

T H E **BULLETIN**

THE ISSUE OF THE SECOND FRONT

1. Cannon "Unravels" the Imperialist Policy
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3. Africa—No Second Front

By **GEORGE MARLEN**

TROTSKYITES VOTE "INDEPENDENT"

By **J. C. HUNTER**

R.W.L.'S REPLY TO CRITICISM

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

1. "GERMANY IS NOT ITALY"
2. WHY EASTMAN AND NOT TROTSKY

THE RED STAR PRESS

P. O. BOX 67 STATION D

NEW YORK

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THE ISSUE OF THE SECOND FRONT

CANNON "UNRAVELS" THE IMPERIALIST POLICY

UNQUESTIONABLY, by knowing the precise reason why the "democratic" imperialists gave the Nazis a free hand to throw virtually the entire weight of the German war machine upon the Soviet Union can the workers understand the present policy of international imperialism. An extremely plausible-looking explanation is offered by the paper of the Socialist Workers Party headed by Cannon:

"This is what the 'democratic' imperialists want — ~~mutual~~ exhaustion of Germany and the U.S.S.R. They know that even with the Caucasuses lost, the Soviet masses will want to fight on, and they count upon them to keep Germany tied up until the Allied armies are strong enough to take on a serious fight with Germany. The fact that the U.S.S.R. is being bled white in the meantime occasions no regrets to the capitalists who have always wanted to destroy the Soviet regime." (The Militant, August 1, 1942.)

As we have said, this explanation appears to be quite plausible. But is it correct? Some years back, when the imperialists were laying the foundation for the present set-up, Cannon had an entirely different prognosis regarding the relation between the Nazis and the "democratic" imperialists, and of the preparations of world imperialism against the Soviet Union.

To test today's evaluation given by The Militant it is necessary to review briefly the present phase of world's history.

In September 1939 Hitler armies invaded Poland. Following upon this event, the "democratic" imperialists of England and France declared war on Nazi Germany. Without a moment's hesitation, the leaders of the "Comintern" announced to the workers that this was an "imperialist war" much similar in character to the world war of 1914-18. It was even vaguely and boastfully intimated that indirectly the shaping of the situation was assisted by the "brilliant" policy of Stalin which, it was alleged, had pushed the imperialists into fighting each other. The claim was made that Stalin's "Non-aggression Pact" with Hitler had diverted the Nazis from an attack upon the Soviet Union and turned them against the "democratic" imperialists.

Unhesitatingly the Trotskyites, and semi-Trotskyites (Oehler) stated positively that the foremost capitalist powers in Europe had become engaged in a life-and-death struggle, had launched an "imperialist war" for the redivision of the earth, basically like the imperialist war of 1914-18. They differed with the "Comintern" as to the story that Stalin's maneuver would save the Soviet Union ~~and said in game~~. Hitler a go-ahead signal to attack Poland and thus involved Hitler in an imperialist war with England and France. They added a scientific-sounding explanation that imperialist contradictions were mainly responsible for the September 1939 turn of history.

We, on the contrary, gave an entirely different evaluation of the political reality behind the official

declaration of war by the "democracies" against Nazi Germany in September 1939 — an evaluation sharply opposed to the one given by the "Comintern" or by the Trotskyites. Declaration of war does not yet constitute war; the condition called war is a real contest by force and is filled with military action of the countries involved. History has demonstrated that war can exist without any declaration, and it is equally true that declarations can be made without being followed by real war. Specifically, in the September 1939 situation real war raged only in Poland. Close observation of the situation in the West pointed to the conclusion that the big imperialist powers were not engaged in actual conflict. The British and French imperialists gave no assistance to Poland. The military "activity" which unfolded on the so-called Western Front was in sharp contrast to that of 1914. There was some firing reported to have taken place in Saarbrücken. While the Nazi bandits tore through the Polish towns leaving behind rivers of blood and mountains of wreckage, some French soldiers were sent to occupy a small wood, then, without a fight, were quietly withdrawn. Nazi aviators poured death and destruction upon Polish villages. But British aviators flying over Germany dropped leaflets instead of attempting to bomb troop concentrations or military trains carrying supplies to the Nazi army in Poland.

Between the British and French "democracies" on the one hand, and Fascist Germany on the other, it was mock war, pure and "simple." As a matter of fact, the bourgeois correspondents themselves referred to the situation in the West as the "phoney war."

Everything pointed to a different method, complex and surprising, by means of which the policy of the Chamberlain period of collaboration with Nazi Germany was being continued behind the cloak of a sham declaration of "war."

A real war among the imperialists could mean nothing else except a

struggle for colonies, markets and the enslavement of nations and the toiling masses with a terrible danger of a proletarian revolution constantly facing the antagonists. But what could be the purpose of a mock war? We could see no other purpose than the organization of an attack upon the vast and rich territory of the Soviet Union. That country had been snatched out of the world capitalist system by a proletarian revolution, and though it was half-strangled by a putrid bureaucracy it still retained the remnants of October 1917, the socialized form of property. The first proletarian State was the only existing place closed to private capitalist exploitation by world imperialism. As events unfolded, the French imperialists opened the gates of France to the Nazis and placed the French toilers under the police surveillance of the Gestapo hangmen, we realized the full aim of the exploiters: to destroy the Soviet Union and establish a Fascist-military regime of slavery throughout the entire world.

Then came the organization of the Balkans under Nazi control to provide Hitler's army with food and oil. The attack upon the Soviet Union was a stupendous task and only ~~one~~ capitalist power was geographically and politically suited to fulfill it — Nazi Germany. The German imperialists could accomplish the double task, to hold down the masses of Europe and destroy the Stalinized Soviet Union only on condition that they were not engaged in a war with other powers and that there was no immediate danger of such a war.

No real war was being waged against the German imperialists in the West and only by ~~having~~ being given to understand that could Hitler safely plunge into the most gigantic counter-revolutionary enterprise capitalism has ever plotted. On June 22, 1941, with the industrial fabric of Europe organized to sustain Hitler's war machine, the Nazi forces advanced upon the Soviet Union to transform the socialized property established by October into capitalist private property whose most outstanding international gendarme is Hitler.

AS Stalin's army was being decimated and the Nazis were sweeping toward Kiev, Odessa and Leningrad, over a year ago, there arose an outcry for the Second Front. The Stalinist bureaucrats, naturally, were the loudest, then, as now, in demanding the Second Front. The Stalinist cry persisted but the "democratic" voices which also called for the Second Front, gradually dropped out of the chorus: "London's newspapers had toned their demands for an invasion down to a mere whisper" (The New York Times, Oct. 12, 1941).

When the demand for the Second Front first arose it was presented as entirely possible of fulfillment because the bulk of the Nazi army was tied up in the East. This possibility existed even in the Summer of 1941 when England was the lone imperialist power left supposedly fighting the Nazis. But how much more feasible — if the "war" in the West were real — it is to open the Second Front after the greatest industrial and naval power in the world, the United States, has joined England in the "war against the Axis"! By the Summer of 1942, on the occasion of the second tremendous offensive of the Nazis, this time toward the Volga and the Caucasian oil fields, a great clamor for the Second Front reverberated throughout the Soviet Union and the "democratic" world. As in the Summer of 1941, the hypocritical capitalist newspaper editors expostulated with their masters: now was the opportunity to strike at Hitler! The editor of a leading American imperialist mouthpiece wrote:

"It is exactly thirteen months ago that Hitler launched his treacherous attack upon Russia. That attack may have been a fatal error. It is still too early to say. But when the attack on Russia began it certainly presented a hitherto undreamed-of opportunity to the enemies of Hitler. Winston Churchill recognized this fact at once. Our own Lease-Lend program had already been in operation for more than four months, and the President also expressed full recognition of the extent of the opportunity presented." (The New York

Times, July 22, 1942.)

And this capitalist editor shed crocodile tears that the opportunity was not being taken advantage of:

"But one is compelled to add that the actual results achieved by either England or the United States in taking advantage of this opportunity have so far been profoundly disappointing. When the opportunity first presented itself most observers feared that it might last only for a few weeks. It has now continued for thirteen months, yet the visible results in taking advantage of it seem incredibly small." (Ibid.)

In unison with these insincere sentiments the Stalinist bureaucrats, hardened fakers and deceivers of the workers, made a pretense of believing that the "democratic" leaders could be persuaded to open a front against Hitler if an earnest-appearing plan could be presented for such action. Wm. Z. Foster, one of the Stalinist leading American flunkys, declared:

"As things now stand militarily Great Britain and the United States are allowing the Soviet Union to face alone Hitler's great armed might, while three or four millions of their own troops, armed to the last detail, vegetate idly in the British Isles. But it is simply demanding too much of the USSR to expect it to defeat the combined armies of Germany, Italy, Rumania, Finland, Slovakia and Hungary, with all of industrial Europe behind them; not to speak of the Soviet Union's being compelled to hold some two million soldiers in the Far East to forestall an attack by Japan." (Daily Worker, July 14, 1942.)

Foster even went to the ludicrous extent of sounding a "warning" of disaster to the "democracies" if they did not open the Second Front soon:

"A too long delay might cause irretrievable disaster to the United Nations. The Roosevelt-Churchill-Molotov agreements for a

second front in Europe this year should be put into effect immediately." (Ibid.)

But just as in 1941 so in 1942, while Hitler is pressed for reinforcements and is compelled to import tremendous numbers of French and other workers to release the German workers for the front, the bourgeois editors, having fulfilled the task of appearing as friends of the Soviet Union, again have dropped the noise for the invasion of the Continent. A cable from London stated:

"Meantime, the newspapers virtually had dropped their invasion demands." (New York World-Telegram, July 27, 1942.)

* * *

CANNON'S paper, claiming to explain the absence of a Second Front, states that the "democracies" are gathering strength "to take on a serious fight with Germany." Does the present or the former line of the Trotskyites correctly reflect the world situation of the last three years? The previous Trotskyite line which preceded September 1939 was composed of two elements: the basic element that the world imperialists were drawing closer together in a policy to attack and destroy the Soviet Union, and the general, theoretical abstraction that the imperialists would commence a war among themselves. Below we offer the basic Trotskyist prognosis which specifically showed Hitler's attitude toward the "democracies" and the Soviet Union, and the attitude of Britain and France toward the Fascist powers at the time when imperialism was laying the foundation for the present world situation:

"Hitler thus evidently does not share the notion of the Stalinist bureaucracy that there is a profound contradiction between the democratic and fascist states of Europe. He boldly envisages a united front of capitalist nations, fascist and democratic alike, directed at the heart of the Soviet state. Britain always has and still does nurture

this same notion. It was the central tenet of France's foreign policy up until 1933 and it is not at all beyond the realms of possibility that France may revert to it tomorrow.

"Hitler sees one fundamental contradiction in the modern world, the contradiction between the capitalist states and the Soviet Union. He also sees what Stalin sees far less clearly and with far less interest, the contradiction between the proletariat and capitalist classes of all nations. His appeal is against Bolshevism and on that appeal he has staked his whole regime." (New Militant, March 14, 1936. Emphasis in original.)

Is this earlier Cannon-Shachtman view of the relations between the "democracies"-Hitler and the Soviet Union correct? Although this was written by the Trotskyites in 1936, it is still the only correct view in so far as the relation of world imperialism toward the Soviet Union is concerned, while the new line of Cannon's is nothing but a cloud of dust. As is well known to Cannon, since Hitler was placed in power by the bourgeoisie, due primarily to Stalinism, he received tremendous assistance from international finance capital.

In those days Cannon (and Shachtman) although pointing out to inter-imperialist friction and rivalries which always exist in the imperialist world, analyzed the situation as being predominantly one of imperialist co-operation against the Soviet Union.

Cannon (and Shachtman) showed that it was the "democratic" imperialists who tore up the Treaty of Versailles (see the Trotskyite article, "England Ends Versailles Treaty," New Militant, July 6, 1935) and allowed the Nazis to organize a huge army. Cannon (and Shachtman) knew that the "democratic" imperialists allowed Hitler to occupy Austria. The Trotskyite leaders know all this. They indicated that Hitler was piling up dynamite for an explosion, and which

country would be the target of the military preparations:

"The aim of the explosion is already apparent: it is directed against the U.S.S.R." (New Militant, August 3, 1935.)

And when the explosion was drawing closer and closer, Cannon and Shachtman wrote the following:

"At Munich Chamberlain, Daladier, Mussolini, and Hitler came together in recognition of the fact that nothing could be more fatal to all of them than the outbreak of an inter-imperialist war which none of their regimes would survive." (Editorial, Socialist Appeal, Oct. 3, 1938, p. 1.)

This was a perfect estimation of the world imperialist policy. This accurate estimation the Trotskyite leaders dropped from their line and, flying in the face of the fact that the imperialists are not really fighting among themselves, the Trotskyites have been pushing forward that part of their former line which history has repudiated. After the phoney war commenced between the British-French imperialists and the Nazis, and Hitler had cut a fiery trail through Poland toward the Soviet Union, stopping there only for the final preparations, the establishment of Fascism in France and the organization of Europe for his army's needs, then Cannon and Shachtman "forgot" the correct part of their old line.

That the Trotskyite leaders know well it is their old prognosis that proved correct, not the new one they adopted since September 1939, we have no doubt. With respect to the attitude of world imperialism toward the Soviet Union they showed their perspicacity even before Hitler had actually been given the power by world imperialism. Prior to the present concrete setting of the line of international imperialism, Cannon and Shachtman gave the following crystal-clear prognosis of the approaching historical period:

"Hitler can preserve himself in

power only as a counter-revolutionary agent of France and the other great powers, only as the butcher of the German proletarian vanguard, only as the primary instrument in a military attack on Russia." (The Left Opposition's Resolution at the New York Anti-War Conference, The Militant, August 13, 1932. My emphasis - G.M.)

Nothing could be more accurate! The only point that could be added to this perfect and truly remarkable prognosis is that world imperialism has made use of Hitler not only as "the primary instrument in a military attack" on the State of socialized property and not only as the butcher of the German, but as the butcher of the international proletarian vanguard. His role today is that of an international Kornilov secretly supported by all the imperialists.

The above-cited Trotskyist prognosis goes once more to show that the Trotskyite leaders quite often give correct theoretical blue-prints of the coming stage of history, only to violate and disregard them when they actually become fulfilled in concrete form.

WORLD history since September 1939 can be divided into two main phases. Up to June 22, 1941 imperialism, behind the smokescreen of a sham war, equipped the Nazi army for its big job of destroying the Soviet Union and for extending the Fascist military system of capitalist rule. Then came the second phase: the sham war among the imperialists continued while the Nazis marched their armies into the Soviet Union. This move by the German imperialists would have been an insane act if the war among the imperialists were real, for already at that time Hitler faced the apparent threat of the greatest of all world powers, ~~the~~ the United States.

In the sham war the masses, without realizing the truth, saw the magic-like entry of the Nazis into such fortresses as Sedan, Liege, Namur,

Antwerp, Paris. The greatest fortress in Europe, Verdun, was occupied by the Nazis in twenty-four hours without resistance. The most powerful military and naval base of the Far East, Singapore, was "taken" by a numerically negligent Japanese force in a week, with the British rulers putting up a comedy of defense.

On the other hand, in the place where the military fight is real, in the Soviet Union, the masses witness a furious struggle, perhaps the bloodiest in history. In contrast to the Verdun of 1940 — not the Verdun of the real war of 1914-1918 — there is an agonizing and stubborn defense of Sevastopol, of Leningrad and other cities. As against the farce in first-class fortresses of Hongkong and Singapore, there is a terrible drawn-out, hand-to-hand battle of Stalingrad, a mere industrial city. This battle of Stalingrad ~~was~~ the bourgeoisie itself admits to be of titanic proportions — "The greatest battle of all times..." (The New York Times, September 20, 1942.)

An interesting slip of the pen recently appeared in The Militant, as follows:

"The Stalinist campaign for the second front brings sharply to the fore one undeniable fact, namely, that the Soviet Union has been fighting ALONE and with its own resources throughout the fifteen months of war." (John G. Wright, The Militant, October 3, 1942. Capitals mine - G.M.)

This is an indirect admission that the "democracies" have not been really fighting the German imperialists in the last fifteen months of this "Second World Imperialist War" as the Trotskyites persistently call the present period. (See the Political Resolution of the Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, The Militant, October 17, 1942.) But did the "democracies" and the Fascist states really fight each other in the first fifteen months of this "Second World Imperialist War"? When, — during the Nazi invasion of Poland? Or perhaps during the many months of the Sitz-

krieg on the "Western Front"? Even the bourgeois correspondents were poking fun at the inaction on the part of both the "democracies" and the Nazis, labelling the situation, "Phoney War," "Second Bore War" and other sarcastic names. The fact is that the "democracies" never fought the German imperialists either in the first or in the last period of this "Second World Imperialist War." In those days, the Trotskyite leaders themselves were compelled to describe the "strange" policy of the "democratic" imperialists as "their waiting game" (Socialist Appeal, February 3, 1940). Only, the Trotskyite leaders concealed the truth to which they had often been pointing previously, that the actual game was to have the Nazis put in high fighting gear their war machine preparatory for the assault upon the Soviet Union.

Another interesting question arises in connection with the slip made by John G. Wright. If, as he says, it is an indisputable fact that the Soviet Union has been fighting alone, then what has been the bombardment of Cologne, Bremen and other German cities? What of the see-saw "war" in the African desert? What is the meaning of perennial bombings of the ~~Gundam~~ and Sharnhorst? How explain the raid on Dieppe? The sinking of ships? Does it all represent an inter-imperialist war? And if it does, how can the Trotskyites say the Soviet Union has been fighting alone? On the other hand, if, as Wright says, it is an "undeniable fact" that only the Soviet Union is fighting German imperialism, then obviously, all of these bombardments and desert "campaigns" are merely a smoke-screen to cover up this fundamental fact.

Naturally, the Trotskyite leaders will never give an honest answer to these questions. Although the whole situation, since September 1939, corroborates their former correct evaluation of the politico-historical attitude of the entire imperialist world toward the Soviet Union, and rejects their present story of the "Second World Imperialist War," they will persist to the end.

And sooner or later the end will

arrive. Neither the imperialists nor the opportunists can prevent the eventual mass explosion against the international Fascist policemen, Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado and their secret collaborators, the "dem-

ocratic" exploiters. The explosion will throw a revealing light upon the ghastly machinations of world imperialism and will expose to the workers the deceptive explanations of the pseudo-Marxist opportunists.

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THE ISSUE OF THE SECOND FRONT

II.

SHACHTMAN AND THE BOURGEOIS EVASIONS

THE leaders of the "democracies" have made it very clear what their policy is with regard to the issue of establishing a second front in Europe. The so-called "delay" in opening the second front - an indirect admission of the existence of only one front, in the Soviet Union - has called for explanations by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie. Numerous "reasons" have been printed in the capitalist press to convince the workers of the necessity of "postponement" of the Second Front. It is well known, however, that the major part of the Nazi forces are inextricably involved in the Soviet Union. Moreover, many divisions of Hitler's army are tied down policing cities and towns in the Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Low Countries, Norway, the Balkans and above all in France. Hence, were the "democracies" under such circumstances to stage a genuine invasion of the European Continent, the German imperialists would find themselves in great difficulty, compelled to detail a huge army to resist such an invasion.

Many of the apologists of the "democracies" assure the workers that the "democratic" powers do not possess today enough mechanized equipment and troops to open on the continent of Europe a second theatre of operations against Hitler. Living under conditions of systematic deception, the

workers no doubt believe these explanations. Especially is it difficult for the workers to get at the truth because the stories of alleged inadequate preparations on the part of the "allies" of Stalin find support also from supposedly Marxist organizations.

Presenting the excuses of the capitalist newspapermen as bona fide facts, the official organ of the Workers Party headed by Max Shachtman declared:

"One of the chief reasons given for the failure of the Allies to open the second front is the lack of sufficient material preparation - not enough planes, not enough trained pilots and mechanized troops, insufficient cargo planes and transports. There can be no denying these facts." (Labor Action, August 17, 1942. My emphasis - G.M.)

An examination of these "facts" reveals that they are in conflict with the steady flow of information coming from authoritative "democratic" statesmen and leaders themselves. Their statements have been filling the pages of the capitalist press with descriptions of the condition of material strength and preparations of the "democratic" powers.

The question of "sufficient mate-

rial preparations" can easily be juggled by unscrupulous people who have an axe to grind, for there has been set no definite limit which, when reached, can be declared as sufficient for opening an attack in Europe. Casting aside sophistry, however, one can logically assume that if the "Allies" possess a greater weight of military means than the Fascist powers, an attack is feasible — provided the policy is that of a real war against the "Axis" imperialists.

Let us examine "facts" which Shachtman's paper says "there can be no denying."

The claim was made of "insufficient cargo planes." On August 14, 1942, the New York World-Telegram printed a U.P. dispatch under the heading "U.S. Now Abreast of Axis in Making Huge Cargo Planes." The dispatch stated that Donald W. Douglas of the Douglas Aircraft Co., made it known that "Already the United States is fully abreast of Nazi achievements in air transport." Since most of Hitler's production of air transport goes to the front in the Soviet Union, and a good proportion of it is destroyed there, it is obvious that in the field of air transport the Allies are superior to Hitler.

We can proceed now to verify how much basis there is for another "fact" Shachtman's paper picked up: "not enough planes." ^{What} constantly bear in mind, in connection with the issue of the second front, that the Nazis suffer terrible losses in men, tanks and planes in the Soviet Union, where the greatest part of their air force is tied up. Three months before Shachtman's paper declared there could be no denying the "fact" of shortage of planes, Glenn L. Martin, well known airplane manufacturer, revealed that the United States aircraft production in May 1942 was almost twice as great as that of the Nazis ("Our Air Output Double Nazis," Martin reveals." World-Telegram, May 22, 1942). This does not include England, Canada and other parts of the British Empire. Martin showed that this has been achieved before the converted auto plants began making planes:

"Even before converted automobile plants have started rolling out airplanes on the assembly line, American war aircraft production now is nearly twice that of Nazi Germany, Glenn L. Martin told an audience of 2500 at the annual presentation of American design awards sponsored by Lord & Taylor at a luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria." (World-Telegram, May 22, 1942. My emphasis - G.M.)

It is well known that the United States had a vast air force prior to Pearl Harbor, and it has added constantly to its air strength, with losses relatively small and production increasing tremendously all along. In the middle of August 1942, before Shachtman's paper printed the "fact" that there were "not enough planes," the president of the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce of America reported that more than two billion dollar's worth of aircraft material had been produced in six months!

"War plane production in the first six months of 1942 exceeded the entire 1941 output, Colonel John H. Jouett, president of the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce of America, reported tonight.

"More than two billion dollars worth of planes, engines and propellers were turned out by old-line aircraft companies from January 1, 1942 to July 1, as against one and three-quarter billion dollars of production in all of 1941, Colonel Jouett said." (The New York Times, August 14, 1942.)

This is just for the United States alone, without taking account of England and Canada, and is certainly an amazing achievement in aircraft production. The authentic reports of the authoritative spokesmen of capitalist industry are an adequate reply to the "facts" Shachtman's paper said there could be no denying.

Now concerning the "fact" about insufficiency of trained pilots. If the British rulers could dispatch a thousand planes in one day over Cologne, it is really childish to believe the "facts" pushed forth by Shachtman that the British Empire, plus

the United States, both representing the greatest plane-producing powers in the world, cannot muster enough trained pilots while the Hitler air force is overwhelmingly engaged in the Soviet Union.

Two months before Shachtman's paper spoke of insufficiency of material preparations of the "democracies," Donald M. Nelson, Chairman of the War Production Board, was reported as stating that in nearly every category war production in the "democracies" exceeded that of the "Axis":

"The United Nations have at last exceeded the Axis in war production 'in nearly every category,' Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, declared today." (The New York Times, May 20, 1942.)

Shachtman's paper declared there can be no denying the so-called fact of transport shortage. It will do therefore to spend a few moments investigating this "fact." Overbalancing the bare assertion of transport shortage are numerous periodic accounts which emphasize the titanic sweep of production of ships in both England and in the United States. In the last few weeks shipbuilding has reached such unparalleled heights and tempo as to stagger the imagination, literally. The official spokesmen of the "democracies" are themselves amazed and fascinated by the performance of the shipbuilding industry. Speaking to the workers of the Brooklyn Navy Yard —

"...Rear Admiral E. J. Marquart, congratulating the men, described the achievements since Pearl Harbor as a 'staggering total almost beyond the belief of one's own eyes.'" (The New York Times, Sept. 8, 1942.)

When one goes over the multitude of reports on ship production, the accounts of the achievements in technique, efficiency and speed, one reaches the conclusion that Roosevelt underestimated the American capacity for production of ships. As a matter of fact—

"The War Production Board ex-

pects to see President Roosevelt's ship-building goal for this year, 8,000,000 deadweight tons, surpassed by about 10 per cent.

"On the basis of a record-breaking performance by the nation's shipbuilders and the increased need for cargo space, WPB has boosted its schedule closer to 9,000,000 tons for the year than to 8,000,000 an official said." (New York Times, August 20, 1942.)

The convoy-escorted merchant fleets crossing to England have been no less remarkable for the magnitude of the number of ships involved. In July the Navy disclosed some figures which, too, stagger the imagination, offering — "Fresh evidence of the enormous amount of war materials and other supplies being delivered to Britain..." (The New York Times, July 21, 1942.) Basing itself on the Navy report, The New York Times indicated that probably 4,800, or even 7,200 merchant ships were escorted last winter to Britain:

"Since the 2,400 ships mentioned were only those escorted by a single United States naval force, the actual total of ship crossings for the Winter probably was double or triple that number, depending upon the availability of both ships and escorting forces." (Ibid.)

This took place last Winter. There is no telling how great the merchant fleets have been during the Spring, Summer and the beginning of this Fall.

Since the time Shachtman's Labor Action declared that there could be no denying of the "facts" given by the imperialist apologists for the absence of the second front in Europe, the production of ships has been reported to have increased still further. According to Roosevelt, the "democracies" were getting ahead of the "Axis":

"We have also had to face the problem of shipping. Ships in every part of the world continue to be sunk by enemy action. But the total tonnage of ships coming out of American, Canadian and British shipyards, day by day, has increas-

ed so fast that we are getting ahead of our enemies in the bitter battle of transportation." (The New York Times, October 13, 1942.)

On the sea, on land, and in the air the "democracies" command a great advantage over the Nazis. Colossal military might has been mobilized in England and in the United States and is kept virtually idle and fresh, while the Nazi forces have suffered terrible losses and are by now half-exhausted. The armies of the "democracies" have been growing; the building of ships outstrips the losses; the air superiority has not only been in existence for quite a while but has been growing. Churchill recently stated:

"The months of August and September have been, I will not say the best, but the least bad months since January. They have seen the building of merchant ships that substantially outweigh losses. They have seen the greatest tonnage of British bombs dropped upon Germany. They covered the most numerous safe arrivals of United States troops in the British Isles. They have marked the definite growth of Allied air superiority over Germany, Italy and Japan." (The New York Times, October 13, 1942.)

Two important items which Shachtman's paper omitted, but which are worth mentioning, are steel and oil. Without steel and oil no modern war machine can function. Hitler has at his disposal 54 million barrels of crude oil production and 45 million of synthetic production. The devouring front against the Soviet Union swallows most of it. The Americas on the other hand produce one billion seven hundred sixty two million barrels! (Life, May 18, 1942.) Thus the oil supply of the democracies is fabulously greater than Hitler's. And this does not include the oil production in the Near East controlled by Britain: "..... The Allies still control 93% of the world's crude-oil production, 88% of its refining capacity, plus almost 90% of its tanker tonnage." (Ibid.) As to steel, it has been more than once reported in the newspapers that the production of steel in the United States alone is far greater than in

all the countries of the Axis combined. About three months before Shachtman's paper supported the flimsy "facts" of the apologists of imperialism, the report was published that the United States production of steel was double that of the Axis ("Production of Steel in the U.S. Reported as Twice Output of Axis." The New York Times, May 22, 1942.) Steadily growing, the steel industry in October "shattered all records." That one month's output alone was greater than the estimated yearly capacity of Japan's steel industry:

"October output was in itself 385,000 tons greater than the estimated yearly capacity of the whole steel industry of Japan and its establishments on the Asiatic mainland." (New York Times, Nov. 7, 1942.)

It is quite obvious why a country like the United States, with its unprecedented expansion of war industry, can outstrip the entire Axis in production of ships, planes and other war material.

But still there is no invasion of the Nazi-held European Continent. It is clear that were it the policy of the "democratic" imperialists really to fight the German imperialists they could very easily organize a powerful naval and aerial concentration off the coast of France and under such protection could land millions of well-equipped troops on the Continent. Of the enormous shipping tonnage scattered throughout the world a great deal could be detailed for service in the English Channel. Unable to withdraw his war machine from Russia or reduce his garrisons in occupied countries, Hitler would have faced annihilation — if the "democratic" imperialists were really pursuing a policy of fighting the German imperialists.

Incidentally, on this point of "insufficient material preparation" of the "democratic" imperialists, Shachtman's line coincides with Cannon's:

"There is at present plausibility to the contention that, if they could, the imperialists would launch a second front. Their failure to do so springs primarily from their fear that they are insufficiently prepared. At any rate to take the flat position that the

imperialists are militarily able to launch a second front but are unwilling to do so, can lead only to an inconclusive argument." ("The Question of the Second Front," The Militant, October 3, 1942.)

The actual fact, hidden by the imperialists, by their ideologists, as well as by the pseudo-Marxists like Shachtman, is that the "democratic" imperialists are not engaged in a real war against the Axis imperialists. All signs go to show that the "democratic" imperialists are following the same policy pursued under Chamberlain and even under Chamberlain's predecessor, Baldwin. It is the policy by means of which world imperialism uses the Nazis to destroy the bureaucratized and undermined Soviet Union and employs Hitler as an international Korneylov to crush the workers of France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland and other countries through the institution of Fascist military slavery.

There is widespread bewilderment due to the queer and unusual features of the present world situation. On the one hand are seen the "democracies," which declare themselves to be so anxious to get at the Nazis, doing very little to engage the Nazis in Europe. On the other, the most titanic war of destruction between the Nazis and the Soviet Union. The workers do not know that history has recorded several sham wars under capitalism (the war of the Girondists against Austria, 1792; the second part of the Franco-Prussian War with the French government collaborating with Bismark; the Crimean War, etc.). A sham war is a situation in which the ruling capitalist groups of different countries, seemingly conducting a struggle against each other, in reality collaborate behind a smoke-screen of a military hullabaloo which superficially resembles a real war. Under analysis this situation reveals itself to be a military absurdity behind which the collaborating imperialist "antagonists" conceal and carry out their predatory schemes directed on occasions against some particular nation, and at all times against the toiling masses. One such sham war was the Crimean War (1853-1855), with the British, French and Turks officially at war against Russia. Marx and Engels

in many articles of that period exposed the fact that although navies clashed and the armies of the "Allies" and of the Tzar battled on occasion, the British-French imperialists led by Lord Palmerston and Napoleon III, were collaborating with the Tzar behind the back of their "ally" Turkey, working out a pre-arranged scheme of partitioning the property of the "Sick Man of Europe" (the Turkish Empire). The masses of France and England sincerely believed that their rulers were carrying on a real war against Russia. But Marx and Engels saw things clearly, and showed how Turkey was being double-crossed by her "allies." The articles of Marx and Engels on this sham war will be found in a collection called The Eastern Question. It should be read by every worker. Even to the advanced workers this aspect of the work of Marx and Engels is little known and in the present period of the phoney war is of particular significance. (See "Marx on a Sham War," THE BULLETIN March 1942.)

Some years ago, when the "democratic" imperialists tore up the Versailles Treaty and aided Hitler in arming Germany, Shachtman wrote clearly what the purpose was in having Hitler in power. His and Cannon's paper wrote then:

"Hitler has no way out except the steady mobilization of his forces, morally sanctioned and materially financed by international imperialism, for a military assault upon the Soviet Union." (The Militant, February 15, 1933. My emphasis - G.M.)

"Britain Joins Hitler Against Soviet Union.

"Smashes Versailles Pact by Treaty with Germany."
(Headline, Now Militant, July 6, 1935.)

"Great Britain's open support of German rearmament, as marked by the recent Anglo-German naval agreement, has strengthened the hand of reaction in Europe." (Ibid.)

And Shachtman, together with Cannon, plainly wrote that England's "new policy" was a culmination of the policy of support to the program of building up a powerful Nazi war machine — obviously for the hidden aim of attack upon the Soviet Union.

"England's new policy, a culmination of years of hardly-concealed material support to Hitler's rearmament..." (Ibid.)

Shachtman knows that while the understanding was to smash the Stalin-crippled Soviet State, the British imperialists kept their eye on the German imperialists and were arming right alongside of them. As a matter of record, when Hitler, with the sanction and support of world imperialism, was building up his armed forces, Shachtman and Cannon were directing the workers' attention to the fact that Britain's war program was enormous. In 1936 they spoke of "Britain, which has just launched the mightiest armament program the world has ever seen.." (New Militant, March 7, 1936.)

Shachtman, as other pseudo-Marxists, conceal the fact that the present phoney war is a continuation of the policy of world imperialism against the Soviet Union and the international proletariat. To account for the lack

of a real military onslaught upon the "Axis" imperialists, Shachtman is compelled to peddle at second hand the pretexts of the "democratic" imperialists about alleged "lack of sufficient material preparation" for landing a powerful force on the shores of Europe.

The advanced workers must break away from the opportunists — the bureaucrats of the "Comintern," the Trotskyites, semi-Trotskyites, Social Democrats and other misleaders of the toilers — who conceal the true picture of the world. They must work for a real war, a revolutionary war, against Hitler, this Fascist policeman of world imperialism, and against his direct and indirect, open and secret collaborators and supporters.

Only by following such a policy can the workers open the possibility of destroying all oppression and exploitation. And only this policy can lead toward the replacement of the existing bourgeois nations and the bureaucratized Soviet Union by a world republic of labor based on genuine toilers democracy, peacefully evolving toward the Socialist stage of historical development.

November 7, 1942

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THE ISSUE OF THE SECOND FRONT

AFRICA - NO SECOND FRONT

EVER since the Nazis, through the collaboration of all the imperialists, were brought into France to crush the workers and set up a French Fascist regime, the masses have been led to expect by the spokesmen of the bourgeoisie that a genuine attempt was being prepared to land an army in France in order to drive out the Nazi hangmen. Weeks and months dragged on, Hitler's war machine rolled deep into the Soviet Union but still no invasion of France. Excuses were forthcoming by the carload as to why no Second Front could be opened against Hitler on the Continent. The sentiment of the masses for the opening of the Second Front was so profound that even Willkie, a foremost spokesman of the bourgeoisie, sought to capitalize on it for his own demagogic purposes.

While the Second Front was only a promise, the Nazi war machine was engaged in a bitter and major contest with only one army, that of the Soviet Union. Paying a heavy price in blood and materiel, the Nazis advanced across the Ukraine and reached the Volga. The need for replenishing the losses became acute. Hitler had been recruiting workers throughout Europe for German industries to relieve German workers for his appalling work. His attempt to impress French workers met with no success despite all the assistance by the leaders of French imperialism. An explosion threatened in France, especially in the unoccupied territory. Naturally, Fascist rule of French imperialism in North Africa also was in jeopardy.

Suddenly the headlines blared the news that the greatest armada of ships ever collected had landed American and British troops in French Africa. A great effort was made by the reporters and editors to create the impression that at last something of a major action had been opened up by the "democracies" against the Nazi war machine. Belief rode high among those workers who trusted the bourgeois promise of a Second Front.

But soon the great noise began to subside. A week after the African landing Churchill himself was constrained to declare officially that this was no Second Front.

Directly tied up with the African landing was the occupation by Nazi forces of the Vichy territory which the Petain gang has controlled only with difficulty. Following the further terrorization of the masses throughout France there developed negotiations between Laval and Hitler for a military alliance. Meanwhile the Fascist rule of French imperialism in Africa has been propped up by the "democracies."

Thus, the imperialists endeavored to accomplish, and temporarily did accomplish the task of strengthening in France and its Empire the Fascist system upon which in the present period hinges the very existence of world imperialism as a whole.

In desperate straits since the World War, and particularly since the October Revolution, the capitalist system has survived only because it has been constantly rescued by opportunism. Today, in the last stage of decay, this terrible system is making the final effort to survive by attempting to destroy the remnants of October and by seeking to impose upon the masses a system of universal Fascist rule of brutal persecution and intensified oppression and enslavement. But by endeavoring to carry out this scheme, under the smokescreen of war among themselves, the imperialists have entangled themselves in **terrible contradictions**. The steady weakening of Hitler's forces makes the strength of the "Allies" correspondingly greater. With the continuous absence of a real Second Front in France against the Nazis, the masses will, at first dimly, realize that something is missing in this "war" of the "democracies" against Germany. Then no amount of fake excuses and explanations of the pseudo-Marxists will serve to keep alive the fable of the "Second World Imperialist War." G.M. 11/21/42

THE TROTSKYITES VOTE "INDEPENDENT"

I N the past the leaders of the American Trotsky group, at that time called the Workers Party, issued statements on the question of a Labor Party which today may sound to the average Trotskyite like echoes from another world. The Trotskyite language of those times employed the slogan "For a Labor Party," virtually as an epithet. When the Stalinist bureaucrats came out for a Labor Party in 1935, the Trotskyites wrote:-

"The slogan of a 'Labor Party' is the negation of the slogan of a 'Revolutionary Party,' and it is no accident, therefore, that the adoption of the 'Labor Party' slogan by the Communist Party coincides with the latter's adoption of a reformist position generally, and correspondingly, a move for organic unity with the Socialist Party." (New Militant, December 28, 1935.)

It should be noted that this position was held by both Cannon and Shachtman, the co-leaders of the Trotsky group in 1935.

The Trotskyite leaders gave good and weighty reasons for their hostile expression on the slogan of a Labor Party. A Labor Party is necessarily reformist, correctly said the Trotskyites, but since capitalism in the present period is in decline, it is incapable of granting reforms; therefore the workers must not place themselves politically on a reformist footing. This is an historical period of revolution, not reform, the Trotskyites accurately observed, hence the Labor Party idea diverts the workers from the true path, that of a revolutionary party:

"Insofar as it would not stand for revolution but would fight for the interests of the workers, a 'Labor party' must necessarily be a political party which confines its struggle to the immediate demands of the workers and to the achievement of reforms for the latter, within the framework which capitalism will permit. Such a party could realize its aims and justify its existence thereby, only if capitalism were still in its progressive stage, and thus capable of granting such reforms. To advance the slogan of the 'Labor Party,' therefore, is to put forth the concept that capitalism is still in its progressive stage and the international revolution a thing of the distant future. We proceed from the Leninist thesis, however, that capitalism, imperialist in character, is in a state of decline; that the capitalists, far from being able to grant 'reforms' to the workers, can exist only by increasing the latter's misery; and that even the 'immediate' needs of the workers can be attained only by an overthrow of capitalism. From this flows the necessity, not of a party of 'immediate demands' but, as against the latter, a revolutionary party for the struggle for power." (Ibid.)

Such were the words of the past. Were the reasons given by the Trotskyite leaders against the Labor Party idea correct? Without the shadow of a doubt.

Today, the Trotskyites issue the slogan For a Labor Party. This slogan is a basic one with both Trotskyite

groups, the S.W.P. and the W.P. On the editorial page of both The Militant and Labor Action, this slogan is carried regularly. The basis for rejecting the Labor Party slogan, according to Cannon and Shachtman of the New Militant days, was the utter decadence of capitalism, its incapacity to advance on a reformist path. What is the present evaluation of the Trotskyites with regard to the character of capitalism? An investigation shows that it is identical with the one given in the days when — in words — the Trotskyite leaders rejected the slogan of a Labor Party. The Political Resolution of the convention held recently by the S.W.P. declares:

"The capitalist system has become so decadent, so retrogressive that it can no longer give the most meagre reforms or improvements." (The Militant, October 17, 1942, p. 3.)

And the Shachtmanite magazine proclaims that present-day capitalist society has reached a stone wall through which only the socialist revolution can break to relieve the masses of the steadily increasing misery which is their only future under capitalism:

"Society has come to an absolute impasse, even in the richest and most highly developed of all capitalist countries, the United States. The fetters which bind the forces of production and condemn the overwhelming majority of the population to steadily increasing misery must be cast off. The only road that can avoid chaos and barbarism is the road that Marx outlined as the historic mission of the proletariat — the socialist emancipation of society." (New International, September 1941, p. 204. My emphasis — J.C.H.)

In other words the Leninist thesis "that capitalism, imperialist in character is in a state of decline, that the capitalists, far from being able to grant 'reforms' to the workers can only exist by increasing the latter's misery" — this thesis on which the Trotskyites rejected the Labor Party slogan is as true today as it was in

1935. But today both the Trotskyite groups advance the slogan for a Labor Party. Today, Cannon, for example, has the brazenness to postulate the decline of capitalism as precisely a period for advancing the slogan of a Labor Party:

"We can say that the basic reason for the organization of a labor party in this country will be the necessity for the workers to defend their class interests during the period of the decline of capitalism." ("We Support All Tendencies to Independent Labor Parties," The Militant, November 21, 1942, p. 5.)

This political jugglery amply illustrates how "seriously" the Trotskyite leadership to the "Leninist analysis" they declare they provide the workers with.

* * *

POLITICAL slogans at times become concrete actions. Periodically, the Trotskyite leaders exhort their followers to vote for this or that candidate put forth by the various reformist Labor Parties in existence. The recent elections in New York and elsewhere brought into revealing focus the true character of the Trotskyite line on the Labor Party. The Militant urged the workers to vote for certain candidates of the American Labor Party, namely, those "not on the slate of the Democratic or Republican parties" (The Militant, editorial page, October 31, 1942).

In issuing this call, the S.W.P. with marked and emphatic reiteration declared that its electioneering for these "independent" A.L.P. politicians did not constitute an endorsement of them as leaders or of the program of the A.L.P. In its brief statement on the elections the S.W.P. repeated this idea no fewer than four times:

"We vote for those candidates of the American Labor Party who are running independently — not on the slate of the Democratic or Republican parties — without thereby endorsing in any way the program of the A.L.P..... Our votes for the in-

dependent candidates of the ALP are votes for the idea of independent political action by the workers not for the program of the ALP...making it clear that we oppose the program of the ALP.... We don't support the leaders or their program." (Ibid. My emphasis - J.C.H.)

It is not an accident or merely poor writing that produced such redundancy. The leaders of the S.W.P. face a very ticklish problem in carrying out their Labor Party program. On the one hand they urge the workers in general to vote for such people as Alfange, a Tammany hack, who was on neither the Democratic nor Republican tickets, and on the other hand, the political understanding of the Trotskyite rank-and-file is developed enough so that The Militant itself is compelled to say of Alfange — "Alfange, the candidate for governor, is a political adventurer from Tammany Hall." (Ibid.) The Trotskyite rank-and-filer, if left to his normal reactions, knows and feels that to vote for a political figure is to endorse concretely and objectively his program, his record, and his promises, as well as the platform and history of his party. The ballots and the voting machines do not register intentions, but they add to detract from a party's political prestige and influence. Every Trotskyite vote for the Alfanges added that much stature to this particular variety of labor faker. Such a vote was not one for "the idea of independent political action," as the S.W.P. statement put it, but a vote for the specific "Labor" Party in New York, the reactionary, war-mongering American Labor (so-called) Party. It is to conceal this objective consequence, that the S.W.P. leaders are compelled to shout from the housetops — We vote for the Alfanges, but we don't endorse their program. Without this shouting the Trotskyite rank-and-filer could not be gotten to accept the idea of voting for a Tammany Hall adventurer.

In urging a vote for the Alfanges, the S.W.P. argued that such a vote was only "for the idea of independent political action by the workers," in brief, for the idea of a Labor Party.

Thus, while objectively the rank-and-file Trotskyite voted for, and thus necessarily gave concrete support to the Alfanges, in his mind he was voting for an idea. What idea? The idea of a Labor Party — an idea which is cast out and spurned by the correct thesis voiced in past days by the Trotskyites themselves, the thesis that the decadent stage of present-day capitalism is one in which the workers must repudiate all reformist political organizations and must place themselves on a firm revolutionary political foundation.

The life of the Trotskyite rank-and-filer thus becomes a political see-saw swinging from Leninist words to reactionary deeds.

* * *

SHACHTMAN, despite his anti-Labor Party writings of the past, today, along with Cannon, supports the idea of building a Labor Party. In the recent elections Shachtman differentiated himself from Cannon by criticizing the S.W.P. as opportunist for supporting Alfange, calling its policy "an opportunist, political deception." Shachtman goes on to state that this cannot be regarded as an episodic blunder on the part of the Cannon leadership, but rather marks an ingrained right-wing tendency in the Cannonite leadership:

"It cannot be considered an isolated or episodic error, however. It is of a piece with the right wing trend which has grown in the S.W.P. since the war began and which became especially pronounced after Leon Trotsky was murdered and the S.W.P. was left to the sole leadership of the theoretical sterility and political opportunism represented by Cannon and his satellites." (Labor Action, Nov. 9 1942.)

This sounds terribly principled. Putting on an air of revolutionary indignation, Shachtman exposes Cannon's crude fakery that a vote for Alfange represented a vote for the idea of independent working class action.

Shachtman makes it quite plain that Cannon and his satellites by their opportunism support reaction. This criticism by Shachtman might lead to the belief that he steers clear of any political entanglements with such an opportunist crowd as Cannon and his satellites. But what do we find in actuality? In the recent elections Shachtman advertised as independent labor candidates precisely a couple of Cannon's satellites, people whom Shachtman himself brands as the right wing trend in the S.W.P. and the personification of "theoretical sterility and political opportunism":

"Breitman and Carlson are INDEPENDENT LABOR CANDIDATES.... A vote for Breitman in New Jersey and for Carlson in Minnesota is therefore a workingclass MUST!" (Labor Action, Editorial, November 2, 1942, p. 4. Capitals in original.)

The Cannon see-saw thus becomes a Shachtman merry-go-round. The Shachtmanites parted company with Cannon — they vote for Cannon's stooges. But the Shachtmanites are no worse off than the Cannonites who recoil in disgust from the Alfanges — and vote for the Alfanges.

Let us draw the Trotskyite gum in the recent elections: The Shachtmanites voted for the "independent" Brietman and Carlson who support Cannon; the Cannonites voted for the "independent" Alfanges who support Wall Street. The grand total of the combined Trotskyite vote spells — support for reaction.

The basic fact in the elections was that there was no genuinely independent workers candidate on the ballot anywhere, for the reason that there exists no genuine proletarian revolutionary party. There exist only sham "workers" parties — and the fundamental task of building a genuine revolutionary party. When a genuinely revolutionary party of sufficient strength exists, then only will there be truly independent workers candidates in the elections. Only a Marxist Party represents independent workingclass action. Meanwhile, the task of the class-conscious workers is to break from the mock revolutionary groups of the Cannon and Shachtman stripe and join with those who are fighting to revive the authentic Leninist current in the working class.

J. C. Hunter

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THE R.W.L.'S REPLY TO CRITICISM

*

"MUDDLE-HEADED" CRITICS EXPOSE
A WRONG R.W.L. FORMULATION

I N The Bulletin for May 1942 we made certain critical observations of the Revolutionary Workers League's manipulation of the slogan of Constituent Assembly. In the R.W.L.'s magazine, International News, of July-August 1942, an article entitled "Constituent Assembly" contains a reply to some "muddle-headed 'critics'" who for an unexplained reason are left unnamed. Curiously enough, the reply deals with some formulations which came under our criticism. The writer of the R.W.L. article reflects:

"However, since some of our muddle-headed 'critics', who do not understand the actual principle and tactical aspects of the problem, have seized on some weak or erroneous formulations appearing in our recent material to muddy the waters, we shall further clarify the question." (Our emphasis - G.M.)

Thus the R.W.L. admits that the formulations which the critics attacked are actually weak or erroneous. But who are the muddle-heads? The "theoreticians" of the R.W.L.? No, the critics, naturally! — a neat specimen of the R.W.L. "logic"!

What do the leaders of the R.W.L. proceed to do, having labelled their critics as muddle-heads and having accused them of muddying the waters? They pass on to making a "correction" of the very formulation which the "muddle-headed" critics exposed:

"In the 'International News' of

May 1942, in the article 'Social Forces in the Indian Revolution' there appeared an erroneous formulation, which we gladly correct here." (Ibid. Emphasis ours- G.M.)

It is fitting therefore to review once again the R.W.L.'s line which International News of July-August 1942 represents as the "corrected" and finished version.

THE R.W.L. "CORRECTS" ITS ERROR

R EFERRING to the dependence of backward countries upon imperialism, the article accepts the correct premise that the Constituent Assembly is definitely an instrument in the hands of enemies of the toiling masses used to confuse and disorient the workers and peasants:

"The Constituent Assembly, therefore, sets itself out to accomplish an impossible task. It can only serve as another instrument of confusion and disorientation of the masses, of reaction." (Ibid.)

And the article assures the workers that the R.W.L. is opposed to the organization of a Constituent Assembly:

"The Revolutionary Workers League and the International Contact Commission are categorically and absolutely opposed to the organization of a Constituent Assembly."

The first impression one receives upon reading the above is extremely favorable. It appears that the R.W.L. basing its reasoning upon an accurate estimation of the reactionary nature of the Constituent Assembly has adopted an unequivocally correct line of steering the masses clear of all possible involvement in the opportunist movement which seeks to create this instrument of the exploiters. And if these statements of the R.W.L. represented its actual line we would applaud that group for making a distinct political readjustment of its policy in the proper direction. But upon closer study of the R.W.L.'s position we are compelled to conclude that the R.W.L.'s line is far from being what the first impression makes it appear. Reading further we find the following:

"Nevertheless, under certain circumstances we may call for the CONVOCATION of such an assembly, once the movement has made great progress (despite us), and once it has involved a major section of the oppressed masses." (Capitals in the original.)

Upon examining the whole position of the R.W.L., there is found a peculiar combination of ideas. On the one hand, the R.W.L. describes the Constituent Assembly as only an instrument of reaction and categorically declares itself opposed at all times to the organization of a Constituent Assembly. On the other hand, it states that if the Constituent Assembly movement involves a major section of the masses, the R.W.L. may be for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. There is obviously supposed to be some very profound difference between the convocation and the organization of a Constituent Assembly, though, curiously enough, the article in International News does not explain what this difference is, or what convocation without organization may mean. But lest the reader conclude that the R.W.L. is engaging in mere verbal hocus pocus to discomfit its "muddle-headed critics," it goes on to give the reader the impression that it leans on Lenin's position of 1917 on the question of the Constituent Assembly. The leaders of the R.W.L.

convey the impression that Lenin used the slogan in 1917 purely as an auxiliary tactic to expose the opportunists and bourgeois democrats:

"Then the slogan for CONVOCATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, as advocated by Lenin in 1917, becomes purely an auxiliary tactic to expose the bourgeois democrats and opportunists, who are powerless to act, who are incapable even of granting a single important progressive demand. Such a slogan is meaningless dribble, unless it is auxiliary to the main slogan for 'Workers Councils,' 'For Workers and Peasants Councils' and for the dictatorship of the proletariat." (Ibid.)

To bring into focus the most prominent points in the R.W.L.'s position: the R.W.L. recognizes that the Constituent Assembly is a tool of reaction; the R.W.L. asserts that the slogan of Convocation of the Constituent Assembly used by Lenin in 1917 "becomes purely an auxiliary tactic to expose the bourgeois democrats and opportunists"; the R.W.L. makes a sharp distinction between the organization and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, counterposing the one to the other; the R.W.L. is flatly opposed to the one and under certain circumstances is in favor of the other; the R.W.L. creates the impression that Lenin in 1917 also made such a distinction between the organization and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

WHAT WAS REALLY LENIN'S 1917 POSITION ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

THE reference to Lenin's being for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly in 1917 is the favorite one in those quarters which today also issue this slogan. To recall Lenin's propaganda for a Constituent Assembly in 1917 is, of course, very impressive, especially to those workers who do not know the whole and true story of this slogan in the history of the Russian Revolution. It is important to note that the people who today support the slogan for the convocation of

a Constituent Assembly carefully avoid telling the whole story of the history of this slogan in the Russian revolution. Above all, they refrain from drawing the real lessons of that crucial piece of political experience.

In what way did Lenin really issue the slogan for a Constituent Assembly in 1917? What did history teach about this aspect of the Bolsheviks' tactics in the Russian Revolution? What did Lenin himself have to say about the question of the Constituent Assembly after this episode was concluded? Did the 1917 Bolshevik tactic justify itself; is it to be repeated today?

When the episode of the Constituent Assembly in the Russian Revolution had already passed into history, Lenin, drawing upon completed experience, described the Constituent Assembly as a White Guardist institution. Thus, at the Third Congress of the Communist International in 1921 Lenin stated quite clearly:

"The word 'Constituent' is a term of abuse among us, not only among the educated Communists, but also among the peasants. They know from practical experience that the Constituent Assembly and the White Guards are one and the same, that the latter inevitably came after the former." (Selected Works, Vol. IX, p. 233.)

But in 1917, prior to the actual experience with the Constituent Assembly in Russia, Lenin had an altogether different view of this institution.

Although in 1917 Lenin stressed the main proposition that all power must be vested in Soviets, he added, when dealing with the problem of the Constituent Assembly, that this bourgeois institution could be combined with a Soviet Republic. The expression prevalent in those days among the Bolsheviks was the "combined type" of state which was a perfectly illusory conception, as history later conclusively proved. In 1917 Lenin wrote:

"During the transition from the old to the new, temporary 'combined types' (as 'Rabochy Put' has cor-

rectly pointed out) are possible -- for instance, a Soviet Republic together with a Constituent Assembly." (Collected Works, Vol. XXI, part 2, p. 90.)

On January 18, 1918, the Constituent Assembly convened. It flatly rejected the proletarian dictatorship created by the October Revolution a few months earlier. The Bolsheviks therefore were compelled to dissolve this bourgeois body, which later supported imperialist intervention and organized White Guard counter-revolution.

After the actual experience with the Constituent Assembly Lenin himself ridiculed and condemned the view of combining the Soviet system with the Constituent Assembly. He saw distinctly now that the one represented the dictatorship of the proletariat, the other the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. In 1919 Lenin declared:

"The ridiculous attempt to combine the Soviet System, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the Constituent Assembly, i.e., with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, utterly exposes the poverty of mind of the yellow Socialists and Social Democrats, their petty-bourgeois political reactionariness and their cowardly concessions to the irresistible growth of the power of the new proletarian democracy." (Selected Works, Vol. VII, p. 233.)

Does the R.W.L., which speaks of raising the Constituent Assembly slogan "as advocated by Lenin in 1917" hold that Lenin's 1917 idea of a Soviet Republic combined with the Constituent Assembly was correct, or does it repudiate this 1917 position, as Lenin himself did? To speak of raising the Constituent Assembly slogan "as advocated by Lenin in 1917" is to foist upon the workers today a position which Leninism has discarded.

Throughout the entire Kerensky period Lenin indefatigably urged the peasants to seize the land, but the unfortunate 1917 feature on the Constituent Assembly here too was dis-

tinctly seen. Lenin told the masses that the Bolsheviks did not dispute the right of the Constituent Assembly, a body which he later clearly recognized as the dictatorship of the exploiters, to pass the final law concerning the land question:

"We do not in any way dispute the right of the Constituent Assembly to determine in detail the final laws regarding the handing over of the land to the whole people and the forms of its administration." (Collected Works, Vol. XX, p. 57.)

We see that in the above statement Lenin invested the Constituent Assembly with high authority on the extremely vital question of land. Revolutionary workers not following the opportunist practice of hiding the errors of their great leaders will recognize at once that in the statement cited above Lenin made a mistake which he politically corrected in 1918.

Does the R.W.L. hold to Lenin's 1917 position of granting the Constituent Assembly the right to determine in detail the final laws on the land question? Is that what the R.W.L. means by raising the Constituent Assembly slogan "as advocated by Lenin in 1917"? Already in 1918 Lenin's position of 1917 on Constituent Assembly was recognized as a political anachronism. What the R.W.L. is presenting today as living Leninism is a counterfeit.

Even after the seizure of power by the proletariat, the Bolsheviks for some time erroneously continued investing the Constituent Assembly, the class institution of the enemy, with an air of revolutionary authority. The Soviet Government, formed at the Second Congress of Soviets, was declared to be provisional pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly:

"For the administration of the country there is formed, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, a Workers' and Peasants' Government which bears the name Council of People's Commissars." (Lenin, "Resolution on the Formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Government," Collected Works,

German edition XXII, p. 24. My emphasis - G.M.)

Everybody knows that in a backward country like Russia the land question was one of the major questions of the Revolution. The Decree on Land written by Lenin immediately upon the formation of the Soviet Government left the final ratification to the Constituent Assembly. The instruction to the peasants on the land problem Lenin said should "serve as a guide in carrying through the great land reforms pending their final ratification by the Constituent Assembly." (Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. VI, p. 407. My emphasis - G.M.)

Another fundamental question of the Revolution, that of peace, Lenin also left to be disposed of by the Constituent Assembly:

"Therefore the point is included that we are ready to consider all terms of peace and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit them to the consideration of the Constituent Assembly, which will have the power to decide what concessions can or cannot be made." (Lenin, Report on the Peace Question, Selected Works, Vol. VI, p. 404.)

Such was Lenin's line in 1917 on the question of the Constituent Assembly. From the material cited above it is plain that the R.W.L.'s story that "the slogan for Convocation of the Constituent Assembly, as advocated by Lenin in 1917, becomes purely an auxiliary tactic to expose the bourgeois democrats and opportunists" is at variance with historical truth. Lenin not only did not separate, as do the leaders of the R.W.L., the aspect of organization of the Constituent Assembly from that of its convocation, but conceived the whole matter as one and the same. What is even more important, and is in fact the crux of the matter, is that Lenin in 1917 believed that the Constituent Assembly could be of service to the masses, believed it possible to organize the new State with the Constituent Assembly as a part of it (combined type), thought it could be made an appendage to the Soviets. And proceeding from

that erroneous 1917 conception Lenin enveloped the Constituent Assembly with the atmosphere of revolutionary authority. With respect to the most important immediate tasks of the October Revolution, that of extricating the country from the imperialist war, that of the confiscation of the land and, above all, that of the organization of the government of the proletarian dictatorship, the Bolsheviks posed the final judgement on all these vital problems as a matter for the Constituent Assembly, an institution which they later correctly designated as a tool of the exploiting classes, of the White Guards, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Do the leaders of the R.W.L. describe as correct the idea that the Constituent Assembly was to have power to pass on peace terms, and to have the right to determine the organization of a proletarian Soviet Government? In so far as we are familiar with the documents of the R.W.L. they do not. Even such open advocates of the Constituent Assembly as the Cannonites and Shachtmanites conceal these concrete features of Lenin's 1917 position on the Constituent Assembly. Yet the leaders of the R.W.L. speak of raising the Constituent Assembly slogan "as advocated by Lenin in 1917." They avoid showing the workers the specific attitude Lenin had towards the Constituent Assembly in that period; they attempt to foist that mistaken position upon the workers.

The leaders of the R.W.L. obviously know that Lenin in 1918 arrived at the conclusion that the Constituent Assembly is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. From this the lesson should be that the task of the Marxists is at all times to expose and combat the whole idea of a Constituent Assembly. But the R.W.L. leaders do not draw this conclusion. They are for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly "under certain conditions." In order to make this position look authentic, they have to make it appear that they are leaning on Lenin. They have to refer to a period in which Lenin also called for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It so

happens, however, that the only period in which Lenin called for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly was a period in which he had an incorrect conception of that institution. It is only by artificially separating Lenin's advocating the convocation of the Constituent Assembly from his generally false conception of that institution that the leaders of the R.W.L. can palm themselves off as Leninists on this question.

HOW THE R.W.L. DRAWS HISTORICAL "LESSONS" FOR THE WORKERS

THE R.W.L. not only shirks the analysis of the fact that Lenin's 1917 ideas regarding the slogan of Constituent Assembly were erroneous but it tells the workers to believe "That slogan was tenable in Russia in 1917" (International News, July-August 1942, p. 5).

What are the real lessons that must be drawn from the experience of the Russian Revolution with respect to the problem of Constituent Assembly? The basic factor in determining the Marxist policy and tactic toward a political institution is that institution's class character. In 1917 the Bolsheviks had a faulty conception of the Constituent Assembly for they did not realize that it is an instrument of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Therefore the policies and tactics of the Bolsheviks in 1917 on the question of the Constituent Assembly are not an example to be followed by the workers. Those who refer to the Bolshevik position of 1917 as a justification for raising the slogan of convocation of Constituent Assembly are guilty of concealing the faulty basis of the 1917 position on this question. The real lessons which must be learned from the experience of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, as well as from the experience of the revolutionary events of Europe in 1919 and later, are the following: the Constituent Assembly is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. To call for the convocation of that Assembly means to play directly into the hands of the imperialists and their dependents, the cole-

nial bourgeoisie who take orders from their masters. Unlike the stupid Russian bourgeoisie who imagined the Constituent Assembly, if called at the time the upsurge of the masses was high, would act against the capitalist power, the present-day imperialists and their agents have learned a great deal from history. They saw that the Constituent Assembly, called when the proletariat was already in power, yielded a core of bourgeois supporters dead set against giving the land to peasants and the industry to the workers. The R.W.L. itself even states that "the United States favors a Constituent for India."

The task of the Marxists at all times, whether the advocates of Constituent Assembly succeed in spreading this opportunist illusion among millions or not, is to lead the minds of the toilers away from demanding the convocation of the treacherous trap called Constituent Assembly and toward the idea of achieving power for a proletarian Soviet government in all countries.

ON HONEST POLMICS

WE wish to call the attention of the followers of the R.W.L. to a "trifle" which usually accompanies frank and sincere political controversies. The great leaders of the workers, men of vast erudition, such as Marx, Engels or Lenin, when waging polemics against an opponent, were not afraid to inform the workers who the opponent was. The essential reason for such a method was rooted in confidence of the correctness of their ideas. They felt free and thought it was desirable to present the workers with both the views of the opponent and the Marxist reply to these views, and to train the workers to study both sides and judge objectively which is right. We think that this is a good

Marxist custom and we make every effort to act in accord with it. It is quite different with political sharpies, and, in general, with people who for one reason or another wish to conceal the name of their opponents and critics. These opportunists fear that the workers might obtain a full sight of the ideas of both sides and discover the real character of both the critic and those against whom the criticism is levelled.

In the case of the R.W.L. led by Oehler, we must record that it is wholly wanting regarding the old Marxist tradition of polemics. The leaders of the R.W.L., in full knowledge of the names of the "muddle-headed critics" who attacked the R.W.L.'s "weak or erroneous formulations," deliberately withhold those names from the workers. It is not at all difficult to understand why Oehler and his friends choose such a method of controversy with critics who discover the presence of "incorrect," — in plain language, opportunist — ideas in the R.W.L.'s platform.

In conclusion it is necessary to state that in its reply to the "muddle-headed critics" the R.W.L. did not square the two contradictory, mutually exclusive reasons it gave for "modifying" its line on the Constituent Assembly. We suggest that the reader subject to inspection the R.W.L.'s political gymnastic feats with the slogan "Constituent Assembly" by obtaining a copy of the R.W.L.'s magazine, International News for May 1942, as well as the Draft Program of the R.W.L., 1939, and then study our criticism published in The Bulletin of May 1942 and arrive at objective conclusions. The documents of the R.W.L. can be obtained from Demos Press, 708 N. Clark Street, Chicago, Ill. The address of The Bulletin appears on the cover.

George Marlen

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

"GERMANY IS NOT ITALY"

I N the years 1930, 1931 and 1932 the German bourgeois-democratic imperialists were building up their Fascist forces in order to place them in power and thus stabilize tottering German capitalism along the lines of Italian Fascism. The German toiling masses, having before their eyes the ghastly example of Italy, were greatly perturbed. Unfortunately, like the Italian workers, the German toilers were deceived and paralyzed by opportunist political parties. The Social Democracy, misleading the working class since 1914, was faithfully serving German imperialism. The Stalinist "Party" was a trap to prevent proletarian revolution, for the purpose of protecting the bureaucratic rulers of the Soviet Union from any upsurge of the masses.

The militant, Bolshevik-intentioned workers followed the Stalinist "Party," falsely imagining they were following real Bolshevik organization. Thus, the Stalinist "Party" stood in the foreground as the main trap for the millions of advanced German workers. In the absence of a Bolshevik Party their fate was sealed.

A very important weapon in the hands of Stalinism to allay the fears of the workers was the ideological chloroform contained in the formula "Germany is not Italy." The feeling of false security which this deadly illusion induced was kept alive by the Stalinist bureaucrats all along while Hitler was gathering his strength. Had the German masses realized that, as matters were shaping-up, Germany would follow the Italian road, they would have been seized with a sharp sense of impending calamity and, probably, would have staged a spontaneous rising

against the Nazis, something similar to the rising in Vienna in 1927. To prevent a rising of the masses of Germany against the growing forces of reaction, Stalinism, as well as Social Democracy, had to deliver the mightiest working class in capitalist Europe to Hitler in a quiet, completely passive way. "Germany is not Italy" was the soothing refrain that lulled the German workers into believing that Germany could not and would not follow the Italian road.

It may be stated with absolute certainty that in the first few weeks of his rule Hitler was trodding upon extremely dangerous ground. He was consolidating his grip upon the State machinery, but the millions of German proletarians were not yet crushed by his assassin bands. The bloody work on a mass scale was yet to be a thing of the future. To fool the workers into believing he was not following the path of Italy, he announced new elections for March 5, 1933. And although Fascist intimidation and terror had begun to show their familiar fangs five million Stalinist workers went to the polls, directed and controlled now by the Hitlerites, and voted for the Stalinist bureaucrats still trusting the comforting lie that Germany would not follow the example of Italy.

Immediately after the March 1933 trumped-up "elections," Hitler took vigorous steps to wipe out in blood the proletarian vanguard of Germany. Had the class-conscious, Fascist-hating masses of Germany even at that late hour realized clearly that the country was being dragged by Hitler along the path carved out by Mussolini for Italy, there might have been a spontaneous resistance to Hitler. An uprising of the German proletariat would have

shaken the whole of Europe and unleashed a force which would have been very difficult for the opportunists to control. But the ideological paralysis spread by Stalinism, Social Democracy and other reactionary forces, the ingrained belief that somehow history was diverting Germany from the Italian road, was too powerful to overcome without a campaign of Marxist enlightenment and exposure of the betrayers. The great toiling masses of Germany lay supine before Hitler, prevented from offering resistance while he was remodeling the German State upon the Italian pattern. Even at that most terrible moment for the German workers, the Stalinist bureaucrats continued spreading the vicious, mesmerizing idea — "Germany is not Italy." The German Stalinist leader, Fritz Heckert, safely outside the Nazi scope of terror, pumped into the minds of the workers the opium that German Fascism was different from Italian Fascism. In a widely distributed pamphlet he said:

"German fascism cannot be compared with Italian fascism." (What Is Happening In Germany, p. 12.)

And the well-known Stalinist bureaucrat, O. Piatnitsky, assured the workers that "Germany in 1933 is not like Italy in 1922." (The Present Situation in Germany, p. 42.)

THE line of the Comintern bureaucracy is plain enough. Now, what was the Trotskyite line on this Stalinist deception?

During those days of consolidation of the Fascist power in Germany, the following piece of deadly delusion was impressed upon the revolutionary workers by people who call themselves Marxists, helping Stalin to stifle the suspicions that Germany was actually following the Italian road:

"It would be patently stupid to believe that the subsequent evolution of Germany will go the Italian

road; that Hitler will strengthen his domination step by step without serious resistance."

This soothing chloroform served Hitler, Mussolini and world imperialism, as well as the Stalinist bureaucracy whose grip might have been shaken had the German masses realized the truth and risen against Hitler. And who was it that penned the above-given poisonous citation? Perhaps some "frightened," "helpless" miserable Stalinist pen-pusher of the Daily Worker? No, it was written by Leon Trotsky, and published by Cannon and Shachtman in The Militant of April 8, 1933.

Aided from every direction, Hitler smashed the proletariat and massacred thousands of the best workers of Germany. Naturally in the face of the obvious development of Germany along the Italian road, the deceptive noise about Germany not being Italy had to be dropped. And just as the Comintern bureaucrats were unable to conceal the truth about the German development and changed their story, so Trotsky and his Cannons and Shachtmans inside of a few weeks also changed the Stalinist tune that "Germany is not Italy" and wrote in an exactly opposite vein: "German Fascism slavishly follows the Italian example." (The Militant, May 20, 1933.)

Unfortunately for the deceived masses, the German situation by then had passed the most crucial point of possibility of proletarian resistance, growing safer daily for Hitler and world imperialism. Then, in their usual vein of sham criticism of the Comintern's disruptive line, the Trotskyites wrote harsh words concerning the deadly opiate "Germany is not Italy":

"Germany Is Not Italy!"

"A damnable and blighting catch phrase ran through the ranks of the German proletariat, wandering through all the organizations of the working class. They consoled each other with it. It was thought up and set in circulation by

frightened, helpless bureaucrats, at their wits' end. 'Germany is not Italy' 'Germany is not Italy', - in pompous and heroic speeches and numberless newspaper articles, the incantation was thrown again and again at the masses. 'Germany is not Italy.'" (The Militant, June 24, 1933.)

People hard to convince of the truth might imagine that the whole matter was just an "error" that crept into the Trotskyite line and that no dishonesty is involved in so far as the Trotskyites are concerned. But facts speak otherwise. During the succeeding years the Trotskyites diligently pointed an accusing finger at others: "Ah, but Germany is going to be different from Italy. The Stalinist hacks turned out reams on this theme." (The Militant, February 8, 1941.) But about the support by Trotsky and Cannon and Shachtman to the deadly Stalinist fraud in the terrible days immediately after Hitler's 1933 "elections" not a single word! Cannon and Shachtman published Trotsky's piece of Stalinist poison, never repudiating it, not even attempting to comment upon it! And about a year after March 5, 1933 the Secretariat headed by Trotsky declared without batting an eyelash:

"THE CORRECTNESS OF OUR methods, our PREDICTIONS and our slogans have been incontestibly proved through the entire historic development of the last ten years." (The Militant, March 31, 1934.)

Is it honest to lie to the workers that "the correctness" of "our predictions" "have been incontestibly proved"? If there were a spark of revolutionary integrity in these people they would at least have pointed out their predictions that definitely proved wrong — of which there were quite a number. But instead of making a correction, as honest people would do, Cannon and Shachtman with a defiant air declared brazenly:

"On the fifth anniversary of our paper Militant we repent nothing and retract nothing." (The Militant, Editorial, Nov. 18, 1933.)

Thus Cannon and Shachtman in effect declared the following: We, the Trotskyite leaders, handed out misleading, deadly ideas which aided Stalin and imperialism to blind the workers to the fact that Hitler was following the road of Mussolini. Nevertheless we do not regret we did that, we are not apologizing to anybody, and make no amends of any sort! — "We repent nothing and retract nothing."

Indeed, the methods of Cannon and Shachtman are the methods of Stalinism: to paint false pictures for the workers, to conceal this fact and attempt to appear as "Marxists." They act as if their consciences are clear and "integrity" is unimpaired. On the sixth anniversary of The Militant, the instrument through which Cannon and Shachtman were disseminating destructive confusion among the workers, they lied as follows:

"In six years the Militant had gained the respect of the entire revolutionary movement of the world for its HONESTY, its clean methods and above all for the clarity and correctness of its policies." (The Militant, December 8, 1934. My emphasis and capitals - G.M.)

Why is there such a multitude of cynical lies, evasions, equivocations and arrogance in the Trotskyite political system? Why do the Cannons and Shachtmans build a Chinese wall of falsification around their own political history? Because upon this falsification, evasion and insolence their "movements" rest. Their "parties" will collapse like rotten hulks when the workers discover that the real foundation of the Cannon and the Shachtman "movements" is support to Stalinist and other reactionary deceptions, hypocritical self-praise, political dishonesty — when the victims of Cannon and Shachtman learn that their "leaders" are a set of adroit "revolutionary" adventurers who, together with the Stalinist and Social Democratic bureaucrats, have been for years pulling wool over the workers' eyes.

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

WHY EASTMAN AND NOT TROTSKY?

In 1925 Max Eastman wrote a book, Since Lenin Died, which many years later The Militant recommended to its readers for an understanding of events in Russia and in the Comintern. The Militant, in 1930, referred to the book as the first to tell the inside story of what was happening in the Russian Communist Party.

The Militant's advertisement of Eastman's book reads:

"Since Lenin Died by Max Eastman "The book that first told the inside story of the struggle between the Opposition and the bureaucracy in the Communist Party in Russia. The details of how the conspiracy was hatched against Leon Trotsky by Stalin, Zinoviev, Bucharin and others, was recounted originally in this excellent volume. It is invaluable for an understanding of present day events in Russian and world Communist movement." (The Militant, May 3, 1930. My emphasis - D.S.)

The question this advertisement raises in the mind of the discerning political reader is: How did it happen that not Trotsky but Eastman was the first to come out with an account of a conspiracy hatched against Trotsky?

Upon reading Eastman's work the matter becomes even more baffling, because one learns that had he followed Trotsky's advice he would never have come out with what the Trotskyites call this first revelation of certain secret machinations in the Russian Communist Party. Eastman in his book uncovers the fact that Lenin left a letter or "Will" calling for the removal of Stalin as General Secretary.

But Trotsky, for some peculiar reason, did not want this "Will" to be publicized and, according to Eastman, instructed him to keep it secret! Eastman relates his conversation with Trotsky:

"Our first conversation was in regard my biographical portrait of his youth. It occurred, however, in the midst of the clamour about 'The New Course,' and I asked him one or two questions about that. All that I learned from him I have attributed to him in the text. Subsequently I met him for a moment accidentally: I told him then that I knew about 'The Testament of Lenin,' and he told me to regard whatever I knew as an 'absolute secret.' That has been an additional reason for my delay in writing this article." (Max Eastman, Since Lenin Died, footnote on p. 26. My emphasis - D.S.)

Only after some deliberation did Eastman finally decide to disregard Trotsky's strange instructions and to tell what he knew of the situation in the Russian Party. It should be noted that, to Eastman, Trotsky did not deny the existence of "The Testament of Lenin"; in actuality he corroborated Eastman's knowledge by asking for secrecy on the latter's part.

When Eastman, rejecting Trotsky's directive, published his knowledge of Lenin's Testament, Trotsky vehemently denied the existence of such a Testament and branded Eastman a liar!

"Comrade Lenin has not left any 'will'..... All talk with regard to a concealed or mutilated 'will' is nothing but a despicable lie....." (L. Trotsky, Inprecorr, Sep. 3, 1925. p. 1005.)

As we have shown, the Trotskyites in 1930 recommended Eastman's book, calling it an excellent volume, "invaluable for an understanding of present day events in Russian and world Communist movement." But in 1925 Trotsky slandered the book, calling it a "botched work," and declared to the proletariat that Eastman was serving the interests of counter-revolution:

"There is no sincere worker who will believe in the picture painted by Eastman. It contains within itself its own refutation. Whatever Eastman's intentions may be, this piece of botched work is none the less objectively a tool of counter-revolution, and can solely serve the ends of the incarnate enemies of communism and of the revolution." (Ibid., p. 1006.)

Though Eastman's book revealed much of the corruption in the bureaucratized R.C.P. it was not a complete "inside story" of what was happening between Stalin and Trotsky. Eastman did not, for instance, explain why Trotsky asked him to keep secret a document which, if put into effect, would have struck a severe blow at Stalin and his corrupt system.

It is noteworthy that while the editors of The Militant on more than one occasion presented Eastman's book to the workers as one worthy of careful study, they diplomatically refrained from making any reference to these private instructions of Trotsky to Eastman to keep Lenin's Testament an "absolute secret."

Stalin suppressed everything that would tend to disclose to the masses the fact that Lenin's policy was to remove him and demolish him politically. Trotsky's confidential instructions to Eastman as well as his attack upon Eastman for revealing much truth about the bureaucratic intrigues in the Party were not isolated instances of Trotsky's collaboration with the Stalin clique in suppressing Lenin's anti-Stalin line.

Lenin's document in which the line for the removal of Stalin was set

in plain terms was written at the end of 1922 and early in 1923. According to Trotsky, it was read in secret before the leaders of the Party on May 22, 1924 (The Suppressed Testament of Lenin, p. 11), over a year before he came out in condemnation of Eastman. Facts show that this was not the only anti-Stalin document that Lenin wrote. At the end of 1922 Lenin, on his sick bed, wrote a letter in which he condemned Stalin for Great Russian nationalism. This document, together with other letters and notes, was called a "bomb" against Stalin, and was intended by Lenin for the Twelfth Congress of the Party, held in the Spring of 1923. All this was known to Trotsky at that time (My Life, p. 482). Trotsky not only knew of Lenin's line but he actually received the papers that comprised the "bomb." Trotsky relates that Glasser, Lenin's secretary, handed over to him these documents. Glasser told Trotsky—

"And he [Lenin] instructed me to hand over to you all the manuscripts that were to make part of his bomb for the twelfth congress." (My Life, p. 484.)

The question is, Why did Trotsky keep silent about Lenin's policy toward Stalin? At the height of power, Trotsky at that time was the most popular figure in the Soviet Union and in the Comintern, next to Lenin, whereas Stalin's existence was not even known to the wide masses. A correct answer to the question why Trotsky maintained silence about the Lenin-Stalin antagonism will give an idea why it was not Trotsky, a vital and central figure, but Eastman, a political dilettante and journalist, a more or less accidental factor in the situation, who was the first to come out with some revelations about the bureaucratic corruption of the leadership of the Russian Communist Party.

It is sufficient to investigate the political atmosphere of the Twelfth Congress and Trotsky's line at that gathering, which Lenin had designated as the arena for exploding his "bomb," to establish whether Trotsky stood with Lenin or with Stalin at

the very inception of the Stalinist degeneration of the Party. The Congress, as is known, was not attended by Lenin due to his physical collapse. The pages of Pravda and other Soviet papers were ablaze with reports about the unprecedented unity among the leaders — Stalin, Trotsky and others. Trotsky "forgot" about the "bomb" in his portfolio, and in his speech at the Twelfth Congress did not even hint at Lenin's line against Stalin. The Stalinist Trio — Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin — led the Congress politically and all their resolutions were adopted unanimously. Effervescing with enthusiasm and joy, Stalin declared:

"I must say, that it is a long time since I have seen such a Congress, unified, inspired by one idea... I regret that Com. Lenin is not here. If he were here, I think he would have said: 'For 25 years I nursed the party and finally nursed it to maturity.'" (J. Stalin, Pravda, April 20, 1923.)

Trotsky, who was a member of the Presidium of the Twelfth Congress — the first Stalinist Congress — gave full support to Stalin's political and organizational line of bureaucratism and corruption. He did it quite consciously, knowing all the time that the Leninist line was to open a fight against Stalin and his clique. Such was the treachery of all the bureaucratic leaders acting behind the back of Lenin who "... was systematically preparing to deliver at the twelfth congress a crushing blow at Stalin..." (My Life, p. 480). At the Twelfth Congress Trotsky cemented his political ties with the Stalin clique.

Thus, Trotsky suppressed Lenin's "bomb" and later participated with Stalin in suppressing all other anti-Stalin documents of Lenin, including the Testament. His public denial of Lenin's Testament in 1925 had already been foreshadowed as early as April 1923. He had aligned himself with the Stalin clique and there he was to remain, unequivocally, until ousted by Stalin who maneuvered to seize all power for himself. Like others who

were to share such a fate (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, etc.) Trotsky assumed the guise of an "oppositionist." The very fact that Trotsky and his Cannons and Shachtmans were compelled to make use of a book which only yesterday the leader of this "Left Opposition" had slandered as a book filled with lies, serving the interests of counter-revolution, is an excellent indication of the spurious nature of this "opposition." Unlike Trotsky, Eastman had no ties with the Stalinist clique and hence could tell what he knew. His only hesitation was due to Trotsky's request to keep secret what he knew. Trotsky withheld the truth, and denied the truth when it was published. To the workers he made grandiose speeches about the revolutionary character of the leadership of the Party, i.e., the Stalinist gang:-

"... it suffices to ask: 'If we assume that the malicious characterisation of our leading Party comrades given by Eastman is only partly correct, how is it possible that this Party should have emerged from long years of illegal struggle, how could it stand at the head of masses of millions carried through the greatest revolution of the world, and further the formation of revolutionary parties in other countries?'" (L. Trotsky, International Press Correspondence, Sept. 3, 1925, p. 1004.)

Many years later, outside the Soviet Union, Trotsky played the role of all loyal oppositions. He accused Stalin of withholding from the Party knowledge of Lenin's letter on the National Question, but concealed the fact that as a member of the Presidium of the 12th Congress he participated in this suppression. He accused Stalin of suppressing Lenin's Testament, but concealed his own participation in this suppression. Sixteen years after Lenin died Trotsky wrote an article hinting at the poisoning of Lenin by Stalin. But this story which he published in 1940 was known to him in 1923 and 1924, yet for sixteen years he remained silent, protecting Stalin. In 1924 when Trotsky's power and

authority were still enormous, such disclosures would have been a bomb-shell to blast Stalin off his pinnacle. In 1940 his article made hardly a ripple.

Thus a certain amount of investigation of Trotsky's role in the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union, provides an adequate answer to the question "Why Eastman and not Trotsky?"

Eastman did not publish the full inside story of events in Russia, perhaps because he did not know them. Trotsky knew. But publication of the truth was not in Trotsky's interest. Like Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Bukharin and other degenerated leaders he had told too many lies, was guilty of too many suppressions and distortions, of participation in fostering

the cancer of burocratism which has brought the Soviet Union to the brink of annihilation. Although Cannon and Shachtman in 1930 gave the impression that they were anxious to have the "inside story" told, this was, indeed, furthest from their desire - and remains so. Exposure of Trotsky's role means automatic exposure of Cannon and Shachtman, albeit in addition they have a long opportunist record of their own to worry about. It is in their interest to continue to spread the illusion that Trotsky carried out Lenin's line and fought Stalin. This illusion amongst the workers is the political life-blood of Cannon-Shachtman & Co.

D. Simms

N O W C O L L E C T E D A N D B O U N D I N O N E V O L U M E

Some articles which have appeared in this section in

THE BULLETIN --

TROTSKY AND SHACHTMAN VERSUS HISTORY

TROTSKY'S "ADVICE" TO THE RUSSIAN WORKERS

HISTORY WRITTEN TO ORDER

THE POLITICAL NATURE OF THE TROTSKY-ZINOVIEV BLOC

TROTSKY AND RADEK'S LINE ON CHINA

THE MOTIVES OF ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV

THE POLITICAL MORALS OF THE TROTSKYITE LEADERS

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