stalin suppressed the traditions of the October Revolution, appealing instead to the traditions of the Napoleonic era and the Russian defeat of the Teutonic Knights in the 12th Century.

"Today, however, a Voroshilov is compelled to proclaim to the workers of Leningrad: 'Dig yourselves in. Leningrad was and is and shall forever remain the city of the great October Revolution.'

"The masses of Leningrad are demonstrating that that is the appeal for which they have been waiting." (August 30, 1941, p.1. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

The Militant carried not a word of exposure of this "revolutionary" fakery of Voroshilov, not a syllable warning the workers that Voroshilov's phrasemongering is out-and-out demagogy, bureaucratic bluff and pretense. Indeed, in the following issue of The Militant the same palming off of Stalinist hokum as "appeals to the real tradition of the Soviet Union - the October Revolution" is repeated:

"In mortal fear for its own existence, the Stalinist bureaucracy is finally forced to rally the workers by appeals to the real tradition of the Soviet Union - the October Revolution." (September 6, 1941, p. 1.)

Thus, in the Trotskyist version of "Marxism," a phrase from the renegade Voroshilov, that two-decade partner of Stalin, becomes an appeal to traditions of the October Revolution! Of course, the Trotskyist "Marxists" did not dare to hail the drivel of the imitator of Voroshilov in the British radio station as an appeal to the October traditions. The Trotskyist leaders know exactly how much fakery they can get their victims to swallow in one dose.

If the Trotskyist leaders did nothing but give support to Stalinist

demagogy, they would be self-exposed for what they are - disguised supporters of Stalinism. Hence, the Trotskyist paper is filled also with a great deal of "anti-Stalinist" noise which serves as a cover for its pro-Stalinist line. In the same issue of The Militant (August 30), and on the same page, in which Voroshilov's "revolutionary" shamming was hailed as "an appeal to the traditions of the October Revolution," the Trotskyists wrote:

"The Soviets, the trade-unions, Lenin's Bolshevik Party, the Young Communist League - all these indispensable class agencies have been destroyed by the Stalinist regime which does not dare to restore them."

These revolutionary institutions were the real traditions of October, the material basis of the proletarian upheaval. The fact that these revolutionary institutions have been destroyed proves that the "revolutionary" words uttered by the Stalinist bureaucrats are the sheerest fraud - empty words without a concrete, material foundation. The destroyers of Bolshevism do not and cannot make genuine revolutionary appeals, they can make only pseudo-revolutionary pretenses for the purpose of deceiving the masses. These pretenses must be exposed, not presented as genuine revolutionary appeals as the Trotskyist leaders do.

The Trotskyist leaders have palmed off Voroshilov's fakery as the "revolutionary appeal" for which the masses of Leningrad "have been waiting." If it is true that that is the "appeal" for which the masses of Leningrad have been waiting, if the workers of the Soviet Union are continuing and will continue to swallow uncritically the pseudo-Bolshevik demagogy of the Stalin gang, then Finis may as well be written right now to the last remains of the October Revolution. We do not know - and at this distance it is impossible to know - the exact state of mind of the toilers of the Soviet Union. But we do know what they should be waiting for, what they must seek if the imperialists are to

be defeated. The toilers of the Soviet Union should and must immediately create a leadership which will work right now for the proletarian overthrow of the Voroshilovs, of the whole counter-revolutionary treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy. The workers must beware of the sham "anti-Stalinists" who paint the criminal Voroshilovs as issuing appeals to the traditions of October. The sham

"anti-Stalinists," i.e., the Trotskyist leaders, are disguised political props of Stalin-Voroshilov, obstacles in the path of destroying the Stalinist system and preventers of the revival of the real traditions and institutions of the October Revolution.

J. C. Hunter
October 1941

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T H E I N V A S I O N O F I R A N

(Trotskyist Apologies for Stalin's
Reactionary Policy)

THE Stalinist-British invasion of Iran has been loudly applauded by the imperialist-democratic politicians, by the Social-democrats, and by the Stalinist bureaucrats. These reactionary forces are entirely open in their approval of this step taken by Stalin and Churchill.

There are others, however, who cannot afford to be so crass in their approval of any policy of Stalin. The Socialist Workers Party leaders, who present themselves under the guise of "Leninist" opponents of Stalin, have issued a subtle apology for Stalin's action in Iran, in which they try to make it appear that Stalin is following a policy laid down by Lenin. The argument given by the S.W.P. leaders is the legalistic one that in 1921, the Soviet Republic signed a treaty with Iran which permits the entry of Soviet troops into Iran should such action be required for the defense of the Soviet Republic. This legalistic argument did not, of course, originate with the Trotskyists, but with the Kremlin gang who hauled it forth upon the movement of Stalin's troops into Iran. Albert Goldman, in an article presenting the Trotskyist position on the invasion of Iran, writes:

"The Soviet Government issued a statement in connection with its invasion of Iran justifying the act on the ground that Article 6 of the Soviet-Iranian treaty of 1921 gives it the right to march troops into Iranian territory in order to take necessary military measures when-

ever the Iranian government is unable to prevent an attack or a threatened attack on the Soviet Union through Iran." (The Militant, September 6, 1941, p. 4.)

The Soviet government, at the time the treaty was signed, was a revolutionary government functioning in the interests of the Soviet Union and the world revolution. The treaty was a link in that function. Stalin's regime, however, is the very opposite of that of the Bolsheviks. It is the duty of every Marxist to make this distinction plain to the view of the workers. Goldman, on the other hand, tries to obliterate this distinction, and presents the Stalinist reactionary regime as though it functions in the interests of the Soviet Union and the world revolution. In what light does Goldman paint Stalin's move into Iran? In the light of what a revolutionary regime might have done in the interests of the Soviet Union and the world revolution!

"It can be taken for granted that Lenin and Trotsky would have sent troops into neighboring territory even without permission, and even without a treaty, if the interests of the Soviet Union and the world revolution demanded such action." (Ibid.)

Goldman's article is written in a tone of arguing against those who see anti-workingclass action in Stalin's invasion of Iran. By invoking the shades of a revolutionary regime,

Goldman conveys the impression that Stalin's invasion of Iran is in the interests of the Soviet Union and the world revolution.

Goldman contrasts the attitude of the Trotskyists toward the Stalinist invasion of Poland, Finland and the Baltics with the one they have taken towards the invasion of Iran. The invasion of Poland, Finland and the Baltics, says Goldman, was condemned by the Trotskyists:

"But did we not condemn the Stalinist government for invading Poland, Finland and the Baltic countries? Yes, we did..." (Ibid.)

The invasion of Iran, however, the Trotskyists do not condemn.

Let us see how consistent the Trotskyists are on the question of Stalin's invasions,— on the one hand condemning the invasion of Poland, Finland and the Baltics and on the other hand not condemning the invasion of Iran. Goldman states that the invasion of Poland, Finland and the Baltics was condemned because it put the Soviet Union in the same light as Nazi Germany:—

"Stalin's crime consisted of exactly this — that he made the Soviet Union appear to be in the same category as Nazi Germany." (Ibid.)

Does not the invasion of Iran in conjunction with the British forces put the Soviet Union in the same category as British imperialism? Obviously it does. The fact that today British imperialism is playing a relatively cautious game in the East should not make the class conscious workers forget that British imperialism is the most ferocious oppressor of the masses of the East. Goldman, however, glosses over this by declaring that the fact that Stalin's move was in conjunction with the British imperialists is not of the slightest importance:

"And neither is the fact that, because of a particular military situation the British imperialists

are invading Iran at the same time that the Soviet Union is doing so, of the slightest importance insofar as determining the right of the Soviet Government to send its troops into Iran." (Ibid.)

The inconsistency of the Trotskyist position stands out in a glaring light — when Stalin moves with the German imperialists, the Trotskyites condemn it; when Stalin moves with the British imperialists, the Trotskyites do not condemn it. The Trotskyist position constitutes by implication a whitewash of Stalin's paper "alliance" with the "democratic" British imperialists.

In order to appear as a Marxist, Goldman begins his article by attacking those who condemn all invasions on moral grounds. It is quite true that "morals" are not the basis for determining the character of an invasion. But neither are "laws" or "treaties." For Marxists, the determining factor in this matter is policy. What is the policy of the invader? Is it revolutionary, is it reactionary? The Stalinist regime, even if it can dig up a carload of treaties signed in the Leninist period of the Soviet Union, to cloak its counter-revolutionary policies, remains the worst enemy in the ranks of the toiling masses, whether it is at peace or at war, whether Stalin acts in "friendly" collaboration with the German, or with the British imperialists. Its criminal acts and policies must be exposed, not whitewashed.

Stalinism does not and cannot defend the Soviet Union. Stalinism is the chief obstacle to the defense of the Soviet Union. The military struggle against the imperialist armies invading the Soviet Union is being hamstrung by Stalinism's reactionary politics. The counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucrats are leading the toilers to a horrible defeat and a fascist hell. The Trotskyists, like the Stalin gang, palm off Stalin's policy in the invasion of Iran as an act in the defense of the Soviet Union. The truth of the matter is that even if Stalin invaded Iran alone, it would have been not in the

interests of the masses of the Soviet Union, but in the interests of the reactionary Stalinist gang and to the detriment of the world revolution. In invading Iran, just as in the invasion of Poland with the German imperialists, Stalin contributed not to the victory, but to the defeat of the masses of the Soviet Union.

Cannon and Goldman, disguised supporters of the Stalinist bureaucracy, are an obstacle to the real defense of the Soviet Union. The revolutionary

anti-Stalinist workers cannot organize a Marxist force against the fascist and "democratic" imperialists if they follow the Trotskyist leaders who protect Stalinism, the chief paralyzing force in the proletariat.

No support to Stalin's counter-revolutionary policies! For the exposure of the "oppositional" apologists for Stalin's crimes:

J. C. Hunter

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THE CANNONITES AND JOHN L. LEWIS

JOHN L. LEWIS is not a new figure in the American labor movement. For many years he was a powerful and leading bureaucrat in the AFL. Even after the formation of the CIO it was admitted in the Trotskyite movement that Lewis was a reformist labor agent of Wall Street imperialism. About a year ago, the Trotskyites wrote, "Green and Lewis and their similars — the whole upper bureaucracy of the labor movement at present — are agents of the capitalists in the labor movement...." (Socialist Appeal, October 26, 1940.)

At the present writing, the Socialist Workers Party has come forth with a line of supporting John L. Lewis in the trade unions. This has grave significance for the class conscious workers who follow the Trotskyite organization and who desire to function in the trade unions as a revolutionary force. It requires a careful evaluation.

The context of the situation in which the S.W.P. has come out for Lewis is the struggle taking place in the CIO between the Lewis bloc and the Hillman-Stalinist forces. The Trotskyites dissociate themselves from Lewis's "isolationist" stand on the international situation and present their policy of support to Lewis as being confined wholly to his role within the trade union movement.

In this struggle in the CIO, says the S.W.P., the workers cannot stand aside but must actively intervene:

"Militants must intervene when two groups are fighting over questions that will determine the

future of the CIO, the independence of the labor movement, the preservation of the gains of industrial unionism." (The Militant, September 6, 1941, p. 3 - emphasis in the original.)

How must this intervention take place, according to the S.W.P.? The Trotskyites proclaim that Lewis condemns the use of troops to break strikes, the anti-labor functions of the National Defense Mediation Board, the shackling of the CIO to the Roosevelt war machine and similar reactionary features, and encourages the affiliation of the drivers' movement to the CIO. Therefore, states the S.W.P., progressive unionists must intervene by supporting Lewis:

"When Lewis condemns the use of troops to break strikes, as at the North American plant, while Hillman condones it; when Lewis attacks the anti-labor functions of the National Defense Mediation Board, while Hillman collaborates with it; when Lewis leads the attack on Congressional and administration anti-labor legislation, while Hillman behind the scenes tries to make that legislation a little more palatable; when Lewis encourages the affiliation of the militant drivers movement to the CIO, while Hillman's associates pass resolutions against it in the local bodies they control; when in short Lewis seeks to build and spread the CIO, while Hillman tries to shackle it to the Roosevelt war machine and weaken it in the struggle against the reactionary craft-unionists headed by the AFL Executive Council, then progressive trade unionists

must support Lewis against the Hillman-Stalinist bloc." (Ibid. My emphasis - A.B.)

From this statement of The Militant, a worker might get the impression that Lewis changed his role, at least in the trade union field, and that the term, agent of the capitalists in the labor movement, which the Trotskyites correctly applied to him about a year ago, is no longer correct. Therefore, it is necessary to make a close examination of Lewis's present role in the trade union movement to determine the validity of the new position on Lewis adopted by the Trotskyites.

Let us make a point-by-point analysis of the arguments given by the S.W.P. in the above-cited statement.

LEWIS AND THE QUESTION OF STRIKEBREAKING

ONE of the points raised by the Trotskyites in defense of their position of supporting Lewis in the trade unions is that he opposes government strikebreaking:

".... Lewis condemns the use of troops to break strikes, as at the North American plant, while Hillman condones it," (Ibid.)

Since the Trotskyites cite the affair at the North American plant as an instance of Lewis's condemning the use of troops to break strikes, let us deal with this case.

When Roosevelt sent the troops to the North American plant, Lewis made a public declaration condemning this act. Behind the scenes, however, as has been stated by the Trotskyites themselves, Lewis and his machine were engaged in factional machinations which involved a sell-out of the North American striking workers. This sell-out took place at the Buffalo convention of the U.A.W. in August of this year. At the Buffalo convention,

maneuvering for control were the Reuthers group (Hillmanites) and the Addes-Lewis bloc. Frankenstein, one of the leaders in the U.A.W. who had taken the leading role in the strike-breaking at North American, was a supporter of the Reuthers group. In order to break Frankenstein away from Reuthers and get him to support the Addes-Lewis combination, the Lewis machine made one of its typical horse-trades. It assured Frankenstein a post, as a result of which deal the North American affair was hushed up. Here is the story in the words of the Trotskyites themselves:

"The Lewis machine in the CIO is made up of the old line wheelhorses of the Miners Union. In the Buffalo convention, Lewis did not attend and throw his personal weight behind the Addes group, he did not do this because Lewis is a prestige politician, and would not risk his prestige and standing where he was not sure of victory. He sent instead his man Alan Haywood, whose contribution, with or without Lewis's aid, was the unprincipled horse-trade by which Frankenstein was assured a board job in exchange for his support to Addes, dumping Reuther, and making some deals as to appointments in the aircraft set-up. The North American fight was hushed up as a result of this deal... This type of tactic is typical of the Lewis machine." (The Militant, August 30, 1941, p.4. My emphasis - A.B.)

Thus, only several weeks ago, the Trotskyites openly disclosed the treacherous nature of Lewis's "condemnation" of the strikebreaking at North American. It was only one week after this exposure of Lewis's treachery that the Trotskyites made a characteristic somersault and came out with a whitewash of Lewis's role in the North American affair.

The treachery of the Lewis machine has, of course, not been limited to the North American plant. In May of this year, before the Stalinists switched their line on Lewis,

and before the Trotskyites switched theirs, the S.W.P. leaders openly showed that the Lewis machine was pursuing a strikebreaking role on a large scale. Posing as critics of the Stalinists, the Trotskyites pilloried the Daily Worker for concealing the scabby role of the Lewis clique:

"The Daily Worker document correctly denounces the AFL top leadership for its strikebreaking role in the Ford, International Harvester and Allis-Chalmers strikes, where AFL charters issued to company stooges gave anti-labor elements the pretext to condemn 'jurisdictional strikes.' The Daily Worker is, however, silent about the fact that the same kind of scabby role has been played by the CIO's 'Construction Workers Organizing Committee' headed by A. D. Lewis, John L.'s brother and lieutenant." (The Militant, May 17, 1941, p. 4. My emphasis - A.B.)

Today, however, the Trotskyites, taking a leaf out of the Stalinist book on unprincipled switching of lines, not only attempt to conceal the scabby role of the Lewis machine, but play up Lewis as a bona fide opponent of strikebreaking.

It is easy to show the ludicrous contradictions in which the Trotskyites become enmeshed due to their unprincipled flip-flops. For example, the Trotskyites today condemn the Stalinists for turning against Lewis. The Trotskyite "logic" is, Why turn against Lewis when he is pursuing more or less the same union policies today as a year ago! Let us quote the S.W.P. to this effect:

"Instead of collaborating with John L. Lewis against Hillmanites in the unions, the Stalinists have declared war against Lewis, although he is pursuing more or less the same union policies today as a year ago." (The Militant, September 27, 1941, p. 3. My emphasis - A.B.)

Not just a year ago, but even as recently as several weeks ago, as the reader will remember, the Trotskyites

were saying that Lewis and his machine play a scabby role. The concealment of this role is now the essence of the S.W.P. trade union line.

LEWIS AND THE NATIONAL DEFENSE
MEDIATION BOARD

THE S.W.P. proclaims that Lewis attacks the anti-labor functions of the National Defense Mediation Board and gives this as one of the reasons for its support to him.

"...Lewis attacks the anti-labor functions of the National Defense Mediation Board, while Hillman collaborates with it..." (The Militant, September 6, 1941.)

Before the Trotskyites came out in support of Lewis, they were explaining that although in words Lewis attacks the Mediation Board, in deeds he consented to two of his chief lieutenants joining the Board:

"John L. Lewis bitingly indicts this ruling of the Mediation Board; but it is plain that his chief lieutenants, Murray and Kennedy, joined the Board with his consent." (Fourth International, May 1941, p. 105. My emphasis - A.B.)

And in connection with this act of Lewis's, the Cannonites wrote in this above-cited article of May 1941:

"No less than the AFL leaders, the CIO leaders are buttressing the government strikebreaking machinery." (Ibid. p. 105.)

But, when the Trotskyites were preparing the grounds to switch their line on Lewis, the SWP leaders began to issue white-washing statements like the following:

"The tendency of the John L. Lewis group in the CIO has been to resist government interference and government strikebreaking..." (The Militant, August 9, 1941. My emphasis - A.B.)

All the previous statements made by the Trotskyites which exposed Lewis's true role and which completely contradict their present line are left by the Cannons and Goldmans unrepudiated, unacknowledged, buried. A typical Stalinist technique!

LEWIS AND THE ROOSEVELT
WAR MACHINE

ANOTHER point which the Trotskyites raise in defense of their position in supporting Lewis is:

".... Lewis seeks to build and spread the CIO, while Hillman tries to snackle it to the Roosevelt war machine..." (The Militant, September 6, 1941, p. 3.)

Quite clearly, in this statement of the Trotskyites, the impression is left that Lewis has a policy of resisting Hillman's efforts to shackle the CIO to the war machine. However, prior to the period when the Trotskyites had taken up the line of white-washing Lewis, they told the workers in plain words that "John L. Lewis leads the CIO into the war machine," and, moreover, condemned the Stalinists for concealing this fact:

"Verbal opposition to the 'defense' program is easy. But to stigmatize the shameful role of John L. Lewis and the Executive Board in endorsing the 'defense' program and in endorsing Hillman's sitting in the Defense Council — that takes revolutionary courage, and the Daily Worker and the Stalinist leadership are neither courageous nor revolutionary. That's why they look the other way while John L. Lewis leads the CIO into the war machine." (Editorial, "Stalinist Fakery," Socialist Appeal, June 15, 1940, p. 4.)

The editorial from which this citation is taken is entitled "Stalinist Fakery," as indicated above. Wherein does the Stalinist fakery dif-

fer from the present-day Trotskyist fakery on John L. Lewis? Except for certain surface features and specific political coloration, insofar as the interests of the toiling masses are concerned, these two specimens of fakery differ not one iota.

The Trotskyites today are concealing the fact that in the trade union field Lewis is only another Hillman, that Lewis, like Hillman, approves of sending "labor" representatives into the capitalist government.

LEWIS'S TOTAL ROLE IN THE
TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

THE Trotskyites are now palming off Lewis as a labor leader who should be supported by the workers. They are spreading the illusion that there are fundamental differences insofar as the interests of the masses are concerned, between the Lewises and the Hillmans. But the SWP leaders as recently as February of this year, without any ambiguity, placed Lewis in the same class-collaborationist category as Green, Hillman, Murray and Tobin. The Trotskyites showed that Lewis, as well as these other trade union bureaucrats, is a lieutenant of the bosses. Here is their statement, black on white:

"From all sides now the employers are summoning allies to their aid: government officials, defense commissioners, arbitrators, preachers of patriotism, army officers and, most important of all today, their lieutenants in the ranks of labor itself: Green, Hillman, Murray, Tobin, Lewis, and their staffs. The function of these labor lieutenants and their policy of class collaboration is to lower the self confidence of organized labor, to underestimate its strength, to keep it from independent class action, and to weaken its will to struggle and to win." (Fourth International, Feb. 1941, p. 37. My emphasis - A. B.)

Nor did the Trotskyites, prior to their switch to Lewis, conceal the fact that Lewis is travelling in the footsteps of the European betrayers of the proletariat who misled the toiling masses and facilitated the victory of Hitler:

"Lewis is merely travelling in the footsteps of the Blums, Kautskys, Caballeros, who led the European working class to its doom. Like them, Lewis paves the way for a native or foreign Hitler." (The Militant, May 10, 1941. My emphasis - A.B.)

These true words were written only recently — in May of this year. Lewis, of course, continues to travel in the tracks of the Blums and Caballeros. He hasn't changed his "principles." It is the unprincipled Trotskyite leaders who make believe they have forgotten what they wrote only yesterday, in order to put over their support to Lewis.

THE KEY TO THE TROTSKYITE SWITCH

WE have shown that for some "mysterious" reason not yet explained here, the Trotskyite leaders have switched to support of John L. Lewis. The Trotskyites executed this maneuver with striking brazenness, contradicting every single correct statement which they had made in the past about Lewis without so much as a single word of repudiation. The natural question is — what is behind this switch in the Trotskyite line on Lewis?

There is one little phrase in The Militant article of September 6, 1941 openly calling for support of Lewis, which provides the key to the present Trotskyite line in the trade unions. This key phrase reads as follows:

".... Lewis encourages the affiliation of the militant drivers movement to the CIO, while Hillman's associates pass resolutions against it in the local bodies they control...." (p. 3.)

This lets the cat out of the bag. The Trotskyite-led Local 544 of Minneapolis constitutes the trade union front of Cannon and Co. The Trotskyite leaders have never tired of pointing to this local as the shining illustration of the Trotskyite "mass work." Now that the FBI in collaboration with AFL leader Tobin is attacking the Trotskyite-led local, the Trotskyite leaders find themselves in a ticklish situation and frantically look about for new allies.

The character of the moves made against the Trotskyite-led local by the AFL bureaucrats made further stay in the AFL impossible. The rival CIO, seeing a chance to snatch away an AFL union, opened its arms to greet Local 544 into its structure.

Lewis has for a long time been trying to raid the AFL in the construction and teamsters field. The more unions in the CIO, the larger basis Lewis has for extending his power, prestige and position and the larger the revenues. Seeing a golden opportunity to jump into a field where the rival AFL has a strong foothold, Lewis stands ready to welcome Local 544 into the CIO and provides the Trotskyite leaders with statements protesting against the FBI persecutions. In return Cannon graces the bureaucratic CIO leadership, in the person of the treacherous Lewis, with a complete coat of whitewash. Of course, once Lewis gets his greedy hands on Local 544, he will settle accounts with the S.W.P. leaders, whereupon the Cannonites will again begin to raise a big howl against Lewis. Right now, however, the interests of the opportunistic CIO leadership and the opportunistic SWP leadership happen to merge. Hence the present Trotskyite line of whitewash and support to Lewis.

Tobin's efforts to seize control of Local 544 are typical of the careerist machinations of the labor lieutenants of capitalism. But the alternative to Tobin, as far as the interests of the workers are concerned, is not Cannon and his colleagues. The interests of the workers require an honest revolutionary leadership which

under no conditions will whitewash a treacherous enemy of the toiling masses. As we have shown above, Cannon and his friends do not represent such a leadership. In the struggle to maintain the Trotskyite control of Local 544. Cannon is pursuing a wholly opportunistic line.

The new SWP line of support to Lewis is not the first example of the flip-flops of the Cannon clique in the trade union field. We can cite as another instance the affair of the AFL Food Workers Local 302. In the December 1940 elections in this local, the Stalinists faced an imminent defeat in the struggle for offices. By granting the Trotskyites a few posts, the Stalinists secured Trotskyite support in an electoral bloc. Due to this maneuver, the Stalinists succeeded in averting defeat for their bureaucratic clique in the union. (See "The S.W.P. and the Food Workers Union," THE BULLETIN, January-March 1941.)

THE TASK IN THE UNIONS

WHAT is the revolutionary task of the proletarian vanguard in the trade union field? The trade unions, under their present misleadership, stand as organizations which chain the workers directly or indirectly to the imperialist machine. Obviously, the task is to oust all the opportunist leaders from the trade unions. But in order to fulfill this task, the proletarian vanguard itself must be freed of opportunist leadership. The Trotskyite tendency is a variety of opportunism fulfilling a reactionary role. Cannon's trade union "mass work" consists of looking for bones from every reactionary source which appears likely to grant them. If the class conscious Trotskyite workers are to perform real revolutionary work in the unions, they must first break with the Cannons.

A. Burke

October 13, 1941

TROTSKYITE "MASS WORK" -- ITS OPPORTUNIST CHARACTER EXPOSED -- Read --

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THE "FIGHTING WORKER" ADDS ITS MITE

ON every side the toiling masses are confronted with political treachery which operates under deceptive names. The "Socialist" leaders today are betrayers of Socialism and have been so, more or less openly, since August 1914. They bear a heavy responsibility for the victory of Fascism in Italy, Germany, Spain and other countries. The "Communist" leaders are no Communists; they are the main betrayers of the world proletariat. Since the Communist International was Stalinized, it became a "revolutionary" deception and a snare used by Stalin to mislead and sell out the world revolution. Stalinism has been the major force in the present epoch which has stifled and disoriented the revolutionary workers the world over, and thus has been chiefly responsible for the extension of Fascism and the strengthening of world capitalism. Needless to say, every institution in the hands of Stalinism bears a deceptive name to dupe the workers. For example, the formerly Bolshevik organ, Pravda (Truth), is still called Pravda, but it is so packed with lies that its name should really be Ne-pravda. The Soviets have been completely robbed of their revolutionary content and represent only the interests of the Stalinist assassins of proletarian revolution. The same, of course, holds for "the Party" which is nothing but an ossified bureaucratic machine, and bears no resemblance to the true Communist Party except in name.

The real Red Army, during Lenin's political leadership, conducted a revolutionary struggle against world

capitalism. Stalin's "Red" Army, on the other hand, subjected to his counter-revolutionary rule is compelled to fight for the preservation of the reactionary bureaucracy. Such fight, from the standpoint of revolutionary politics, is not a struggle against capitalism and its Fascist tools. A politically confused person or a swindler might exclaim: What is the Red Army doing now, if not fighting the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union! Isn't that a fight against world capitalism and its Fascist hordes?

A genuine fight against the forces of world capitalism is one based on revolutionary politics. Workers must not confuse physical struggles,-- demonstrations, battles, wars, etc.-- which are led by opportunists, with a genuine fight against the agents of world capitalism. All "struggles" led by opportunists are only a form of betraying the workers. Such "struggles" can result only in the victory of the world bourgeoisie.

When the workers were guided by a Leninist policy of destroying world capitalism, they really fought Fascism --and won! Such was the case with Kornilov's attempt to set up a military dictatorship in August 1917, and with the endeavors on the part of the Russian White Armies, aided by the French, British, American, German and other imperialists, to establish a White Guard regime.

The fact that Stalinist and Social Democratic workers cracked some Fascist heads in pre-Hitler Germany,

that thousands of Fascists were killed in the Spanish civil war, that huge numbers of Nazi soldiers are being killed in the imperialist invasion of the Stalin-controlled Soviet Union, does not at all erase the truth that under the reactionary Stalinist leadership the forces of capitalism cannot be fought. This truth must be burned indelibly into the minds of the workers. But there are people who, although they proclaim themselves Marxists and anti-Stalinists, obscure this truth by obliterating the difference between the Bolshevik Red Army which actually fought against capitalism and the Stalinist "Red" army which, while resisting the Nazi invasion, is not actually fighting world capitalism and its Fascist fighting arm.

In the September 3, 1941 issue of the "Fighting Worker" of the Revolutionary Workers League, we read the following concerning Stalin's "Red" army:

"The Red Army will continue the struggle of death and victory against Fascism and world capitalism."

If the leaders of the R.W.L. were so many "Rip Van Winkles" who fell asleep in 1921 and were suddenly awakened by the thunder of imperialist artillery bombarding Leningrad and other cities of the Soviet Union, their seeming ignorance of the history of the last two decades would have to be excused. They would have to be enlightened as to the fatal transformation that befell the proletarian State during Lenin's illness, and have explained to them the personal dictatorship of Stalin, of whom virtually nothing was heard in the revolutionary days of the Soviet Union. But the leaders of the R.W.L. are no "Rips." They know something about this transformation and are quite aware of the fact that Stalinism is a deadly counter-revolutionary disease plaguing the proletariat. In the same issue of the "Fighting Worker," in a supposed exposure of the Trotskyist pro-Stalinist policies, we read the following:

"The Trotskyists would oppose

workers action against the Stalinist bureaucrats until the front is 'safe.' But since Stalinism is incapable of waging a real defense, an 'all-out' revolutionary war, the front would always be in danger. Therefore the Trotskyist position spells, not the overthrow, but capitulation to Stalinism, which can only lead the Soviet Union to defeat." (Ibid. My emphasis - G.M.)

We see that the leaders of the R.W.L. realize that Stalinism is not waging a real defense of the Soviet Union, a revolutionary war. How, therefore, can this square with the statement that Stalin's army is not only fighting, but "will continue the struggle of death and victory against Fascism and world capitalism"?

It is clear that all the R.W.L.'s "anti-Stalinist" outbursts are decorative phrases to conceal the pro-Stalinist content of their position that Stalin's army is conducting a struggle against world capitalism and its Fascist front.

Although the R.W.L. assures the workers that it is fighting the Trotskyites, we have been saying time and again that the R.W.L. is essentially a Left-Trotskyist tendency. Let us trace the origin of the R.W.L.'s out-and-out lie about Stalin's army fighting Fascism and world capitalism. Here is what the Trotskyites told the workers in July 1941:

"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 deception about Stalin's army is not an isolated instance or accidental, but constitutes a basic line in the Trotskyist system of distortion. Long after the bulk of the Russian revolutionary vanguard had been decimated by Stalin's bloody G.P.U., after the former revolutionary Red Army had become a corpse and was supplanted by the military bureaucratic arm of counter-revolutionary Stalinism, Trotsky wrote:

"But the Red Army is also not only the Red Army. It is — the arm of the proletarian world revolution." ("Germany, the Key to the International Situation," p. 24.)

The leaders of the R.W.L. may spill a few words now and then "differentiating" themselves from Cannon and his companions, and "attack" the Trotskyites for "capitulation to Stalinism." The cardinal truth is that basically the R.W.L., like Cannon and Co., works for Stalinism and muddles the understanding of the workers regarding the thoroughly counter-revolutionary nature of this deadly malady. There

are many workers who were victims of Stalin and who took the necessary step of subjectively breaking with that promoter of counter-revolution. They must take the next step and break with the subtle "oppositional" supporters of Stalin — the Trotskyites and Left-Trotskyites. Only by taking such a step can they free themselves completely from Stalinist influence and adopt the policy that will really enable them to fight world capitalism.

George Marlen
October 12, 1941

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

of TROTSKY'S OPPORTUNIST ROLE in
the rise of STALINISM -- his COLLABORATION
with the STALIN CLIQUE -- his BETRAYAL of
LENIN'S LINE AGAINST STALIN -- READ:

DID TROTSKY COLLABORATE WITH STALIN
THE CANNONITES "ANSWER" THE SHACHTMANITES
AFTER SIXTEEN YEARS OF SILENCE (On Trotsky's
article: "Did Stalin Poison Lenin?")
TROTSKY AND THE SUPPRESSION OF LENIN'S
TESTAMENT
THE MURDER OF TROTSKY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST
STALINISM

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THE "COMINTERN" AND THE TROTSKYITES

Stalinist zigzags present and past — Their real source and meaning — The nature of the mock "Opposition" — The task of the revolutionary workers.

* * *

SINCE the invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Stalin's "Comintern" has again been pursuing an ultra-Rightist line, betraying and paralyzing the workers through the method of tying them to the "democratic" capitalist politicians. In the eyes of many people, Stalin's present foreign policy of playing at "alliance" with the "democratic" imperialist States determines this ultra-Rightist "Comintern" line. "Public opinion" in this instance happens to be correct. Insofar as the present "Comintern" zigzag is concerned, it is actually determined by the needs of Stalin's foreign policy. But this is so for the first time in the history of the Stalinized "Comintern." The words "for the first time in history" may be puzzling to those who for many years have been hearing stories to the effect that Stalin's "Comintern" is only an adjunct of his foreign office, that the "Comintern" line is nothing but the direct product and the echo of Stalin's foreign policy. Nevertheless it is a fact that at no time prior to June 22, 1941, was the line of Stalin's "Comintern" the product of, or determined by, Stalin's foreign policy.

That those who prior to June 22nd were painting the "Comintern" line as a direct resultant of Stalin's foreign policy are distorters of reality can be clearly proved by an examination of the situation before the attack on the

Soviet Union. It will be recalled that at that time Stalin's foreign policy was oriented toward "friendship" with the German imperialists (Stalin-Hitler "Pact"). Towards the "democratic" imperialists, Stalin in his foreign policy put on an air of hostility. The "Comintern" was at that time off on a "Leftist" course, shouting about "imperialist war," raving against bourgeois-democracy, against the "united front," against Social-Democracy, in short, against all the features which the Stalinists in the preceding Popular Front zigzag of the 1935-1939 period had led the workers to support. To adduce a cause-and-effect relation between Stalin's "friendship" with German imperialism and the Leftist noise of the "Comintern" against "democracy" seemed logical enough. And yet this "logic" was wholly deceiving. Let us examine a few samples of this "logic" and see wherein it constituted a falsification of what was really taking place.

THE CANNONITE "POSITION"

THE Trotskyite leaders were among the most consistent protagonists of the story that the "Leftist" line of the "Comintern" prior to June 22nd was a direct outgrowth of Stalin's foreign policy, merely an aspect of that foreign policy. A very clear formulation to this effect is the fol-

lowing by Albert Goldman of the Socialist Workers Party:-

"The switch in Stalinist foreign policy symbolized by the Hitler-Stalin pact of August 1939 was naturally followed by a shift in the policies of the Communist parties. At that period also the connection between the policies of those parties and Stalin's foreign policy was quite clear. All the blame for the war was placed on Great Britain and France. The war was imperialist only so far as these two countries were concerned. Nothing was said about German imperialism. Stalin was out to help Hitler consolidate his first victories and to get peace." (The Militant, June 14, 1941, p. 6. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

This statement is unequivocal in its linking the "Comintern" line with Stalin's foreign policy. The "Comintern," according to the Trotskyists, put "All" blame on the Franco-British imperialists; it stated that: "the war was imperialist only" on the side of England and France; it said "nothing" against German imperialism. Goldman makes a direct cause-and-effect linkage between Stalin's "Pact" with Hitler and the "Comintern" line. But there is another feature to be noted in the Trotskyist analysis. While the S.W.P. leaders asserted that "Stalin was out to help Hitler consolidate his victories," they also wrote that Hitler's victories aroused fear in the Stalin gang which caused it later to shout about the imperialist nature of Germany. At first, however, according to the Trotskyists, only the "democratic" camp was denounced by the "Comintern." Here is how the S.W.P. paper puts it:-

"At first they placed the blame for the war exclusively on British imperialism; but after Hitler achieved his victories and threw the fear of the Lord into Stalin, they discovered that Hitler also was an imperialist." (The Militant, May 17, 1941, p. 6. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Is it true that at first there was this alleged direct cause-and-effect relation between the Stalin-Hitler "Pact" and the "Comintern" line? Did the "Comintern" denounce only and exclusively the "democratic" gang of imperialists? An investigation of the outpourings of the "Comintern" bureaucrats will provide the measure of the "accuracy" of the Trotskyist analysis.

Six days after the declaration of war on September 3, 1939, Browder stated in a speech:

"On the side of Nazi Germany, the imperialist character of the war is so crude, so brazen, so obvious, that for the overwhelming majority of all Americans it is taken for granted, without argument, as a matter of common knowledge." (The Second Imperialist War, abridged edition, p. 43.)

In the same speech, this "Comintern" spokesman cried:

"We can support neither one side nor the other in the imperialist war. The former distinction between the fascist and democratic nations has lost the meaning it once had, and is rapidly losing any serious political meaning at all." (Ibid. p. 53.)

Specifically denying that German imperialism had in any way changed its vicious character, Harry Gannes wrote less than two weeks later:

"Yes, German imperialism is what it always was, only in a more frenzied degree, wracked by its own inner crisis, just as British imperialism is what it always has been towards the U.S.S.R." (Daily Worker, September 20, 1939.)

An article dated October 1939 and written by Stalin's chief "Comintern" flunkey, Dimitroff, proclaims:

"Only the blind can fail to see, and only out-and-out charlatans and deceivers can deny, that the present war between Britain and France, on the one hand, and Germany on the

other, is being waged for colonies, sources of raw materials, for domination over sea routes, for the subjugation and exploitation of foreign peoples." (The War and the Working Class, p. 5. My emphasis — J. C. H.)

On November 13, 1939, still well within the "at first" period, Browder stated:-

"We Communists clearly and boldly denounce the present war as an imperialistic one, on both sides, from which the peoples have nothing to obtain but misery, starvation, oppression and death." (The Second Imperialist War, abridged edition, p. 79. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Eight days earlier, the Daily Worker carried a manifesto of the "Comintern" in which it was written:

"The blame for this war falls on all the capitalist governments!" (Nov. 5, 1939. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

On November 21, 1939, the Daily Worker extensively quoted a manifesto of the Young Communist International:

"'The German imperialists,' the manifesto continued, 'are hiding their imperialist designs from the German people and the German youth under the guise of a struggle 'to bring about socialism.'"

This is the "Comintern" line which the pro-Stalin workers saw. Does this line correspond in any way to the Trotskyist analysis? Not in the slightest degree! The fact of the matter is that from the very beginning of the so-called "Second World War" the declarations of the "Comintern" shrieked against the German imperialists, as well as against the Anglo-French.

THE SHACHTMANITE "POSITION"

THE Shachtmanites, going the Canonites one better, pretended that there was a cause-and-effect connection between the Stalin-Hitler Pact

and the "Comintern" line right up to the June 22nd invasion of the Soviet Union. We cite samples of this "position" from the Shachtmanite press:-

"The Stalinist parties, it goes without saying, do their part loyally for the Axis, concentrating all their attacks upon England and France, to the exclusion of Germany." (The New International, April 1940, p. 70. My emphasis — J.C.H.)

Referring to the American Stalinist Party, the Shachtmanites wrote:

"As the American agency of the Kremlin tyrant, its war policies are shaped according to the needs of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. That is to say, its anti-war agitation is not directed against the imperialist war, but merely against one side of this imperialist war." (Editorial, Labor Action, June 16, 1941. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

And even after the attack on the Soviet Union began, the Shachtmanite magazine reiterated this theme. Referring to the pre-June 22nd days, The New International states:-

"The Stalinist propaganda was neither anti-militarist nor anti-imperialist. It was opposed only to one camp in the war, the Anglo-American." (July 1941, p. 132. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

We have already shown that immediately after the September 3, 1939 declaration of war the "Comintern" bureaucrats talked against German imperialism as well as against the "democratic" gang. It is worthwhile to produce further statements taken from various periods since September 1939 to make it clear that the "Comintern" swindlers, contrary to the Shachtmanite "position," consistently made a "revolutionary" noise against the Nazi gang as well as against the "democratic," right up to the attack on the Soviet Union.

On January 13, 1940, W. Z. Foster declared in the Daily Worker:-

"Great Britain and France are fighting to defend and extend their great capitalist empires and Germany has a similar imperialist objective."

A March 1940 pamphlet issued by the Stalinist Workers Library Publishers contained the following:

"The imperialists on one side claim that they are waging an 'anti-fascist' war, and the imperialists on the other side that they are waging an 'anti-capitalist' war. But as a matter of fact both are waging a war for colonies, for sources of raw materials, for markets of cheap labor, a war for supremacy, a war on the masses and their most faithful champions, the Communists." (Ernst Fischer, Is This a War for Freedom? pp. 38-39. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Three months later a pamphlet by W.Z. Foster stated:

"All the great capitalist states, by their very nature, are to blame for the war." (What's What About the War, p.3. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

Let us skip through the wealth of evidence showing what the "Comintern" propaganda actually was, and come closer to June 22nd so as to have an end to the wearisome repetition of the Stalinist theme. A Stalinist pamphlet of April 1941 declares:

"The German imperialists who declare that they are fighting for a 'new and happy Europe' have established in the countries they have vanquished a shameful regime of violence, of frightful oppression, tyranny and plunder... The imperialist countries which were late for the previous division, or were done out of their share, such as Germany, Italy and Japan, prepared for this imperialist war to fight the most powerful colonial powers -- Great Britain and France -- for the possession of colonies." (Wilhelm Pieck, International Solidarity, pp. 5, 6. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

One more and the last. A Sunday Worker headline of June 15, 1941:

"Nazi 'New Order' Furthers Interest of Imperialist Monopolies, Robs and Despoils People in Draining Conquered Countries."

So much for the "Comintern" propaganda as it actually was - in contradistinction to the Camonite and Shachtmanite distortions -- and as it appeared in the eyes of the Stalinist workers who mistook it for a revolutionary line.

THE EFFECT OF THE TROTSKYITE DISTORTIONS

THE Trotskyite workers imagine that their leaders provide them with a Marxist analysis of Stalinism and a revolutionary line against this structure of counter-revolution. Yet it is an indisputable fact that the Trotskyite leaders, both Camonite and Shachtmanite, were feeding their followers a sheer distortion on the nature of the "Comintern" line and its source. In a system of rational and scientific thought, it is absolutely impossible organically to link the "Leftist" and "revolutionary" rumble of the Stalinized "Comintern" up to June 22nd with Stalin's foreign policy as symbolized by the Stalin-Hitler Pact. The Trotskyists spread the deception that the Pact with Hitler caused the "Comintern" bureaucrats to keep mum about German imperialism. Yet it is the very fact that the "Comintern" maintained a constant "anti-Nazi" hullabaloo, condemning the German imperialists as well as the "democratic," which provided the Stalinist workers with a point of seeming defense of the Pact. The Stalinist workers felt or argued thus: Yes, it is true that the Soviet Union has a Pact with Germany, but nevertheless the Comintern's "fight against Hitler fascism" continues unabated.

The "Comintern" propaganda which "struck" at both the "democratic" and the fascist imperialists confirmed the

Stalinist workers in their illusion that the "Comintern" was following the same path as it did when it was under Lenin's leadership. It is clear that the Trotskyist denial of the existence of the "anti-Nazi" rumpus raised by the Stalinist bureaucrats, which distorted the nature of the Stalinist maneuver, could not possibly provide either the Trotskyist or the Stalinist workers with a true understanding of the character and function of the treacherous Stalinist system. On the basis of such distortions, the anti-Stalinist class-conscious workers cannot conduct a Marxist struggle against Stalinism.

THE "COMINTERN" ZIGZAG SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

WE have dealt so far only with the last "Leftist" maneuver of the "Comintern." In order to grasp the meaning of the "Comintern" zigzag method as a whole as well as the significance of each individual zigzag, the ultra-Rightist and ultra-Leftist maneuvers must be examined in the historical order of their appearance and in their relation to the essence of Stalinism.

The Communist International fell into the clutches of the Stalinist usurpers in the years 1921-22. The first ultra-Rightist line was officially sanctioned at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (1922) and embodied in the slogan of "Workers Government." This line was one of support to non-Communist, i.e., bourgeois governments. (See the Resolution and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, pp. 32-35.) In Germany in 1923, to single out a crucial case, this led to a coalition government of Social-democrats and Stalinists in Saxony and Thuringia, a government based on the bourgeois parliamentary State. Though the capitalist system, due to the revolutionary crisis it labored under, was on the brink of destruction in Germany in 1923, it was saved because of the fact that the German proletarian vanguard followed

the ultra-Rightist Stalinist line of support to the bourgeois-democratic government. When the betrayal of the German revolution was assured through the workings of the ultra-Rightist zigzag, the Stalinist bureaucrats, in order to cover up their treachery and stranglehold on the workers, launched an ultra-Leftist zigzag. Particularly during the period of the 5th "Comintern" Congress in the year 1924, the "Comintern" pursued a mixed line, partly ultra-Leftist, partly ultra-Rightist, after which it was again pushed to an ultra-Rightist zigzag in 1925.

What was the relation of the Stalinist foreign policy to these "Comintern" maneuvers? The Stalinist bureaucrats had "friendly" relations with the German imperialists, the keystone of Stalinist foreign policy in that period, during both ultra-Rightist and ultra-Leftist zigzags of the "Comintern." "Logic" might have it that the 1923 Rightist zigzag was the result of "friendly" relations with the "democratic" German Republic and that, generally speaking, the "Comintern" maneuvers of the Stalinists were determined by their foreign policy, but this "logic" collapses in the face of the ultra-Leftist maneuver perpetrated during this same period of a foreign policy oriented on "democratic" Germany.

The Leftist zigzags of the Stalinized "Comintern" can never be made to jibe with Stalinist foreign policy. This was true in 1924 as well as in 1940-41. Seen in its totality, the policy of the Stalinized "Comintern" will be understood to be derived from something other than Stalin's foreign policy.

From 1924 to 1927, the "Comintern" followed an ultra-Rightist line. The focal points of Stalinist treachery on the international scene during this period were in England and in China. In England, during the General Strike in 1926, the Stalinist bureaucrats bound the advanced workers to the reformist trade union fakers. Working hand-in-glove, the Stalinists and reformists sold out the masses to the imperial-

ists. During the gigantic social upheaval in China in the years 1925-1927, the Stalinist bureaucrats in direct collaboration with the bourgeoisie drowned the revolutionary toilers in blood. Unity with the counter-revolutionary Chiang Kai-shek was the Stalinist line of that period. To conceal their tracks, the Stalinist leaders in 1927 cunningly switched the "Comintern" to an ultra-Leftist zigzag. This second ultra-Leftist maneuver of the Stalinist line lasted up to 1933-1934. It came to be known as the "Third Period."

Again, the question must be raised concerning the relation, if any, of Stalin's foreign policy to these "Comintern" maneuvers. During the entire period from 1922-1923 to 1933, Stalinist foreign policy was centered around "friendly" relations with the German imperialists. The "Comintern" had four zigzags during this period, — Rightist in 1921-23, Leftist in 1923-24, Rightist in 1924-27 and Leftist in 1927-33, — yet Stalin's foreign policy remained the same.

During the whole of the "Third Period" uproar of 1928-33, Stalin continued his "friendly" relations with German imperialism which was then employing a "democratic" form of rule. Moreover, it was precisely in Germany that this ultra-Leftist zigzag reached its broadest and wildest stage. By no stretch of the imagination could this "Comintern" line be described as an adjunct or a result of Stalin's foreign policy. In its formal aspects, it operated against Stalin's foreign policy, which was to make secure "friendly" relations with the German bourgeoisie. Fundamentally, however, as far as Stalinist-imperialist relations are concerned, it makes no difference whatever in what direction the "Comintern" zigzag leans. The imperialists understand the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism. They are not in the least troubled by any "revolutionary" noise the "Comintern" emits, for they realize that the "Comintern" line in all its phases is a life-saver of imperialism. During the ultra-Leftist "Third Period" rumpus of 1928-33, there was a veritable blossoming of profitable exchange

between Stalin and the German imperialists. In 1931 there was the greatest amount of trade between Russia and Germany since the World War. Early in that year a trade agreement was signed between Stalin's diplomats and German imperialists, the latter granting the Soviet Union a credit of 300,000,000 marks. A tariff agreement of that year reduced the German duty on a number of Soviet products and put some of them on the free entry list. While the "Comintern" frauds, the Thaelmanns, the Piecks, the Muenzenbergs and the Renneles, were daily "overthrowing" German capitalism, the German imperialists from 1931 to 1933 quite willingly supplied from 36 to 46 percent of Soviet imports. In 1932, German-Russian trade amounted to an aggregate of more than 1,000,000,000 marks.

During this ultra-Leftist period of the "Comintern" when the Stalinist bureaucrats were calling the pacifists and reformists by the epithet, social-fascist, Stalin was the first to sign the pacifist Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact (August 27, 1928). So little causal connection was there between Stalin's foreign policy and the "Comintern" line!

In 1933-34, the "Comintern" began to switch to an ultra-Rightist maneuver which after a while became known as the Popular Front. What was the reason for this change? The reason was the same as in the case of every previous alteration in "Comintern" zigzag, namely, the need of the Stalinist bureaucrats to cover up their treacherous tracks. The ultra-Leftist "Third Period" line had achieved its purpose of paralyzing and betraying the workers. With Hitler's advent to power, there occurred a big exodus from the ranks of the "Comintern." Thousands of workers were bitterly disappointed with, and alienated from, the "Comintern" leadership. Stalin and his henchmen, who bore the chief responsibility for Hitler's victory, had to utilize some self-protective devices lest they lose their hold on their victims. Regardless of what Stalin's foreign policy was or might come to be in the future, the "Third Period" noise had to be dropped in order to prevent

the collapse of Stalin's "Comintern" and thus of his domination in the proletarian vanguard. Stalin had to feed his victims some different kind of demagogy. The ensuing ultra-Rightist, Popular Front line was the method by which Stalin pulled himself out of this dangerous situation.

When Hitler came to power on January 31, 1933, Stalin tried to con-tinue his old foreign policy of "friendship" with Germany, but on the other hand, he immediately began to alter the "Comintern" zigzag. Let us examine the progression of events in some detail to see the actual functioning of the "Comintern" and of Stalin's foreign policy, as differentiated from the myths that have been spread about them.

Stalin tried to continue his "friendly" relations with the German imperialists after Hitler came to power just as in the days of the "democratic" German Republic. Stalin's emissaries were plying Hitler with offers of a "collective security" pact. Stalin declared that he did not consider a fascist regime in Germany as an obstacle to having "friendly" relations with the German imperialists, for, said Stalin, have we not had "very good relations" with fascist Italy. In his report to the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U. in January 1934, a year after the Nazis had been ushered into power, Stalin stated:-

"Of course, we are far from being enthusiastic about the fascist regime in Germany. But fascism is not the issue here, if only for the reason that fascism, for example, in Italy, did not prevent the U.S.S.R. from establishing very good relations with that country." (Imprecorr, February 13, 1934, p. 237.)

It was not he, but the German imperialists who changed their foreign policy, Stalin explained:

"The point is that the policy of Germany has changed." (Ibid.)

During the same month in which Stalin delivered this report, Baron von Neu-

rath, the Nazi foreign minister, rejected Stalin's offer of a "collective security" pact (see The New York Times January 14, 1934). Stalin was compelled to look elsewhere for new "friends" amongst the imperialists. After some dickering the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance pact was signed in May 1935. The "collective security" pact, first offered to Hitler, was now painted up by Stalin as a way of "fighting fascism."

It will be recalled that during the "Third Period" of 1928-33 the Stalinist bureaucrats were conducting a violent, pogrom-like policy toward the Social-democrats, with whom they had had direct collaboration during the previous Rightist zigzag. Making scapegoats of their former partners-in-crime, the Stalinists howled that the Social-democrats were social-fascists and that no "united front" with them was possible. This line of ferociously Leftist-sounding demagogy was dropped officially by the "Comintern" almost immediately upon the disruption of the revolutionary situation in Germany. In March 1933, the "Comintern" talked "united front" to the Second International. With the usual "revolutionary" hullabaloo as a protective preface, the "Comintern" agreed to collaboration with the Second International, and as a guarantee that these two criminal organizations would be able to work together in harmony, the Stalinist leaders stated that "the E.C.C.I. considers it possible to recommend the Communist Parties during the time of common fight against capitalism and fascism -- [this is the Stalinist lingo for common treachery to the masses - J.C.H.] -- to refrain from making attacks on Social-democratic organizations" (Daily Worker, March 18, 1933). With this offer to drop the "Third Period," ultra-Leftist "warfare" on Social-democracy, the ultra-Rightist line which later came to be called the Popular Front was ushered in.

The Stalinist bureaucrats maneuvered their way to the extreme ultra-Rightist policies of the Popular Front very gradually and cautiously so as not to startle their followers in the

proletarian vanguard who in five years had become accustomed to ultra-Leftist tirades. Later on, this Stalinist "united front" included not only the Social-democrats, but also the bourgeois-democrats, trade union reformists and Liberals, the imperialist politicians of several countries, and at one time even hinted at including the Pope and the Italian and Greek fascists. Throughout the world, the March 1933 declaration of the E.C.C.I. inaugurated a deluge of "united front" offers from the various sections of the "Comintern." On March 30, 1933, the Browder gang announced that "the Communist Party is ready to sincerely agree to withhold all attacks upon Socialists" (Daily Worker). These antics were continued internationally until a "united front" was officially perpetrated between the Stalinist and Social-Democratic Parties of France (July 1934) and of Italy (August 1934) (See Labour Monthly, October 1934, pp. 621-626). By the middle of 1934, therefore, it is clear that the Stalinist was well on the way of its third ultra-Rightist maneuver.

Thus it can be observed that in 1933-34 the "Comintern" line was changing from ultra-Leftist to ultra-Rightist without any change in Stalin's foreign policy,—indeed, without even any intention on Stalin's part to change his foreign policy. We have stated the real reason for the alteration in "Comintern" zigzag from the "Third Period" to the "Popular Front," and we repeat it:—the need of Stalin and his bureaucrats to cover up their "Third Period" treachery, to save their face before the workers, to retain their stranglehold on their victims by the introduction of some different form of demagogy. This need had to be fulfilled no matter what Stalin's foreign policy was. If the German imperialists had not changed their foreign policy, then the ultra-Rightist line which followed and could not but follow, the "Third Period" uproar would have unfolded to the accompaniment of "friendly" diplomatic relations between Stalin and the Nazi government. It was only the fact that Stalin's

compact with the "democratic" French imperialists (May 1935) and the persuasiveness of the Popular Front zigzag happened at the same time which lent credence to the deceptive story that the "Comintern" maneuvers are determined by Stalin's foreign policy. The fundamental historic progression of "Comintern" zigzags has its own organic laws and, with the already mentioned exception of the most recent "Comintern" zigzags which began June 22, 1941, is not causally related to Stalin's foreign policy. Sometimes the "Comintern" line seemed to parallel Stalin's foreign policy, sometimes it did not. Only the Rightist maneuvers of the "Comintern" can appear to coincide with Stalin's foreign policy, never the Leftist. And in the case of the Rightist zigzags, the cause-and-effect relationship which seems to exist between Stalin's foreign policy and the "Comintern" line is merely the illusory product of temporal coincidence.

At the end of the Spanish Civil War early in 1939, the Popular Front zigzag had outlived its usefulness to Stalinism. Gigantic betrayals of the workers had been effected through this ultra-Rightist maneuver, most notably in Spain and France. Again the Stalinist bureaucrats were faced with the danger of intense dissatisfaction and resentment in the ranks of the "Comintern." Once more, Stalin and his gang had to engage in cunning twists and turns to preserve their power and prestige among the workers. Stalin's foreign policy for the time being continued to be oriented toward "friendship" with the "democratic" imperialists, but nevertheless toward the end of 1938 and the beginning of 1939, the line of the "Comintern" began to switch to a Leftist zigzag. Again fierce noise against Social-democracy began to appear in the "Comintern" propaganda. As usual, the switch in "Comintern" zigzag was executed cautiously and discreetly by the wily bureaucrats. In order to conceal their own criminal role in the vast betrayals of the Popular Front period, the Stalinist bureaucrats strove to make scapegoats of their erstwhile partners-in-crime, the Social-democrats,

and of as many other tendencies as possible. At the 18th Party Congress in the Soviet Union in March 1939, Manuilsky, pretending to be sizzling with righteous indignation, raised the question of whether the Spanish workers could have been victorious, and answered, yes—

"But the capitulators of the Second International did not want this to happen, because they fear the victory of the People's Front more than they fear the victory of fascism." (Daily Worker, March 13, 1939.)

This was already a far cry from the days of the Popular Front when the Manuilskys were agreeing "to refrain from making attacks on Social-Democratic organizations." In various countries, the Leftist line was developed in accordance with the conditions of the immediate situation. In some of the Balkan countries the Stalinists launched a number of adventures. In England and the United States the unfolding of the Leftist line was much slower.

In August 1939 there was signed the Stalin-Hitler Pact, signifying a change in Stalin's foreign policy. Nevertheless, the "Anti-Hitler" rumpus of the "Comintern" bureaucrats continued during the whole period of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. So little was the "Comintern" line the product of Stalin's foreign policy!

A very important part of Stalinist demagogy is the pretense of leading a fight against fascism. At all times, regardless of what the "Comintern" zigzag may be or what foreign policy Stalin may be pursuing, the "Comintern" demagogues are compelled to continue their "Anti-Fascist" tirades. Without seeming to be "fighting fascism" at all times, they could not possibly win the support of the vanguard workers who form the basis of their organizations. This is another factor giving rise to the contradiction between Stalin's "Comintern" line which included noise against Hitler, and Stalin's foreign policy which contained a pact with Hitler. To the

duped workers, followers of Stalin, of course, there was no contradiction, for to them the pact with Hitler was not a pro-Hitler affair but merely a matter of "defending the Soviet Union," while the "anti-Hitler" phrases of the "Comintern" were simply a continuation of the "Anti-Fascist" battle which they imagine the "Comintern" had been waging all along.

WHY THE PRESENT RIGHTIST ZIGZAG

AS we have indicated at the beginning of this article, the third Leftist zigzag of the "Comintern" (1939-41) was dropped immediately upon the attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 and a fourth ultra-Rightist line was launched. The Leftist line which the "Comintern" had been pursuing prior to June 22nd had not yet had the opportunity to effect some epoch-making betrayal, as, for example, the one in 1928-33 when the "Third Period" maneuver opened Hitler's path to power, or like the one which the Popular Front line consummated in Spain in 1936-39. The Leftist line of 1939-41 had not yet had the occasion to result in dissatisfaction amongst the Stalinist workers to such an extent as to endanger Stalin's hold on them. Therefore, from this angle, Stalin was not compelled to drop the pre-June 22nd "Comintern" line. That line, in fact, was still quite acceptable to the advanced workers supporting the "Comintern" for it had a strong "revolutionary" coloration, generally speaking, and seemed to the Stalinist workers to be quite promising of good results. The change to the fourth Rightist zigzag can be attributed only to the change in Stalin's foreign policy. Such a basis for a change in "Comintern" line, as we have said, has no precedent in the history of Stalinism. How is this anomalous situation to be accounted for? Several factors enter into the explanation.

For the moment, in the Stalinist bureaucrats' struggle for self-preservation, everything recedes in significance before the colossal problems raised by the imperialist attack on the Soviet Union. In previous periods the

chief immediate menace to the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy was the danger of proletarian revolution which, regardless of where it originated, would threaten to spread and destroy Stalinism in its main stronghold, the Soviet Union. To crush the revolutionary impulses of the proletariat, the Stalinist bureaucrats have been using the "Comintern" with its counter-revolutionary zigzag method. The threat of an imperialist attack existed only in a general sense. Hence, in those conditions the most vital guiding line of the Stalinist bureaucracy in its utilization of the "Comintern" has been the paralyzing of the masses. Each "Comintern" zigzag was instituted and abandoned solely for the purpose of misleading the workers and retaining the Stalinist stranglehold on them. This was so even when a particular "Comintern" zigzag seemed to stand in opposition to Stalin's foreign policy. When an imperialist attack was merely a general threat, Stalin could well afford such tactics.

At the present time, on the other hand, the danger of proletarian revolution exists for Stalin mainly in a general sense, while the immediate threat is from the imperialist armies which have already advanced hundreds of miles into crucial territories of the Soviet Union. With the threat of imperialist attack becoming concrete, everything in the international operations of Stalinism must be subordinated to Stalin's foreign policy. Stalin kills two birds with one stone. By connecting the "Comintern" line with his foreign policy, Stalin reinforces the latter while in no way lessening the effectiveness of the "Comintern" as his international engine of counter-revolution.

It does not follow from the above-outlined factors that the line of the "Comintern" can never again be at variance — in formal aspects only, not in reactionary content — with Stalin's foreign policy. Stalin's alliance with the "democratic" imperialists is a sham one, for the latter have not the slightest intention of seeing the Soviet Union victorious over Hitler Germany. Indeed, the aim

of all the imperialists, regardless of their form of rule, is to bring about the destruction of the Soviet Union by the Nazi armed forces. If the situation in the Soviet Union continues to approach closer to final disaster in the shape of growing Nazi victories, the Stalinist pretenses of having the support of the "democracies" will wear thin, and it may become necessary for Stalin to alter the "Comintern" line. Life itself will show the workers that the "democracies" have not the least intention of putting up any genuine stumbling blocks against Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union. Stalin's pro-democracy demagogy may lose its effectiveness with the workers, and something Leftist may have to be put in its stead. In desperation, Stalin may even resort to putsches and adventures in the capitalist countries. In that case, since Stalin will always have the policy of trying to lean toward some group or other of the imperialists, the "Comintern" line may again be in contradiction with Stalin's foreign policy. Precisely how this situation may develop cannot, of course, be foreseen. It is essential, however, for the workers to be forewarned lest they mistake some future Leftist maneuver of the "Comintern" for a revolutionary line. The unalteringly counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism must be known to the workers no matter how skillfully it is camouflaged with "revolutionary" noise, otherwise it will be impossible for the proletarian vanguard to be freed from Stalinist bondage.

THE REAL SOURCE OF THE "COMINTERN" POLICIES

FOREIGN policy is only a continuation of internal policy; the latter is basic, the former is only its reflection. The real source of the Stalinized "Comintern" policies must be sought in the most basic aspects of Stalinism. To understand the origin of the bureaucratized "Comintern's" policies for the whole two decades of its existence, the origin of Stalinism itself and its essen-

tial nature must be known.

Stalinism originated as a bureaucratic degeneration of a large section of the Bolshevik leadership of the first workers State. Possession of enormous personal power during the years of the Civil War corrupted the outlook of these leaders and they became prey to that malignant political disease, the craving for personal, autocratic, permanent power. From leaders of the revolutionary masses they were converted into plotters for entrenched bureaucratic domination. The unfolding of the revolution eventually leads to the withering away of all forms of political power. The degenerated party tops came to fear the extension of the revolution as a threat to their entrenched bureaucratic power and embarked on a policy of counter-revolution to safeguard their bureaucratic interests. The definitive forms of the Stalinist counter-revolution put in their appearance in the years 1921-22. *

The bureaucratically degenerated leaders in 1921-22 transformed the Comintern into an agency for the defense of their usurped power. The Comintern was refashioned into an instrument to prevent proletarian revolution wherever it might threaten. The bureaucrats understood well the international nature of the proletarian revolution and realized that, regardless of where in the capitalist world it might burst forth, it would spread its mighty liberating impulse to their "homeland" and terminate their bureaucratic self-aggrandizement. The counter-revolutionary character of the bureaucratized "Comintern" was thus derived from the treacherous internal policies of the renegade usurpers. In foregoing parts, we have sketched the series of betrayals they perpetrated beginning with the period 1922-23 through the ultra-Rightist and ultra-Leftist zigzags of the "Comintern." The zigzag method of the "Comintern"

is the technique of counter-revolution utilized deliberately and consciously by the usurpers from the very beginning of their renegacy.

THE EARLIER LINE ON STALIN'S

"COMINTERN"

FROM the beginning of the Stalinization of the "Comintern" to 1933-34, Trotsky and his lieutenants called for workingclass support to the "Comintern," at first without even a pretense of "criticism" and later with the fraudulent "criticism" integral to Trotsky's politics in the epoch of Stalinism. During the first Stalinist Rightist zigzag, that of 1922-23, Trotsky supported the Stalinist policies out-and-out. Thus, neither in that past period nor at any time later, did Trotsky ever expose the reactionary character of the thesis of the Fourth Comintern Congress which offered support to a non-Communist, i.e., a bourgeois government (see above for the source-reference to this thesis). Indeed, to the end, Trotsky unswervingly declared that he stands upon the first four Congresses of the Comintern. The Declaration of Principles of the S.W.P. states that the principles upon which it is said to rest "have been concretized in the basic documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International" (p. 11). To this day, therefore, the Trotsky movement palms off support to a bourgeois government as a "Leninist" principle. When in October 1923 the German Stalinists, Brandler, Boettcher and Thalheimer, entered the bourgeois parliamentary government of Saxony, Trotsky supported this treacherous Rightist maneuver and even had the brazenness to equate the Social-democratic-Stalinist government of Saxony which rested on a bourgeois State with the revolutionary Soviet government which Lenin and the Bolsheviks, with Left S.R. minority participation, established in Russia after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. (See Trotsky's speech to the Metal Workers Conference in Moscow, reported in Izvestia, October 21, 1923 and in The Worker, U.S.A., December 1, 1923.)

* Material demonstrating the origin and development of the Stalinist reaction will be found in the various issues of THE BULLETIN and in articles published under separate cover.

When the renegade usurpers, in line with the Rightist "Comintern" zigzag, tricked the Chinese workers into supporting the bourgeois Kuomintang and camouflaged this trickery with demagogic pretenses of "revolutionizing" the Kuomintang, Trotsky echoed the Stalinist fakery faithfully:- "We approve of Communist support to the Kuomintang Party in China, which we are endeavoring to revolutionize." (Leon Trotsky, Inprecorr, May 29, 1924.)

As the efforts of the Stalin clique to oust Trotsky from power grew more intense, Trotsky, for obvious self-protective reasons, had to couple his support to Stalin's policies with "criticism." More and more, Trotsky took to shouting that the Stalinist bureaucrats were "confused revolutionists." This was his "criticism," the form of his deception during that past period. Wherein lay the deception? The Stalinist bureaucrats were not revolutionists of any sort, but were counter-revolutionists who feared proletarian revolution as a threat to their usurped bureaucratic power. The reactionary nature of their policies was derived not from "confusion," but from their fear of proletarian revolution and their deliberate efforts to prevent it. Only by concealing the consciously counter-revolutionary purpose and intent of the Stalinist leaders, could Trotsky delude his followers with the mirage of "correcting" the Stalinist "Comintern."

During the period from his exile to 1933-34, Trotsky kept up his yarn about the Stalinist leaders being "confused revolutionists". He continued to call for supporting and strengthening the "Comintern." This was the period when Trotsky and his lieutenants called themselves a "faction of the Comintern." In this period the Trotskyist leaders were issuing such monstrous lies as this one:- "One party alone represents the interests of the proletariat in this election: the Communist Party." (The Militant, July 9, 1932.) This was issued, as can be observed, during the "Third Period" zigzag, the treacherous maneuver of Stalinism which opened Hitler's path to power. With his

egging the workers on to vote for the Thaelmanns and Fosters, whose counter-revolutionary Parties he pretended "represent the interests of the proletariat," Trotsky acted as a bulwark of Stalinism.

During the whole "Third Period," which coincided with the first five years of Trotsky's exile, it was of course out of the question for Trotsky to try to hinge the "Comintern" line upon Stalin's foreign policy. This form of sham criticism could not be used at that time. No one in his right mind could possibly be gotten to believe that the wild, ultra-Leftist, "Third Period" line was supposed to be a support to Stalin's efforts to dicker in "friendship" with this or that gang of imperialists.

After the hideous, Stalinist-engineered victory of Hitler in January 1933, it became impossible for Trotsky to go on indefinitely shouting for the strengthening, and "correcting," of the "Comintern." Trotsky gradually dropped his story about "correcting the Comintern." At first Trotsky called for a "new Party" only in Germany and China, but with the passage of time, he generalized this new slogan.

TROTSKY'S ATTITUDE DURING THE TRANSITION TO THE POPULAR FRONT

MEANWHILE, as we have shown above, the Stalinist bureaucrats in 1933-1934 were cautiously switching the "Comintern" over to the third ultra-Rightist zigzag, the Popular Front. The first symptom of the swing to the ultra-Rightist zigzag was the formation of the "united front" conspiracy between the Stalinist and Social-democratic bureaucrats in several countries. Agreeing to drop the "Third Period" practice of talking against each other, the criminal leaders of these two opportunist organizations entered into a plot to cooperate directly in betraying the masses. This was palmed off on the workers under the demagogic label, "united front."

How did the Trotsky leadership greet this Stalinist maneuver?

When the information that the Stalinist bureaucrats were talking "united front" was first issued publicly, the Trotskyist leaders greeted it with a loud hurrah. A headline in The Militant of March 8, 1933 (p. 1) announced: "Communist International Changes Policy." In the body of the article it was stated:

"The Left Opposition enthusiastically welcomes the turn!"

The Trotskyists "complained" that the Stalinist turn to the "united front" was half-hearted and incomplete and was accompanied by efforts of the Stalinist bureaucrats to appear infallible. But barring these bad features, declared the Trotskyists, the "united front" then being engineered by the Stalinists was all to the good as far as the interest of the working class was concerned. The Trotskyists uttered not a word revealing that the "united front" maneuver was only another form of Stalinist treachery, a subtle trick of the Stalinist bureaucrats to cover up their past crimes and prepare for future betrayals. Indeed, during this period when the Trotskyists were "enthusiastically welcoming" the launching of the Stalinist "united front" Cannon and his colleagues actually issued a demand that the Trotskyist "Left Opposition" be readmitted to the "Comintern" (The Militant, March 18, 1933). This call to be taken back into the "Comintern," it should be carefully noted, was made after the gigantic Stalinist betrayal in Germany culminating in the Nazi rise to power was already consummated.

When the Stalinist "united front" conspiracy was perpetrated in France, Trotsky in the course of a discussion of the French situation wrote in the following vein:

"We are ever ready to sincerely acclaim every step the Stalinists take on the correct road." (Whither France, p. 26.)

Painting a rosy future for the workers

who were being trapped by this fraudulent "united front," Trotsky declared:

"We have already said that the united front of the Socialist and Communist Parties embodies immense possibilities." (Ibid. p. 43.)

Carrying this line of deception to its logical conclusion, Trotsky called for a Blum-Cachin ministry:-

"The aim of the united front can only be a government of the united front, i.e., a Socialist-Communist government, a Blum-Cachin ministry." (Ibid., p. 44.)

What, in reality, were the immense possibilities embodied in a Blum-Cachin ministry? Trotsky, of course, was not ignorant of what such a "united front" government meant for the workers. More than a decade before, in 1923 in Saxony and Thuringia, there were such "united front" governments composed of Social-democratic and Stalinist ministers. Trotsky was well aware of how these "united front" governments acted to paralyze and betray the masses. His pro-Stalinist deceptions concerning the proposed Blum-Cachin ministry were only echoes of his earlier deceptions concerning the actual Zeigner-Brandler ministry in Saxony.

The Trotskyite workers themselves were very much shocked by Hitler's coming to power through the treachery of the Stalinist leaders. Trotsky, as well as Stalin, was faced with the necessity of shifting his line. Trotsky could no longer peddle his old story of trying to "correct" the Stalinist bureaucrats. The formation of the Stalinist-Social-democratic so-called "united front" in France and elsewhere, and especially the ensuing Franco-Soviet Pact, led Trotsky to the idea of presenting the "Comintern" line as the product of Stalin's foreign policy. This cry became a major part of Trotsky's new "criticism."

This new form of deception served Trotsky several ways. First, it enabled him to shift from the previous, and now outworn, deception that the

Stalinist bureaucrats are "confused revolutionists" and that the "Communist Party" must be corrected. Trotsky now had a new, but equally false, "criticism." Secondly, it enabled him to continue concealing the fundamental truth about the "Comintern," namely, that since the beginning of Stalinism, its reactionary policies were the product of fear of proletarian revolution as a threat to the usurped bureaucratic interests, that the treacherous zigzag policies of the Stalinized "Comintern" were always the technique used deliberately by the bureaucrats to disrupt revolution. Workers who understand that Stalinism is based on reactionary material interests will realize that a yarn about "correcting" the Stalinist organizations is as fantastic as one about "correcting" the bourgeois organizations. Such workers will understand that for many years Trotsky, who spread the illusory hope that the "Comintern" could be corrected and should meanwhile be supported, was simply deceiving the workers into supporting the Stalinist counter-revolution, that his entire "analysis" of the Stalinist bureaucrats as "confused revolutionists" was a myth and a trap for the workers. This understanding will impel workers to study the entire history of Stalinism, a study which opens the path for an understanding of Trotsky's pro-Stalinist role. But if workers accept the Trotskyist fable about the "Comintern" line being the product of Stalin's foreign policy — we are speaking of the six years prior to the June 22nd attack on the Soviet Union — their mind will be tied to the immediate present at each stage, and thus they will not be impelled to study the whole history of Stalinism. With such a distorted view, they will never come to a true grasp of the reactionary part played by Trotsky in the Stalinist epoch.

CONCLUSION

WHAT is the prospect that the Trotskyist leaders hold for their followers? More support to the

Stalinist bureaucrats — of course, covered up with more "criticism." Goldman explicitly offers such a prospect:

"We can even whisper to our critics that if we deemed it advisable and of benefit to our party and consequently to the working class we would not hesitate to give critical support to Browder running on the Communist Party ticket." (The Militant, March 15, 1941, p. 4.)

Support to the Stalinist bureaucrats can be painted up as of benefit to the working class only by a sham "anti-Stalinist" tendency. The Trotskyist workers should evaluate Goldman's statement in light of the results of the pre-1933 "critical support" that Trotsky and Company gave to the Stalinist organizations which they palmed off as "representing the interests of the proletariat." This support to the Stalinist bureaucrats, the main betrayers in the ranks of the proletariat, helped open the path for Hitler. The "criticism," sham in itself, with which the Trotskyist leaders accompany their urging of support to the Stalinists, is a trick, a device to make palatable support to what the Trotskyist workers know to be a system of counter-revolution.

The enlightened revolutionary workers will give no support whatever to the Stalinist bureaucrats! They will break with the Trotskyist opportunists who parade as fighters against Stalinism and imperialism while in reality foisting on the workers a line of support to the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy, and, in consequence, to the bourgeoisie.

J. C. Hunter

October 11, 1941

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

SHACHTMAN FAILS TO
FINISH A STORY

UPON the death of Lenin in the beginning of 1924, the Stalin clique and its supporters plunged into a vast maneuver to pack the Bolshevik party with hundreds of thousands of hand picked flunkys and backward elements. A huge "recruiting drive," demagogically called the "Lenin Levy," or "Lenin recruiting" was inaugurated by Stalin and Company for the purpose of creating a broad bureaucratic base in the Party on which to rest their usurped power.

In an article written to commemorate the first anniversary of Trotsky's death, Max Shachtman finds occasion to quote one of Trotsky's references to the reactionary nature of the "Lenin Levy":

"You know that it threw open the party in its spurious "Lenin levy" to a tremendous influx of hundreds of thousands of raw, untrained people, who constituted thereafter the big voting blocs of the bureaucracy. The party was diluted and finally disintegrated by the Bonapartists by precisely this method." (Labor Action, Aug. 25, 1941, p. 3.)

That the Stalinist conspirators corrupted and undermined the party by this maneuver is, of course, indubitable. The "Lenin Levy" or recruiting of 1924 consolidated the hold of the Stalinist bureaucrats by opening the hitherto carefully guarded gates of the party to people who were committed in advance to support Stalin. The full import of the reactionary, anti-

Leninist nature of this Stalinist move can be seen when one studies the stringent regulations insisted upon by Lenin as conditions for party membership and his reasons for the same in his proposals to the Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P. (See "Two Notes to V. M. Molotov," V. I. Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. IX, pages 320-323.)

Trotsky, many years after the "Lenin Levy" quite correctly pointed out that it dealt a death blow to the party of Lenin:

"By freeing the bureaucracy from the control of the proletarian vanguard the 'Leninist levy' dealt a death blow to the party of Lenin." (Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed, 1937, p. 98.)

Trotsky fostered the illusion that he fought against the Stalinist degeneration of the Bolshevik Party. When his followers in 1937 read his attacks on the "Lenin levy" they were given the impression that in the concrete situation in 1924 Trotsky fought against the "Lenin levy." In the article by Shachtman mentioned above, Trotsky is referred to as one who fought against the Stalinist development. It is within this context that Shachtman repeats Trotsky's words stigmatizing the reactionary Stalinist nature of the so-called "Lenin recruiting" of 1924.

Let us look a bit deeper into the story of the "Lenin Levy" and conclude the incomplete tale told by Trotsky and the Shachtmans. At the 13th Cong-

ress of the R.C.P. held in May 1924, the "Lenin recruiting" was demagogically characterized in the following manner by Stalin:

"Such facts as the discussion and the Leninist recruiting - there is no need of proving this - are the greatest events in the country and in the party... our party, having taken in two hundred thousand new members with the will and consent of the entire working class, is in fact an elective party, an elective organ of the working class." (Pravda, May 27, 1924.)

Stalin made this speech at the evening session of May 24, 1924. And how did Trotsky, the alleged fighter against the Stalinist corruption of the Party, combat Stalin's brazen fakery about the "Lenin recruiting"? Trotsky spoke after Stalin at the day session on May 26th. Here is Trotsky's statement on the "Lenin recruiting":

"Without doubt, the Leninist recruiting, AS HAS BEEN CORRECTLY STATED HERE, has brought our party closer to being an elective party." (Pravda, May 27, 1924. My capitals - A.B.)

This was a direct echo, an almost verbatim echo of Stalin's demagogy. "As has been correctly stated here," said Trotsky, carrying the workers' mind back to Stalin's speech. Hand in glove with Stalin, Trotsky "dealt a death blow to the party of Lenin."

Trotsky did not confine himself simply to affirming the Stalinist demagogy. In a speech to the workers at Baku a month prior to the 13th Congress, on the occasion of the Stalinist drive to pack the party with hand-picked Stalinist supporters, Trotsky spoke of the fake "Lenin recruiting" as reflecting a genuine

democratic worker a:

"When the workingclass reacts to the death of its leader in such manner that Baku gives 9,500 new party members - this is the highest voting; this is not parliamentary charlatanism, not parliamentary deception, but a genuine democratic workers voice." (Pravda, April 15, 1924.)

The fact that Trotsky supported this Stalinist maneuver is the crucial point that Trotsky and the Shachtmans conceal in their stories about the "Lenin Levy." When the story is complete one can see that Trotsky supported Stalin in his drive to bureaucratize the Bolshevik Party.

There are those who argue that Trotsky made mistakes in his alleged fight against the Stalinist degeneration, ostensibly putting such matters as support to Stalin's "Lenin levy" into the category of "blunders." The implication of such argument is that Trotsky was honest but not entirely clear. However, it doesn't require a profound grasp to realize that if Trotsky had been honest he would have admitted that such action was wrong. What do we find Trotsky doing, on the other hand? Trotsky not only did not state that his support to the Stalinist machination which dealt a death blow to Lenin's party was wrong, but on the contrary, concealed his own role, and, moreover, pursued a policy of fostering the false notion that he fought against the Stalinist degeneration.

Shachtman, of course, in his usual unprincipled way, covers up and helps keep alive this Trotskyist deception.

Arthur Burke
October 2, 1941