

**FIVE CENTS**

**MAY-JUNE 1945**

# **T H E BULLETIN**

## **FROM THE MUNICH PACT TO UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER**

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**THE R. W. L. ON THE WAR:—**

**IN REPLY TO A CRITICISM**

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**BREAK WITH THE MASKED  
SUPPORTERS OF STALINISM**

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**THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION**

**THE FUSION WITH THE MUSTEITES**

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FROM THE MUNICH PACT

T O

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

I N the situation in Europe three factors have loomed before the mind of the masses:— the "Allied" imperialists, the German imperialists and the Soviet Union. To understand the situation in Europe, the inter-relation of the above-mentioned three factors in the present historical period must be clearly grasped. If only two of these factors existed, the Allies and the German imperialists, the situation would require no special analysis, for it would be an old, familiar one patterned on that of 1914. It is the third factor, the Soviet Union, which makes the present situation unique in history and causes appearances to be deceptive in a way never before experienced.

The October Revolution cast a decisive hue over the entire unfolding of the present situation in a way absolutely unforeseen by the old generation of Marxists. It is a problem specifically for the present body of revolutionary workers to grasp. The October Revolution not only determined the relation of the Soviet Union to the Allied and the German imperialists but also the relation of the latter to each other. The total complex of relationships, having in common their origin in the sharpest break in history, the October Revolution, brought about the present situation in Europe. What was the significance of the October Revolution and what course has history pursued from that past turning point to the present?

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T HE October Revolution was the most important event in all history. It was the first time that the workers, led by a Marxist party, overthrew the ruling class and as a result loosened the props beneath the entire capitalist system.

The war of 1914 was itself a tremendous crisis in capitalism. It ushered in the October Revolution and revolutionary upheavals throughout Europe, which did not result in a further overthrow of capitalism, yet rendered the crisis permanent. The very existence of capitalist society itself became the issue before the ruling class.

World capitalism was forced into certain policies to preserve itself. The bourgeoisie, who up to 1917-18 were chiefly concerned with their international rivalries and attempts at bandit conquests, turned decisively toward the task of stabilizing their shaken system by restoring capitalism in the place of the conquests of October and crushing the workers in the capitalist countries.

In 1918-21, to achieve the first task, i.e., the restoration of capitalism in Russia, the imperialist world made a concerted effort to overcome the workers' state by a direct attack. That imperialist enterprise failed and the problem remained. In consequence

under the pressure of the universal crisis of the capitalist system, the imperialists perforce continued to evolve various schemes. Along with the general scheming for the attack went the process of subduing the proletariat in one capitalist country after another. With the establishment of the Nazi regime, the most terroristic bourgeois rule on record, the two historical tasks of capitalism coalesced. German imperialism was now ideally suited to take up the "unfinished business" of trying to wipe out the State which arose out of the overthrow of Russian imperialism.

The treaty of Versailles was discarded by the imperialist powers and Germany was given financial aid to re-establish its armament industry and its military machine. The great powers handed over Austria (March 1938) to the German imperialists, and Czechoslovakia (March 1939) through the "Munich Accord," bringing the German imperialists to the pre-Polish phase of the development. The territorial advances of the Nazi regime were the result of the agreement of the imperialist powers. Without this agreement the Nazi regime could not have moved one inch beyond its borders for it was weak in comparison with the strength of the "Democratic" rulers. The capitalist apologists in the first years of the territorial advances of the Nazis (i.e., prior to 1939) pretended that the "democratic" rulers were really opposed to these advances, but that the "blackmailing" Nazis were being appeased. This cry of appeasement was a cover-up of the deliberate connivance of the "democratic" imperialists with the Nazi gang. The Nazi regime was being primed for the task which world imperialism set for it, namely, the attack on the Soviet Union.

Let us glance for a moment at what was going on among the masses in the bourgeois-democracies. The outcries against "appeasement" had been growing in direct proportion to the increasing territorial expansion of the Nazi war machine. Had the "democratic" imperialists continued with the business of handing over territory after territory to the Nazis, the workers would have suspected that the story about "appeasement" was a fraud and that the "democratic" rulers were actually in cahoots with the Nazis.

By the time the Nazis were to be brought into Poland, the imperialists had to drop the pretense of "appeasement" and adopt a pretense of attempting to stop them. Chamberlain-Daladier declared war, but did the basic policy of the "democratic" rulers change one iota? Some more advanced workers will agree that during the Munich period the "democratic" imperialists were in connivance with the Nazis for an attack on the Soviet Union. Let this be thought through a little further. If the Second World War has been a real war among the capitalist powers, then at some point between Munich and the declaration of war, the imperialist connivance must have collapsed. Where did such a collapse occur? Only objective facts can give an answer. Let us review the period after September 3, 1939 in order to determine whether the old policy of collaboration continued. Following the Chamberlain-Daladier declaration of war, the Nazi war machine turned Poland into a blazing inferno, but in the West the "democratic" armies and the Nazi soldiers settled down to a very queer Sitzkrieg which lasted two thirds of a year. Thus the Munich policy was continued also in the case of Poland as seen from the glaring fact that not a finger was lifted by the British and French to halt the Nazis. The objective fact shows

that the imperialist connivance did not collapse.

The next phase was to harness the entire industrial machine of the European continent to the military machine of German imperialism. The Nazis entered Denmark, without firing a shot, crossed the wide stretch of water into Norway and rolled into Belgium, Holland, France and the Balkans with only token opposition on the part of the "Democratic" powers.

When we speak of "handing over" territory we do not want to convey the idea that these territories were being actually given to the German imperialists. They represented just so much war potential to be used for the specific job of finishing off the Soviet Union, and then to be evacuated by the Nazi gendarmes. To achieve their goal, the imperialists pooled their resources: the German bourgeoisie contributing their army; the "democracies" contributing, temporarily, Europe with all its resources and manpower,

It took about a year for France and other occupied countries to become integrated into the whole industrial structure behind the German Army. Practically all the able-bodied German men were drafted into the army and the home economy was kept running with the aid of the millions of slave laborers from all over Europe.

On June 22, 1941 world imperialism, with the Nazis as its spearhead, was finally on the march against the Soviet Union, a march which had been interrupted by defeat in the first intervention of 1918-21.

After a lightning-like drive into the heart of the Soviet Union, reaching to the outskirts of Moscow and Leningrad, the Nazi war machine began to slow down. Then came what perhaps will go down in history as the world's most important battle, important both from a military and a political sense. This was the battle of Stalingrad, September 1942 - February 1943. The turn at Stalingrad proved conclusively that the Nazi attack upon the Soviet Union had failed. This meant that the object for which the whole European continent had been put under the Nazi heel was not attained. In bringing the Nazis into the various countries in Europe in preparation for the attack on the Soviet Union, the imperialists precipitated a terrific crisis in each one of these countries. In a word, the already existing crisis which was there prior to the attack, was intensified a thousandfold after the attack collapsed.

Once it was involved in so epoch-making an enterprise as the gigantic war on the Soviet Union, the fate of the Nazi Army together with the fate of the Hitler regime hinged on that undertaking. With the whole continent of Europe placed under the Nazi heel by world imperialism for the specific purpose of the attack on the Soviet Union, the failure of the latter had profound significance also for the whole bourgeois order in Europe. The collapse of the Nazi endeavor to smash the Soviet Union meant the inevitable collapse of the Nazi regime and of the "order" it had established in Europe. This was the nightmare the imperialists faced with the end of the Battle of Stalingrad. The imperialist rulers undertook to maneuver matters so that it would be they, and not the masses who would be at the helm of power at the time of the final elimination of the Nazi regime.

By entering Italy, then France and finally Germany itself, the "democratic" imperialists dismantled the Nazi regime before the seething among the masses could reach the point of an all-European explosion. The spearpoint of the "democratic" occupation of Germany is not directed against German imperialism, but against the masses. In an article last year on the "Allied" re-occupation of France we foreshadowed the possibility of such a move whose essence is not imperialist rivalry, but political counter-revolution:

"Today the British and American armies are standing on the German border and even have one small toe inside Germany. Have the imperialists decided that the Nazi spearhead is irreparably broken? If this should be the actual judgement of the 'democratic' rulers, it would signify that they consider Hitler's regime to be on its last legs and have decided to catch the falling sceptre before the German proletariat gets its hands on it."  
(THE BULLETIN, November -December, 1944, p. 19)

The manner in which the occupation of Germany by the British-American forces was brought about is characteristic of the whole "war" between the imperialists in the West since 1939.

While Stalin was following on the heels of the Nazi army in the Baltic, Poland and the Balkans, the imperialists proceeded to re-occupy France and other countries which had been placed under Nazi policing. This phase of the "war" in the West was no less sham than the phase which preceded it. The so-called Atlantic Wall, the Siegfried Line, and the "German Redoubt" disappeared in the same "mysterious" way as had the Maginot Line in 1940. In the East the Nazi army in its final withdrawal was exacting as much blood as possible from the Russian masses, and pouring out the blood of the German workers in profusion, whereas in the West the Allied losses were of a token nature by comparison. The losses of the Nazi Army in the West were primarily in the form of a wholesale surrender to the safekeeping of world imperialism.

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As things stand at this historical hour, the British-American imperialists and the Stalin bureaucrats are face to face in the middle of Germany, as the Nazis and the Stalin gang faced each other in the middle of Poland four years ago. There was "friendliness" between the Stalin gang and the German imperialists then, as there is "friendliness" between the Stalin gang and the British-American imperialists now. The problem which the international bourgeoisie has been confronted with since the October Revolution, that of wiping out the basic results of that stupendous event, and establishing private capitalist relations in Russia still remains. What are the elements that aid the imperialists or stand in their way?

On the one hand the imperialists are favorably situated to attack Stalin's army because of their huge military machine and vast untouched reserves. On the other hand the imperialists face a turbulent situation among the European masses which acts as a deterrent. Moreover, due to the peculiarity of the whole imperialist game, the bourgeoisie has been compelled to pretend an alliance with the Soviet Union and give credit to Stalin's Army for

the military struggle it put up against the Nazi forces. There is a strong pro-Soviet Union sentiment among the masses within the "democracies" forming an obstacle in the path of the imperialists which they will seek to overcome before attacking.

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To a worker who is not guided by political criteria, Stalin's military victory is considered a successful defense of the Soviet Union. The truth of the matter is, however, that Stalin's policy, being counter-revolutionary, has not only laid the foundation for the Nazis' devastating invasion of the Soviet Union but is today laying the basis for the renewal of the imperialist attempts. The political line is decisive in the question of preserving and extending the conquests of the October Revolution. Stalin and his agents work to prevent proletarian revolution because they fear that they would be swept away by the revolutionary might of the proletariat.

It is clear that the strong position in which world imperialism found itself at Munich and after was due to the Stalinist reaction. It was Stalinism which sold out every revolutionary situation since the German crisis in 1923. Combining with the bourgeoisie to suppress the proletarian attempts to overthrow capitalism now in Germany, now in China, now in Spain, the Stalin gang freed the hands of world imperialism for the Munich policy.

Stalin and his agents continue their role of hangmen of proletarian revolution. They are stifling the powerful energies of the French, Italian and other workers. This political aid of Stalinism and other opportunism to the imperialist rulers leaves their hands untied to renew their attempt to destroy the remnants of October — the proletarian form of State economy.

The undoing of the October Revolution, due to the Stalinist reaction, is developing along two interrelated lines: one, internal and the other, external. Bit by bit, day after day, the Stalin gang is undermining the proletarian economy. Unless a complete political transformation takes place in the Soviet Union and the band of Stalinist renegades is replaced by a revolutionary leadership, the ultimate elimination of proletarian property is a foregone conclusion. Since the Stalinist reaction continues astride the Soviet Union and exercises its influence within the international working class, the terrible sacrifices of the Russian toilers have been in vain and are only a foretaste of what the treacherous bureaucracy has in store for them.

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A heavy share for the presence of the Stalinist cancer falls upon the Trotsky leadership. In the very early stage of the Stalinist degeneration, Trotsky double-crossed Lenin and instead of pursuing Lenin's policy of removing Stalin, united with Stalin at the XII Congress of the Russian Communist Party (April 1923). Every step of advance of the Stalinist cancer was screened by Trotsky. It was Trotsky who shielded Stalin from a scathing exposure in 1925 (Statement on Eastman). The whole Trotsky policy of building the deadly illusion that the Stalin bandits were revo-

lutionists who could be "corrected" aided the development of Stalinism. Foisting this illusion upon the advanced workers of Germany, the Trotsky leaders assisted Stalin and the imperialists to open the path for Hitler. Cannon and Shachtman gave "critical" support to the Stalin-Azana crew of wreckers in Spain. During the Nazi attack upon the Soviet Union the Cannon leaders by their policy of "unconditional defense" and the Trotsky "good soldier" thesis engendered among the revolutionary workers the feeling of indefinite postponement of the removal of the Stalin gang and the establishment of a genuine Marxist leadership.

Today the Cannon leaders are repeating the policy they applied in Spain. They tell the workers to support the idea of establishing a Stalin-Social-Democratic government in Italy, while in France the Trotskyite slogan is "Thorez to Power." Thus new Stalinist betrayals are in the making, and with the Trotskyite aid, as usual, the Shachtman leadership is blindfolding the workers to the existence of the important remnants of the October Revolution, the proletarian form of economy. Both the Cannon and the Shachtman leaders divert the thoughts of the revolutionary workers into the reactionary path of building "labor parties." These perennial concocters of delusions for the proletariat are a valuable asset to both the Stalin and the bourgeois counter-revolution.

Opposed to the Trotskyite line is that of Marxism: to break completely with all Stalinist policies, open or concealed, direct or indirect, to repudiate all support to Stalinism, including "critical" support, and thus to revive the revolutionary movement for the struggle of socialist liberation.

May 19, 1945

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For a more complete picture of the treacherous line of the imperialists and of their opportunist assistants read other articles in this publication dealing with the international situation.

THE CASE OF HOLLAND, BELGIUM AND FRANCE

THE "WAR" REACHES THE PACIFIC

THE SECOND "BATTLE" OF FRANCE

THE SECOND "BATTLE" OF THE PHILIPPINES

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THE BULLETIN  
P.O. Box 57 .. Sta. D.  
New York



THE R.W.L. ON THE WAR:

In Reply to a Criticism

FROM the very first day of the official declaration of the so-called "Second World War," the political tendency represented by this publication has put forth an analysis of the world situation which is entirely opposed to the line of the Revolutionary Workers League as well as all other political organizations within the working class.

In the last several months, some of the R. W. L.'s adherents have begun to acquire an understanding of our position to such an extent that after some five years of heavy silence, the leaders of that organization find themselves compelled to make some form of reply to our line. This reply is made in the January 1945 issue of the R. W. L.'s International News and is completely characteristic of the R. W. L. leadership. While they attack our specific position and even go to the length of quoting THE BULLETIN directly, they do not name their opponent nor give the source of the quotation. A reader of the R. W. L. publication who is not familiar with the position being attacked, and is not aware of who holds it is therefore "protected" from reading our documents at first hand and independently comparing the analysis set forth with that of the R. W. L. so as to arrive at an objective conclusion. He is supposed to accept on faith what the R. W. L. presents as "somebody's" position as well as the R. W. L.'s reply to "somebody." This shabbiness of the R. W. L.'s polemical method sets the pace for the specific arguments it raises against the position of THE BULLETIN.

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AN epoch-making event which formed a foundation stone of the line of THE BULLETIN which the R. W. L. attacks, was the Nazi occupation of France in 1940. THE BULLETIN presented a mass of documentary evidence to show that the gates of France were deliberately thrown open by the "democratic" rulers to bring in the Nazis for the fascization of France. What was the reason for this maneuver?

The basic task of the world imperialists was to organize Europe for the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union. The immense production of the continent had to be put at the disposal of the Nazi war machine — armaments, raw material, foodstuffs, manpower. At the same time the rear of the Nazi spearhead in Western Europe had to be safeguarded by decisively crushing the militant French proletariat. The only path open for stifling the French workers as a prelude to subjecting the whole continent to Hitler for the forthcoming assault on the Soviet Union, was to bring the Nazis — an outside force — into France. Any attempt to use the internal fascist forces of France would have precipitated a tremendous conflict between the proletariat and the ruling class: the echoes

of the Spanish Civil War, where internal fascism was employed with the resultant struggle by the workers, had hardly died down at the time.

The French masses believed that "France is at war with Germany." When the "Democratic" rulers opened the gates, resistance on the part of the workers was paralyzed by the orders of the "Allied" General staff, and the Nazis swept in under the cover of "war" which actually camouflaged the inter-imperialist collaboration.

The leaders of the R. W. L. sharply attack this analysis. They raise a "devastating" question against our position that the imperialists had to bring in an outside force to establish fascism in France as a prelude to the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union. In the following sentences they give their version of this aspect of our line and then raise their question:

"The other mechanical view is a 'left' view. It too pictures everything as either 'black or white', without gradations and dialectical combinations. This is not an imperialist war at all, they say. This is an ideological war, a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. The Munich pact is still in existence. The war between Germany and Britain is a SHAM WAR. The only real war is on the eastern front. Germany, Britain and the U. S. are in an actual alliance. Their only purpose in this war is to defeat the Soviet Union. In fact the Stalin-Hitler pact was merely a part of this plot whereby Germany and the Allies agreed to a German occupation of France in order to suppress the French proletariat before proceeding to the main job of suppressing the Soviet Union. Why an army of 5,000,000 Frenchmen, under Daladier was unable to suppress that Revolution is not made clear. Particularly in view of the fact that the French bourgeoisie had been able to check the French revolution since 1934, and there was no Marxian Party in France." (International News, January 1945, p. 3  
My emphasis - A. J.)

The R. W. L.'s question, which implies that Daladier had no need of calling in the Nazis because he had at his disposal a huge army, simply avoids admitting what actually occurred in France in May 1940. Interestingly enough, only one month before this attack on our position, the same R. W. L., without resorting to any hocus-pocus questions, inadvertently recognized the truth of our analysis by admitting that the French capitalists actually opened the gates to the Nazi army for the express purpose of crushing the French workers.

"Lacking confidence in the ability of their fascist reserve to smash the power of the workers, the French capitalists checked the class struggle before it reached the point of civil war. They checked it by opening their borders to the military machine of German fascism which in 1940, took over the problem of subduing the French workers." (The Fighting Worker, December 1944)

Thus we see that when it suits the R. W. L.'s requirements

they admit that the French bourgeoisie were unable to use their fascist reserves and opened the gates to the Nazis to crush the French workers. On the other hand, when the R. W. L. has certain "polemical" requirements against our position, they conveniently forget this concrete historical fact as well as their own admission of it and raise irrelevant questions to becloud the real issue. When it suited their purpose to admit something we have been saying for over four years, they did not raise any flim-flam questions about the French army of 5,000,000. This dodge was only dragged in by the ears to distract the reader from our exposure of what actually occurred in France in 1940.

In May 1940, the eight-month Sitzkrieg on the "Western Front" came to an abrupt end. There can be no claim that the bourgeoisie did not know that the Nazis were going to enter the Low Countries. Not only was the move expected but "even the date — May 10 — has been whispered around Paris for the last 10 days and only the censor prevented your correspondent from mentioning it." (New York Post, May 10, 1940)

After a lightning occupation of Holland and Belgium, 50 or 60 thousand lightly armed Nazis on motorcycles were allowed to race through between the completely intact French army of 4 million in France to the south and the combined "Allied" army of 1 million to the north. The bourgeois papers reported this farce as follows:

"Advices here indicated that only 50,000 to 60,000 Germans were involved in the race against a retreat of nearly 1,000,000 Allied troops." (The New York Times, May 22, 1940)

The British troops were withdrawn from the continent and the entry into France continued without opposition. When the British pulled out of France, correspondents reported that "the English had left samples of practically everything belonging to a modern army and they had not destroyed anything." (New York World-Telegram, June 4, 1940) The amount of supplies the "Allies" left to the Nazis can be seen from a headline in the same paper on June 5, 1940 which reported that "NAZIS WIN BOOTY FOR 40 DIVISIONS."

The pattern laid down for the entry of the Nazis was — No opposition. There was, for example, no artillery to hinder the fascists, no sign of the famed French 75s. Correspondents were a bit confused as to the reason for its absence:

"In this connection it is asked here: What has happened to the French artillery? It is a matter of record that the French have the most efficient artillery, from light field pieces including the famous 75s up to railway and other heavy long range guns.

"None of these, any more than French supertanks reputedly weighing in the neighborhood of fifty tons, have figured in reports of the fighting available here." (The New York Times, May 22, 1940)

Not only were there no tanks or artillery but there was no allied airforce. For instance Louis P. Lochner cabled on May 25 that "Our

six days in the operations zone left great questions. Why, thru-out this time, did we never see an Allied plane during the day-time?" (New York Post)

These reports from the "front" by the bourgeois correspondents gave the true picture of what was occurring in Holland, Belgium and France. While concrete reports and eyewitness dispatches showed quite clearly that the path was freely opened for the Nazis, the official propaganda line roared about the "Second World War" and pretended that in France there was occurring a titanic battle on the "Western Front." The R. W. L. paper during those events fell in precisely with this official bourgeois propaganda fakery. The blood-and-thunder story the Fighting Worker told was that:

"The second imperialist war has now reached an unparalleled stage of carnage, death and destruction. As the armies of the German imperialists hurl themselves against those of the Anglo-French..." (June 1, 1940)

The R. W. L., echoing the official bourgeois propagandists, completely ignored facts and presented such myths as:

"The use of men and material has now reached huge proportions and every hour more are being consumed on both sides." (Ibid.)

In so far as the use of men and material was concerned the facts were the exact opposite from what the R. W. L. was babbling. The air was full of mystery about the absence of French artillery, tanks and airforce and the inactivity of the bulk of the huge French Army, its absence from the scene. What did happen was the Nazi terrorization of the French masses, and the unrestricted operation of the Luftwaffe against them.

The fundamental feature of the situation was the absence of real war, with the Nazis being brought into France in collaboration with the "democratic" rulers. Nothing that could be called a military offensive in the real and usual sense of the term occurred. What happened actually was a machination on the international scene which was disguised under a pretense of war. This sham war was evaluated by the R. W. L. in fantastic language which placed it above such really gigantic military offensives as Napoleon's invasion of Russia or the Kaiser's invasion of Belgium and France in 1914:

"After 39 days of the most far-reaching military offensive in history the French bourgeoisie is suing for a separate peace." (Fighting Worker, July 1, 1940. My emphasis- A. J.)

The above-cited R. W. L. story about the greatest offensive in history was a mere paraphrasing of the basic imperialist line to impress the masses with the delusion that real war took place in France. However, in concrete reportage of the events, the bourgeois press revealed many facts to show that the war was a sham, that no battle took place in France. For example:

"It now seems quite clear that there never was a battle of France, a battle for Paris, or whatever it was called in the days before the country's collapse." (Walter Kerr in the New York Herald-Tribune, July 23, 1940. My emphasis - A. J.)

The multiple explanations and inconsistencies which the R. W. L. has presented on the Nazi occupation of France include the part that the French and British military leaders played in the entry of the fascists. The imperialist maneuver to turn France over to Hitler was carried out by the "allied" General Staff which made certain that the troops, artillery and airforce were absent at the proper moment. It was the top allied military leadership which gave the order to retreat before the Nazis so that the fascist hordes could sweep in unopposed, in short which carried out the practical — the military — end of the plan formulated by the imperialists to throw open the country's borders to the Nazi military machine. It was the "Allied" General Staff which paralyzed the workers in so far as resistance was concerned and suppressed any "irresponsible elements" wherever they disobeyed orders, in several instances going so far as to turn over to the Nazis workers who had tried to stop the advance. The "Allied" General Staff arranged things so that the huge, virtually impregnable fortresses of Verdun, Sedan and others were occupied by the Nazis in short order without a battle. The "Allied" military leaders carried out the mechanics of bringing the Nazis into France for the obvious purpose, admitted by the R. W. L. in December 1944, of suppressing the French workers.

In the fantasy spun by the R. W. L. in 1940, however, the situation was made to appear just the opposite. The Fighting Worker told its readers that the "Allied" military leadership — which as we have shown had just turned over the country to Hitler — was busily engaged in determining how to carry out a counter-attack against the Nazis:

"The onmarch of the Nazi blitzkrieg which has now rolled into Paris and forced France to surrender has raised the entire question of military strategy and tactics to the point where all the military big-wigs are trying to figure out how to combat the German lightning war of movement.

"The Anglo-French and American militarists are attempting to determine how to perfect their military machine to counter-attack against Germany." (Fighting Worker, July 1, 1940. My emphasis - A. J.)

It cannot be too strongly or too often emphasized that this bourgeois poison which the R. W. L. was (and still is) spreading was just what the imperialists wanted the masses to believe. These inventions were a cover-up of the collaboration of the "democratic" leaders with the Nazis in putting the French toilers under the Fascist heel.

After the initial fraudulent noise about the alleged Battle of France had died down, many thinking workers began to sense that something very fishy had occurred in France. Both the bourgeoisie and the opportunists had to change their tune considerably

and to give "explanations" as to why the Nazis had entered France without opposition. The R. W. L. was naturally caught up in this stream of re-writing their line. Without ever refuting or even mentioning the fantasy originally presented to the effect that the Anglo-French militarists were "attempting to determine how to perfect their military machine to counter-attack against Germany," the R. W. L. subsequently published the story that the General Staff actually turned the country over to the Nazis:

"The General staff, rather (than) face the revolt of the masses at home, turned the nation over to the German invader." (The Fighting Worker, December 15, 1942)

This is not the entire extent of the R. W. L.'s contradiction, however. Just two months before the above explanation appeared, the Fighting Worker was telling the reader, not that the General Staff had been responsible for the quick and facile entry of the Nazis into France, but that the fascists had been forced to smash their way in. Comparison was even made between France and the bloody battle of Stalingrad:

"Already some 35 days of furious battle have passed and the city of Stalingrad still stands although the resistance of the whole of capitalist France was smashed after a mere 29 days of actual combat." (Fighting Worker, October 10, 1942)

The December 1944 issue of the International News peddles the R. W. L. contradictions from a somewhat different angle. Whereas previously the workers were told that the generals had deliberately turned the country over to the Nazis, in this issue of International News, the new story is that the reason the Nazis overran the country so easily was because the French Generals had made serious military blunders by depending upon the strength of terrain for defense. In discussing military tactics, the R. W. L.'s "military expert" quotes from the military strategist Clausewitz:

"'Never to depend completely on the strength of the terrain and consequently never to be enticed into passive defense by strong terrain.' Although he calls this a principle, and it is only a first rate strategical problem, it is nevertheless of the highest importance. It is one of the many blunders of the French General Staff made in relation to Germany in the present imperialist conflict." (International News, December 1944, p. 7. My emphasis - A. J.)

If the writer of the above had bothered to read the concurrent issue of the Fighting Worker, sister publication to the International News, he might have been no end surprised to learn that there were no blunders whatsoever on the part of the French General Staff but that all had gone according to plan, for in the December 1944 Fighting Worker appears the story, already quoted, that the French capitalists opened "their borders to the military machine of German fascism which in 1940, took over the problem of subduing the French workers." The hokum about military blunders also is a cover up of the "democratic" leaders' collaboration with the Nazis in opening the gates of France to the Nazis.

The motley collection of contradiction, confusion and invention, which in many instances is a paraphrase of the bourgeois propaganda line, is the R. W. L. "position" on the occupation of France, which is based upon the thesis — if something sounds good, throw it in the breach. The promulgation of these inventions is not serious politics, it is sheer humbug that is being foisted off on a gullible section of the R. W. L. membership by writers who depend, not upon Marxist analysis but upon over-active imaginations for their conclusions.

In France there was no inter-imperialist war. There was collaboration between the "Allied" bourgeoisie and the German bourgeoisie in order to have the latter occupy the country for the purpose of crushing the masses, for assimilating into the Nazi war machine the huge productive force and military supplies of yet another capitalist country. The only warfare that occurred in France was a one-sided civil war of the ruling class against the workers, and in that war the ruling class was victorious while the proletariat was defeated by imported fascism.

The general tactic of the imperialists was to give the Nazis a free hand in Europe for organizing the attack on the Soviet Union. Vast territories were turned over to the Nazis by the "democratic" imperialists. The details of the various parts of this tactic have been described in the past issues of THE BULLETIN in connection with bringing the Nazis into Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, Greece, Yugoslavia, and other places. To cover the basic inter-imperialist collaboration on a world scale, the pretense of war was launched between the "democracies" and the Axis.

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In regard to this position, the R. W. L. raises a question which we have answered many times before and will answer again. Their question is this:

"Why all the imperialist armies didn't openly unite to smash the Soviet Union is likewise not made clear. Did they have to conduct a 'sham' war, which costs American imperialism alone almost 500 billion dollars? What was there to gain? Did America fear a revolution at home if it attacked the Workers State? The very suggestion is preposterous, particularly in 1939. The same is true of Britain." (International News, January 1945, p. 3. Emphasis in original.)

Before answering the question about an open, united attack on the Soviet Union, we feel it necessary to say a few words about the R. W. L.'s allegation that the "war" has cost American imperialism almost 500 billion dollars. The "war" has not cost American imperialism a single cent. The American imperialists, as the R. W. L. knows well and constantly shouts, have made billions in profits, in fact, the most fabulous profits in all history, out of the "Second World War." That the R. W. L. "Marxists" have to resort to such infantile prattling to "refute" our line is a revealing measure of the shaky ground on which they stand.

To come back to the main point, why the "democratic" imperialists could not openly unite with the Nazis in an assault on the Soviet Union. According to International News of January 1945, we have not made this clear. Actually not only have we made this perfectly clear, but the R. W. L. itself in 1940 made it perfectly clear. In 1940 the R. W. L. showed that in England, for example, there was a powerful labor sentiment against a war with the Soviet Union and described that sentiment as "of great significance." In 1940, even after the Stalin-Hitler pact had been announced, the R. W. L. declared:

"The fact that over 241 labor organizations in England came out against starting a war against the Soviet Union and proposed that the Labor Party take up active opposition to the war government is of great significance. It indicates the general trend of class relations even at this early stage of the war. On the heels of this labor blast against its leaders and the war government, 'liberal' ex-Minister Lloyd George also talked against the plan to war on the Soviets." (Fighting Worker, March 15, 1940. My emphasis - A. J.)

Such a sentiment made it impossible for the British imperialists to hurl their masses against the Soviet Union. Such a sentiment existed not only in England, but also in France where the Stalinists had huge forces. The Stalin-Hitler Pact no doubt alienated many workers, but the situation was a million miles removed from any possibility of mobilizing the French masses against the Soviet Union. It is a remarkable fact that even in such an important fascist country as Italy, only an insignificant handful could be sent against the Soviet Union. Only the German masses with their vanguard decapitated by a particularly potent and efficient fascist regime could serve as a possible spearhead against the Soviet Union.

There is still a further fact that made impossible an open, united assault. The masses of the "democracies" definitely viewed the advancing Nazi power as the chief enemy, and would absolutely not tolerate any open union with Nazi Germany. Such an open unity between the "democracies" and the fascist powers would have resulted in an explosion in the former which would have torn the basis out of the whole endeavor of world imperialism. No other tactic could be followed but to hurl the Nazi spearhead against the Soviet Union, while the "democracies" freed the path and pretended to war against Nazi Germany.

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As soon as the position is presented that the imperialists are only pretending to be at war among themselves, that in its inter-imperialist phases the "Second World War" was and is a sham, the question is immediately asked: What about the casualties and destruction? Do not the American and British casualties and material losses prove the war of these imperialist powers is a real one? The R. W. L. raises this question:

"Is it a 'sham' war? One third of England's buildings are severely damaged or destroyed. The Downing St. govern-



ment itself attests to 700,000 casualties. Britain has lost  $2/3$  of its export trade, one quarter of its merchant marine. America has spent hundreds of billions; it has over 200,000 casualties." (International News, January 1945, p. 4)

In this statement the R. W. L. points to a situation at a very late stage of the development of the so-called "Second World War." To understand the role played by casualties and destruction it is necessary to examine the "Second World War" in its development. In the beginning on the "Western Front" there was an eight months Sitzkrieg. Casualties and destruction were conspicuous by their absence. The "Second World War" in this phase was openly called The Phoney War. The R. W. L. leaders do not like to bring up this phase when they make their point about casualties and destruction. It is obvious that the imperialists could not continue indefinitely with a Sitzkrieg. The more the Nazis' path was being opened by the "democracies," the more glaring would the Sitzkrieg have become to the masses. If for five years not a shot had been fired, even the R. W. L. would have known that it is a sham war. With such a policy, it would have been patent to everybody that the "war" was a sham. Inevitably, there would have been an explosion in the "democracies" against such an unconcealed policy of freeing the path for the Nazis. The imperialists were compelled to create the semblance of a real war. For a long time the see-saw "war" in Africa served this purpose. Gradually, casualties and destruction, unavoidable to the imperialists to conceal the sham nature of the war, mounted in quantity. Let it not be forgotten that the "Second World War" in its inter-imperialist phase is over five years old. Naturally in such a long period, the casualties and destruction grew to fairly large proportions. If a "man from Mars," falling on the earth after five years of this process and not knowing about the Sitzkrieg and the consistent policy of deliberately opening the path for the Nazis, viewed the present scene, naturally he would be completely confused and deeply impressed by the casualties and destruction. The R.W.L. leaders give precisely such a "man from Mars" analysis of the role of the casualties and destruction.

In a sham war of the past analyzed by Marx and Engels, a similar process occurred. This was the Crimean "War." Marx and Engels held that the Crimean "War" was an utter sham in which the Anglo-French gang pretended to be at war with Russia while behind the scenes there existed a secret alliance among these powers for the dismemberment of Turkey. At first there was a Sitzkrieg, as Marx and Engels showed. Gradually, the Anglo-French imperialists, faced by the dissatisfaction of the masses at the lack of action against Czarist Russia, were compelled to cook up "action." Marx and Engels demonstrated that this "action" on the "front" was sheer "busy work" to fool the Anglo-French soldiers and the masses and had no military purpose against Russia whatever. Nevertheless in the course of this deliberately concocted "action" thousands of lives were lost and enormous destruction resulted. Marx and Engels, however, viewed the situation in its development and to the very end, in the face of the casualties and destruction, maintained that the Crimean "War" was a sham. It is worthwhile to cite Franz Mehring's brief summary of the position of Marx and Engels on the Crimean "War":

"Despite the million lives and the millions of pounds which the war cost, both Marx and Engels regarded it as a pseudo-war as far as France and, in particular, England were concerned." (Mehring, Karl Marx, Chapter "The Crimean War and the Crisis," p. 267. My emphasis -A.J.)

The object of the present imperialist ruling gang has been to re-establish capitalism in the Soviet Union and thus to bolster the tottering foundations of the world capitalist system. This is an enormous historic aim. The imperialist masters will go to any lengths to carry it out. The lives of the masses and the material expenditures required mean absolutely nothing to the ruling clique in fighting for so epoch-making an objective. When the leaders of the R.W.L. raise a seemingly big point about the casualties and destruction, they put on an air of incredulity as if it cannot penetrate their understanding that the imperialists would resort to such bloody deeds to effect their secret purposes. The R.W.L. leaders understand quite well what we are saying and they know there is nothing strange about our contention that the casualties and destruction in the so-called inter-imperialist war of the present are a deliberate brutality engineered to conceal the underlying collaboration of world imperialism. The expostulation and outcries of "Fantasy", etc., in the R.W.L. writings are simply a means of distracting the workers from the essence of our contentions.

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The R.W.L. points to the failure of Japan to attack the Soviet Union as a flaw in our analysis. Their own explanation of Japan's withholding is the following:

"The antagonism between the 'allies' Japan and Germany was played upon by the Soviet bureaucracy. The fear of a drive by the U.S. and Britain forced Japan to hold off." (International News, January 1945, p. 4.)

Insofar as the alleged antagonism between Germany and Japan goes, this is a typical R.W.L. invention for which there is not one shred of evidence. These "theoreticians" have a habit of concocting "international factors" to suit their needs. The possible spheres of interest of German and Japanese imperialism are located far apart, the former power having had its eye on the Soviet Union and the latter being deeply involved in Asia. Does the R.W.L. pretend that German and Japanese imperialism had a hidden conflict over China? Or, if German and Japanese imperialism had a conflict over the Soviet Union, then certainly Japan would have attacked the latter to grab the Eastern half. On this score the R.W.L. explanation explains nothing.

As regards the alleged fear Japan had of an attack by the U.S. and Great Britain, here is how the R.W.L. itself describes the actions of the latter:

"The 'democratic' capitalists practically handed over Europe to Hitler, and retreated before Japan in the Far East, for fear of the workers and colonial slaves." (Fighting Worker, September 19, 1942. My emphasis - A.J.)

We have given the real explanation of this so-called "retreat." Far from being a threat to Japan, the "democratic" imperialists deliberately handed over to temporary Japanese policing such vital places as the Philippines, HongKong, Singapore, Malaya, Burma, etc., We have given detailed descriptions of these events in past issues of this publication.

The R.W.L.'s explanation of why Japan did not attack the Soviet Union is completely false. From all indications it was the imperialists' calculation that the power of the Nazi Army sufficed to do the job of destroying the Soviet Union without involving the weakened Japanese forces, drained already before 1941 by the tremendous task of suppressing the Chinese, Manchurian and Korean masses and spread out over vast areas. Japan's role was limited by world imperialism to immobilizing a large Soviet army in the East. The imperialists miscalculated on the ability of the Nazi Army and when it became clear that the Nazis had failed, it was too late to resort to an adventure in the form of launching a third-rate power like Japan against Stalin's Far Eastern Army. A future attack on the Soviet Union can have hope of success for imperialism only if carried out by first class powers like the U.S. and Great Britain.

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To sum up. In their efforts to refute our position the leaders of the R.W.L. have enmeshed themselves in some sharp contradictions. These contradictions stem not from an inability to grasp the truth but from their rejection of reality as a general line and admission of it when it suits their purposes. On the one hand they persist in painting the present period of history as "imperialist war". On the other hand they resort to journalistic gyrations to explain away the weird and highly "mysterious" military feats which both the "Axis" and the "democracies" have performed for a stretch of nearly six years. As we have conclusively shown, as a result of its position, the R.W.L. is compelled to offer various self-contradictory explanations for one and the same phenomenon.

Our position arose out of the entire chain of developments that preceded and followed the Munich Accord. In review, this position has stood the test of history. It was verified from the first days of the "war" by the strange absence of any fighting for many months during the so-called Sitzkrieg. It was proved in the fantastic occupation and later re-occupation of France. The total lack of struggle around such formidable military barriers as the fortresses of Sedan, Verdun, Metz and others indicated that this "war" was of a different nature from that of 1914.

In THE BULLETIN we have produced a mass of authentic documentary material to show that the "fighting policy" of the imperialist rulers in the so-called "Second World War" is a sham and a cover for underlying collaboration. The R.W.L., on the other hand, has published nothing but mutually exclusive versions of key events (France, the Soviet Union) and a heap of distilled "revolutionary" abstractions not unlike those that were poured out in profusion by the Stalinist "Comintern" in the "Third Period."

It is not at all an accident that the R.W.L. advances the story that the capitalist powers have been locked in an imperialist combat similar to 1914-1918. The political family of which the R.W.L.

was born and bred left an indelible imprint on it. Let every revolutionary worker weigh the significant fact that when Chamberlain and Daladier declared "war", every pseudo-Bolshevik tendency from Stalin's "Comintern" down advanced the thesis of a "second imperialist world war." The Browders and Fosters for almost two years were dinning into the ears of their victims that the imperialists were at each other's throats as in 1914-1918. Cannon, Shachtman and the Left Socialists had no deep-seated differences on this characterization. It was only when the Nazis opened the real war (the war against the Soviet Union) for which the sham set-up in the West paved the way that the Browders changed the label they pasted on the "war" amongst the imperialists. For the Cannons and Shachtmans there was no point in singing a new tune - the basic deception in either case was that the relation among the imperialists was that of real war.

The R.W.L., as we have shown on other occasions, is a "Left" tag-along of the Trotsky tendency which in turn is a branch of the Stalinist political system. The R.W.L.'s connecting links with the Stalinist system are many and varied. The most subtle one is the slogan of "marching separately and striking together" with Stalinism on the pretense that at certain moments and in special situations Stalinism can operate in a progressive way. However, true to their two-faced attitude on many vital issues, the leaders of the R.W.L. are constrained to acknowledge the fact that "Stalinism" is reactionary at all times." (International News, May 1945, p. 12.)

The strongest political link of the R.W.L. to Stalinism is its persistent support to the hoary lie that Trotsky's loyal "opposition" in Russia was a Marxist tendency fighting against Stalinism, that Trotsky "merely" committed "principled errors"! The R.W.L. conceals Trotsky's treacherous horse-deal with Zinoviev and Kamenev whereby he officially renounced his Marxist theory of the Permanent Revolution. The R.W.L. hides the truth about Trotsky's support to Stalin's "Lenin Levy." In short, the R.W.L. hides from the workers all the facts which we alone have exposed proving that Trotsky was a supporter of Stalinism maneuvering under "opposition" disguise.

The entire Stalinist system with all its political branches, including such groups as the R.W.L., is the basic obstacle to the building of a Marxist International. The task of the revolutionists is to break every political link which holds the workers to this monstrous system of betrayal and counter-revolution and to revive the Marxist movement on the only possible basis -- complete political independence from Stalinism and all other opportunist tendencies.

A. James

May 1945

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# BREAK WITH THE MASKED SUPPORTERS OF STALINISM

Issued by -- THE BULLETIN --

**THE** grim scene which confronts the toilers this May Day holds a ray of hope only if the major sections of the proletariat enter upon a Marxist path. To free themselves from the butchery, persecution, exploitation and suffering of this period of history is possible for the toilers only on the condition of a clean break with the various fraudulent political tendencies which claim to operate in the interests of the masses.

Within the workingclass at this time, unfortunately, the political situation in recent months has become particularly acute, for the chief opportunist, counter-revolutionary force in the workingclass, Stalinism, has undergone an enormous increase in influence, a growth to new power for treachery. The most turbulent centers of the world, Europe and Asia, are living examples of this fact. In France, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Belgium, Finland, China, the Stalinist bureaucrats are everywhere in the forefront, in control of the most active sections of the masses.

**THIS** phenomenon is one which we have often pointed out and warned against. Whenever a crisis occurs and the masses turn Leftward, however confused that turn may be or how great or small its extent, the chief strata of the proletariat inevitably come under the sway of the Stalinist bureaucrats whom they mistake for a radical, liberating political current.

Despite all the betrayals perpetrated by the Stalinist leadership, the masses have not been disillusioned by Stalinism. To believe that the treachery of Stalinism automatically enlightens the workers and causes them to break with Stalinism is itself one of the worst illusions. Stalinism can be overcome only in the course of a political struggle by a Marxist tendency.

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**THE** majority of the subjectively revolutionary, anti-Stalinist workers are gathered around the Trotsky movement, the so-called Fourth International. In a period like the present, May Day has meaning only as a day of reckoning, a calling to accounts. What line does the Trotsky movement offer to the workers in regard to that key question, Stalinism? A correct estimation of that line is of basic importance for an understanding of the total political nature of the Trotsky movement.

Stalinism is dominant in the so-called "Liberation" and "Partisan" movements in Europe. These Stalinist-led movements control the most energetic, courageous and self-sacrificing of the toilers. The workers of the "Partisan" movements of present-day Europe are the com-

rades of the "Loyalist" workers of Spain who for almost three years shed their blood with unsurpassed heroism. Unfortunately, however, these workers are also the political counterpart of the "Loyalist" workers who for all their bravery went down to a bloody defeat because they followed the Stalinist traitors.

It is no accident that the Trotsky leaders in explaining their line on the current "Partisan" movements bring up Spain of 1936-1939 as an illustration. The reason is: - The Trotsky leadership is introducing again the line it had in Spain in that epoch-making situation. The essence of that line, according to their own admission, was the posing of the issue as one of "Democracy Versus Fascism,"

In an article, "Why We Supported 'EAM-ELAS' Struggles," M. Morrison gives the Trotskyite evaluation of the Greek events of several months ago.

"The leadership of the EAM is similar in character to the Spanish Popular Front Government. The Greek masses undoubtedly want a fundamental social change. That was also true of the Spanish masses in the Spanish civil war. But the Greek masses were following a leadership which limited itself to a struggle against the reactionary forces represented mainly by the monarchy and supported by British imperialism, just as the Spanish masses followed a leadership which limited itself to a struggle against fascism and for bourgeois democracy." (The Militant, February 24, 1945, p. 3)

The tie-up of this evaluation with the Trotsky line on the Spanish Civil War is a clear and unmistakable one which the writer of the above article draws concretely:

"In the Spanish civil war the Trotskyists gave material support to the Loyalist Government in its fight against Franco because we considered that fight to be one for bourgeois democracy against fascism." (Ibid. Our emphasis - The Bulletin.)

The first thing that should come to the mind of the workers is that this very same evaluation of the Loyalist Government's "fight" was also put forth by none other than the Loyalist Government itself, by the treacherous Stalinist bureaucrats, by the Social-Democrats and by every opportunist scoundrel involved in the Spanish betrayal of 1936-1939. In fact, the line that the Spanish Civil War was a fight of bourgeois democracy versus fascism was particularly the Stalinist line, the gist of their People's Front fakery. Its application to Spain was anticipated at Stalin's Seventh Congress of the "Comintern" held about a year before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. "Democracy-versus-fascism" was the slogan which the Stalinist bureaucrats dinned incessantly into the ears of the workers.

This fraudulent slogan was a concealment of the fact that the bourgeois democratic "Loyalist" Government was completely disloyal to the workers and totally loyal to Franco, the agent of Spanish capitalism. From its very inception the Stalinist-led "Loyalist" Government deliberately protected the fascists and during the course of the Civil War opened front after front to them, eventually all of Spain. It was through this process that Franco was victorious. These

facts were well known at that time to the most advanced workers and the Trotsky leaders were compelled to pay some homage to this knowledge. As "Left" trimmings for their line of support to the treacherous bourgeois democratic "Loyalist" Government, the Trotsky leaders were compelled to admit some of its betrayals. For example, how the "Loyalist" regime was deliberately opening the front to Franco:

"Fearing the revolution more than Franco, the government was directly sabotaging the Aragon and Levante fronts held by the C.N.T. Fearing the revolution more than Franco, the government was giving fascist agents (Asensio, Villalba, etc. etc.) the opportunity to betray the Loyalist fortresses to Franco (Badajoz, Irun, Malaga.)" (F. Morrow, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain, p. 87)

What remains of the yarn that the "Loyalist" Government was fighting for bourgeois democracy? Absolutely nothing. It was and is a total myth. The Stalinist-dominated regime was working for only one purpose, to betray the revolutionary-minded masses to the fascist butchers. The crisis in Spanish capitalism could be solved for the capitalists only through the victory of fascism. All the opportunists and all the capitalist agents worked for fascism. The "Loyalist" gang concealed its connivance with Franco by a pretense that it was "fighting for democracy." The Trotsky leaders aided and abetted this fakery as can be seen from their own formulation of the issue of the Spanish Civil War — "democracy versus fascism" with support to the "Loyalist" Government.

The real issue of the Spanish Civil War was — proletarian dictatorship versus fascism. Only a proletarian dictatorship coming to power through the victory of Marxism in the proletarian vanguard could have defeated fascism in Spain. The Trotskyites were "Left" hangers-on of the Stalinist Popular Front, disguising their support to the Stalinist line with verbal "criticism."

Just as the Trotskyites attributed certain non-existent policies to the "Loyalist" Government, so they make claims that "the Greek masses were following a leadership which limited itself to a struggle against the reactionary forces represented mainly by the monarchy and supported by British imperialism..." (cited above). From the Trotskyites' own writings it can be shown that the Stalinist gang in Greece had no policy against the monarchist forces or against the British imperialists, but on the contrary supported the Greek monarchy and the British imperialists.

"The Greek Stalinists, on orders from Moscow, changed their line after the Teheran Conference, to support of the monarchy." (The Militant, December 23, 1944, p. 3)

"The record thus shows that from the beginning, the Stalinist bureaucrats sought the leadership of the Greek workers and peasants in order to deliver them at the appropriate time to the British executioners." (Ibid.)

Such are the Trotskyites' admission when they "criticize" the Stalinists. ~~What~~ then is the meaning of their fabrication of a Stalinist anti-monarchist and anti-British imperialist role? This is the core

of the fraudulent line they foist on the workers under the cover of "critical" phrases. This is the real nature of the patterning of the Trotskyite line on Greece on their line in the Spanish Civil War, the invention of demagogic excuses for a line in support of Stalinist fakery.

If the Stalinists in Greece eventually find it necessary to introduce the full Popular Front line with its noise about "supporting democracy," they will find that their path has been well greased by the Trotskyites. Should the Trotskyite influence remain dominant in the subjectively revolutionary, anti-Stalinist sections of the workers, there will be no center of real struggle against the Stalinists' demagogic of "fighting for democracy."

The Marxist line for the workers of Greece remains what it always has been: Break with the Stalinist-led structure of opportunism and marshal the vanguard in a new Marxist party which will lead a struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship of democratically elected Soviets. Such a Marxist force, exposing the Stalinists and their "Left" hangers-on, the Trotskyites, will steer the toilers clear of such traps as the "democracy" fakery of the opportunists. It will teach the workers that the slogan of "democracy versus fascism" is a concealment of the fact that "democracy" represents imperialism, that it strives to assure the victory of any other form of oppression the imperialists decide on, even the most bloody open military or fascist dictatorships.

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THE line of the Trotskyites on bourgeois democracy is a repudiation of the foundations of Marxism-Leninism. When Lenin returned to Russia upon the overthrow of the Czarist monarchy, the keynote of his line was the repudiation of the slogan of a bourgeois democratic republic. In his famous April Thesis the central point was the rejection of the slogan of a democratic republic and the issuing of a call for a Soviet regime. This was the feature which aroused such fierce opposition to Lenin in the early days of the so-called Dual Power period even in his own party. But history proved Lenin to be absolutely correct. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the Russian toilers were filled to the brim with bourgeois democratic illusions and looked to a democratic republic as the very pinnacle of human achievement did not deter Lenin from repudiating the slogan of a democratic republic. Lenin's line was against falling in with the illusions of the masses; his tactic was to combat these illusions and to offer a scientifically correct policy even though at this or that moment the bulk of the masses did not accept it.

The Trotskyites have exactly the opposite line. The Italian Trotsky group (Workers Communist Party of Italy) has issued a program of which the very first point reads as follows:

"Abolition of the monarchy and the institution of a democratic republic." (The Militant, March 17, 1945, p. 3)

The Trotskyite adherent may argue; Well, the Italian masses have not gone through the experience of a democratic republic, hence this slogan is in order; such an experience will disillusion them with a



democratic republic and make them receptive to the idea of a proletarian dictatorship. To which we reply: - Had Lenin argued this way, the Bolshevik revolution would never have occurred. The Russian masses also had not gone through the experience of a democratic republic when Lenin arrived in Russia on April 16, 1917. The masses were expecting a democratic republic. But Lenin did not follow the line of the Mensheviks whose stand for a democratic republic concealed the preparations for a military dictatorship of the capitalists. Lenin cut clean through all lines of political fakery with the only possible sword: - the proletariat to power through the Soviets.

From every angle, the Trotskyite line is an ultra-Rightist one falling in generally with the present ultra-Rightist zigzag of Stalinism.

The bourgeois democratic slogans which the Trotskyites raise are not put forth simply in "pure" or abstract form. They are made to fit in specifically with the machinations of the Stalinist bureaucrats. Thus, the Trotskyite slogan for a "democratic republic" in Italy is issued in a certain context which shows its real intent. According to the Italian Trotskyites this "democratic" republic is to take the form of a "Socialist-Stalinist Government" (see The Militant, containing the program of the Italian Trotskyites, cited above). The Trotskyites, to the extent of their influence in Italy, are opening the path for Stalinism to achieve the very pinnacle of opportunity for betrayal, governmental power — only to lead to a military dictatorship of imperialism.

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THE urging of the establishment of Stalinist-led governments is a practically universal one with the Trotskyite leaders. In Belgium the Trotskyites call for a government of the Belgian Labor Party and the Stalinist Party (The Militant, March 31, 1945). In France the Trotskyite slogan is "Thorez to Power" (Fourth International, October 1944, p. 295). These slogans have been concretely issued in situations which are at white heat, where the masses are looking far to the Left, and where the influence of Stalinism is particularly powerful, and where the possibility of mass outbursts are concretely present. In a word, these slogans, which indicate the general Trotskyite line in the present period, have been advanced specifically where the situation is most desperate for the bourgeoisie.

In a country like the United States the Trotskyite support to Stalinism is less extreme in form, but none the less factual. Here its concrete aspects are confined, so far, to giving the Stalinist bureaucrats electoral support in trade unions and in elections for public office. Indeed, the line of electoral support has been made a general position and a promise for the future. Naturally, this line is cloaked with phrases about its being in the interests of the workers:

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

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WE call upon the workers to keep the Stalinist counter-revolutionaries out of every place, to fight any attempt on their part to extend their influence, to work for the ultimate destruction of the whole structure of Stalinism. Along this path of fighting against the opportunists, the workers will be able to fashion a new Marxist party which will lead the masses in the overthrow of capitalism. We maintain that history has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that a line of "bourgeois democracy versus fascism" is disastrous to the toilers, that a line of support to the Stalinist bureaucrats, however disguised with "critical" phrases, works for reaction. The millions of workingclass corpses strewn over the world by the treachery of bourgeois democracy and of Stalinism are a testimony to the truth of this contention. Unfortunately, the Trotsky line of support to Stalinism has so far won out in the most advanced sections of the proletariat. To a major degree this accounts for the bloody disasters which the toilers have suffered. The revolutionary, anti-Stalinist workers can become a real force for liberation only in so far as they break with the Trotsky leaders and unite with the Marxists in building a Party to lead a struggle for a proletarian dictatorship based on democratically elected Soviets.

AGAINST THE TROTSKYITE LINE OF SUPPORT TO STALINISM!

FOR A MARXIST FIGHT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF REACTION, FOR A REAL STRUGGLE TO OVERTHROW THE BOURGEOISIE AND CREATE A PROLETARIAN SOCIALIST REGIME!

THE BULLETIN  
May 1, 1945

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THE METHOD OF THE R.W.L.

**M**ARXISTS often strive to illuminate the path of the proletariat by indicating and to a degree predicting the course of history. The information they gather flows in the main from enemy channels. Many important facts are withheld from publication, and facts which are given are always misinterpreted and colored to suit the requirements of the ruling class. Consequently, even the greatest theoretical minds possessing a stupendous power of analysis sometimes commit errors of prediction (Marx, Engels, Lenin). There is nothing criminal about making an honest error of prediction, and a revolutionist who falls into such an error will never attempt to palm it off as a correct prognosis.

An opportunist, however, invariably set on building himself up in the eyes of trusting workers as an infallible "Marxist theoretician," will take the opposite course. After making a whole series of false predictions he draws a veil over the workers' eyes and assures them that the "illumination" he has been giving them is true Marxist light and that the path of history unfolded exactly as he had predicted it would.

The often-used method to which many fakers in the labor camp resort is very ingenious. It consists in presenting to the workers some past prediction of a general character accompanied with a boast of theoretical farsightedness, keeping mum meanwhile about the mass of wrong prognoses produced by reactionary or muddled political views. A case in point is the leadership of the R.W.L. Recently this leadership introduced in its paper the Fighting Worker a column: "Words That Came True — The Fighting Worker Wrote History in Advance." A politically naive worker with no knowledge of the "History" written by the R. W. L. leadership "in advance," receives an impression of infallibility of the "theoretical" vision of the R. W. L. This impression is strengthened when he comes upon a statement such as the following one: "History has verified our every prediction." (International News, February-March 1943, p. 1)

A wary worker, however, who does not trust anyone on a mere sayso, will look into the files of the R. W. L. press. And as he reads those files carefully he will realize that the impression which the R. W. L. leaders give him is false. A few samples of what he will find in the R. W. L. press suffice to show why.

In the January 21, 1942 issue "The Fighting Worker wrote history in advance" in the following fashion:

"Before winter is over Germany will push into the Near East or Spain, or both, in a drive to break out of the Anglo-American blockade. This will involve Turkey and will tax the resources of the Allies to the fullest extent."

That winter was soon over, and then another, and then the third

passed, but the R. W. L.'s "history" written "in advance" did not materialize; as a matter of fact, real history took an altogether different course.

In that same issue of three years ago the R. W. L.'s "history in advance" prophesied that soon not only Turkey would enter the war but also that Stalin would fight Japan:

"Before this war is much older, Turkey will be in it, and the Red Army will be fighting the Japanese."

Three long years have gone by. Nothing of the sort has come true. Did the R. W. L. leaders ever acknowledge that they had written this "history in advance" falsely? No! Were they, at least, honest enough to leave out of their publications any pretense of being infallible "theoretical" oracles? The very opposite. It was around a year after they wrote the above-cited "prognosis" that they brazenly lied to the workers: "History has verified our EVERY prediction." (Our capitals)

Let us take a look at another prediction, concerning Japan, made two months after the Nazis opened the attack upon the Soviet Union; under the headline, "Japan Faces War Decision," the R.W.L. said:

"Much more probable is a Japanese move against the Soviet Union, as soon as the Red Army seems sufficiently weakened.

"Japan faces the most critical stage of her imperialist history, since an involvement with Russia will surely be used by the U. S. imperialists to strike for their own interests." (Fighting Worker, August 13, 1941)

Of course this "prognostication" turned out to be nothing but idle words which never came true. Stalin's army retreated to the Volga but Japan never got involved with Russia. In plain words, this was one of those predictions of the leaders of the R. W. L. which was proved to be false, exposing their later boast of every prediction coming true as an unadulterated lie.

It would be worth while to cite one of the false predictions of the R. W. L. with respect to the Spanish Loyalist People's Front Government in 1937 when Negrin was put at its head. The article embodying the prediction was titled: "Spanish Peoples Front Government Moves Toward Open Dictatorship."

"Soon the Socialists and Stalinists will be given the same treatment they give today to the POUM and the anarchist workers and militants. Negrin will be replaced by an even more open bourgeois tool." (Fighting Worker, July 15, 1937)

What actually occurred was that the Spanish People's Front Government, following the rise of Negrin, fell completely into the hands of the Stalinist gang. As to Negrin, he was not replaced but remained as the head of the People's Front Government until the very end of the civil war (1939) and dutifully carried out Stalinist policies. This was another incorrect R. W. L. prediction.

Some of the most fantastic predictions of the R. W. L. were made in connection with the role of the Soviet Union in the war situation. The leaders of the R. W. L. presented the prognosis that the Soviet Union was becoming an appendage to German imperialism and as such was being drawn into the war situation:

"Despite the wishes of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, the Workers State, because of the fatal policy of the Stalin cancer, is being drawn into the war as a tail to the German imperialists." (Fighting Worker, November 15, 1939)

Proceeding along this line of prognosis the R. W. L. leaders immediately after the conclusion of the Stalin-Finnish War, forecast that the Soviet Union, acting as a tail of German imperialism, would become involved in a war against the British Empire. The possible war theatres were indicated as the British possessions in Asia or the Balkans:

"Soviets will soon be in war again.

"Even though the Soviet Union is temporarily out of the military phase of the war, as a tail of German Imperialism Russia is bound to be involved in the very near future — possibly in Afganistan, India, or in the Balkans. The peace is only very temporary." (Fighting Worker, April 1, 1940)

Of course everybody knows that the Soviet Union never entered the war as a tail to German Imperialism and has not fought the British Empire. It is definitely clear that the R. W. L.'s boastful statement that every one of its predictions came true is a shameless lie.

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We ourselves have made many predictions; some were correct, some incorrect. We shall now advance another prediction, but this one, we know, will be fulfilled to the letter because it is fool-proof.

People who hide their errors and set themselves up as infallible in order to build up prestige for themselves among the workers, act not as revolutionists but as downright careerists — and will continue to act so.

George Marlen

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THE FUSION WITH THE MUSTEITES

A REVEALING EPISODE

RECENTLY the Trotsky leadership has been going to great lengths into the history of their movement. Many articles and some books have been published on this theme. The announced purpose of this campaign is to instruct the Trotskyite workers in the "Marxist" character and "principled" line of its leadership. Amongst other things, the Trotsky leaders have referred to the various blocs and combinations which they made with other tendencies. Certain interesting features in those fusions, throwing a revealing light on the nature of the Trotsky leadership, have been invariably left out by the Trotskyite historians. This column has been systematically supplying these features. In the present instance we take up an aspect of the Trotskyist fusion with Muste.

In 1928 a former preacher, A. J. Muste, formed a group under a "progressive" coloration designed to hook those trade union workers who were repelled by the more open agents of the bosses. Backed by a few wealthy "angels," Muste quickly won some adherents, and published a paper, Labor Age.

The very first manifesto of the Muste group met with a sharp condemnation from the Trotskyite Communist League of America. The function of the Muste group was correctly described as follows:

"The recent manifesto of the pseudo-progressive group of the 'Labor Age' is primarily a reflection of this discontent in the ranks of the unions which the reformists seek to divert into harmless channels. The appearance of the new movement, even in a nebulous form, with pseudo-progressives at its head, is a sign of the abdication of the Communist and the Left Wing who in recent years have led these unions. It is a warning that continued neglect of the struggle in the old unions clears the road for the reformist stultification of potentially revolutionary movements within them." (The Militant, February 15, 1929, p. 5. My emphasis - A. B.)

The Muste group developed and took the form of a "Conference for Progressive Labor Action." The role of the Musteites in the trade union movement, that of "left" apologists for the AFL bureaucracy, was shown clearly in the field of the textile and mine workers where the Muste group had some forces and exercised a measure of influence. Their essential function in the union movement was characterized by the Trotsky leaders with scientific precision:

"The C. P. L. A. people are playing the role of come-ons for the labor fakers." (The Militant, January 25, 1930)

Muste's C. P. L. A. talked about eschewing politics in the trade union movement. However, the Trotsky leaders were not fooled by the "a political" professions of the Musteites and classified them as an undeclared wing of the Social Democracy:

"The social-democracy — from its extreme Right wing in the A. F. of L. bureaucracy to its extreme left wing in the Muste group — is the staunchest bulwark of bourgeois democracy against the proletarian revolutionary movement." (The Militant, July 25, 1931, p. 4)

In July-August 1931 Muste's group dropped its "non-partisan" political disguise and openly proclaimed itself as a distinct political organization. The only change, according to the Trotsky leaders, was that Muste and his followers were now openly transferring their treacherous union role onto the political field. Likewise in classifying the membership of Muste's organization, Cannon-Shachtman failed to discern the presence of any revolutionists:

"The organization consists of intellectuals, pacifists, S.P. members and leaders who themselves need leadership." (The Militant, May 27, 1933, p. 2)

And finally, as late as June 1933 the Trotsky leaders prophesied the collapse of Muste's outfit, dubbed its leaders fake militants and characterized the C. P. L. A. as a sterile exponent of reformism:

"It is plain, therefore, that the collapse of Musteism is inevitable. With the revolutionary upsurge of the American working class these fake 'militants' of the CPLA will stand exposed as barren and futile evangelists of reformism." (The Militant, June 1933, p. 2)

The line of the Cannon-Shachtman leadership on the Muste outfit was thus clear. From the beginning they classified Muste as a "left" labor faker whose function was to cover up the betrayals of the A. F. L. bureaucracy with a sugar coating of radical phrases. When the C. P. L. A. decided to dispense with its a political cloak and definitely announced its formation into a distinctly political grouping, the Trotsky leaders stuck to their analysis of this tendency as "evangelists of reformism."

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About six months later Cannon and Shachtman suddenly announced that negotiations were taking place with Muste for fusion. The true estimate of Muste as being a "left" labor faker and the characterization of his group as reformist disappeared from the Trotsky press. For some time the negotiations stalled but with Trotsky's July 1934 letter introducing the French Turn an impetus was given to the negotiations with Muste. By the time fusion was accomplished in December 1934, Cannon and Shachtman had already made a complete about-face on the character of the Muste group. In describing the vote at the Muste convention for fusion The Militant went into raptures about the past role of Muste's C.P.L.A. and gave it a clean bill of health:

"This was the last and most important act in the career of an organization that within the few years of its existence initiated and led some of the most significant and militant struggles of the American proletariat, blazed the trail in the trade unions of honest, militant, left-wing leadership, built the greatest of existing unemployed organizations and won for itself an impressive niche in the history of the working class march to power in America." (The Militant, December 8, 1934)

Before fusion with Muste and his followers was in the perspective of the Cannon leadership, The Militant wrote in quite a different vein about the role of the Muste group in the unions. Here is a typical sample:

"As soon as the working class showed signs of moving away from the bourgeoisie, and even from reformism, the Musteites came forward as a barrier in the path of the workers' advance seeking to turn them back to reformism by devious routes, but under no conditions to allow them to take the natural road of development towards Communism. Since its organization, this has been the primary function of the C. P. L. A. Developed on the trade union field as a political bloc of yellow socialists, labor bureaucrats, pseudo-progressives, and finally embracing turncoats from Communism like Miller and Benjamin and even further 'left' — the Lovestoneite group itself — the C. P. L. A. now seeks to transfer its functions more directly into the political field."  
(August 8, 1931, p. 1)

Such was the character of the Muste group which for reasons of factional unity was now advertised as having "blazed the trail in the trade unions of honest, militant, left-wing leadership" and consequently won for itself "an impressive niche" in the labor movement!

One may imagine that the "re-evaluation" of and fusion with Muste was prompted by his repudiation of his rotten past — "come-on for the labor fakors." However, this is not the basis on which the Trotsky leaders form and conclude combinations. Well aware of this fact, Muste frankly stated:

"We are not repudiating our pasts, rather we are looking towards the future," A. J. Muste said in opening the session." (The Militant, December 8, 1934. My emphasis—A. B.)

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When Lovestone in 1931 began a flirtation with the Musteites he followed the same dishonest pattern described above and it is amusing to read the indignant reprimands which Shachtman addressed to Lovestone for the opportunist shift in analysis on the Muste group:

"We established our point of view on the progressive movement and its leaders from the very beginning and



have had no reason to change it to suit factional expediency, which was done, however, as has now become clear as day by the Lovestone group." (The Militant, January 1, 1931, p. 3)

Obviously, the readers of the above got the impression that the Trotsky leaders were of an entirely different character from the putrid Lovestone gang.

One can take Shachtman's estimate of the crooked Lovestone tactics in regard to the Muste group when a bloc was in Lovestone's mind, and apply it verbatim to the methods which the Trotsky leaders used in 1934:

"Little by little, therefore, the tone of criticism of the Muste group is moderated, thinned down to a whisper. Yesterday's social reformists and weak-kneed pseudo-progressives become today 'militants' and 'genuine progressives;' tomorrow they will be irreproachable comrades-in-arms." (Ibid.)

Just as with Lovestone, it is factional expediency which is the guiding line of the Cannon and Shachtman leadership. When they decided to join forces with the "left" labor faker, Muste, all the theses and resolutions which they had written concerning the reactionary nature of the Muste group were unceremoniously buried without so much as a word of repudiation. To make the fusion palatable to their deceived followers, the Trotsky leaders completely whitewashed Muste's past and spread outright lies that his past was in the interest of the working class.

For fifteen long years Muste was a pseudo-progressive, a fake militant, as the Trotsky leaders themselves agreed. He flirted now with the Socialist bureaucrats, now the Comintern, now with Lovestone. This unbroken fifteen year history of deceiving the workers was dishonestly pictured by the Trotsky leaders as serving the interests of the proletariat:

"On Wednesday, January 9, a testimonial dinner will be given for A. J. Muste, National Secretary of the Workers Party, at Irving Plaza, New York City. The dinner is to commemorate his fiftieth birthday, and the fifteenth year of his invaluable service in the revolutionary labor movement." (The Militant, December 29, 1934)

The followers of Cannon and Shachtman, of course, may feel pressed to defend the maneuvers with Muste. It may be argued: The Trotskyite leaders were not interested so much in Muste, but in winning the rank-and-file of the Musteite workers to a Marxist position. If fusion with Muste could accomplish this, then it was justifiable.

On the surface this sounds logical. But, if Cannon's and Shachtman's interest was in clarifying Muste's followers and winning them to a Marxist position, why did these leaders whitewash Muste's rotten past? Did the lies Cannon and Shachtman spread about Muste's past clarify the rank-and-file? The Can-

nonite and Shachtmanite followers may argue further that Muste signed a Marxist program when he fused with the Trotskyites. We will not debate at this point how "Marxist" that program was. Let us grant for the sake of argument that Muste signed a Marxist program. The rank-and-file, however, is not clarified by the mere signing. Only by an understanding of the rotten nature of Muste's political history could the rank-and-file Musteites really break with their opportunist background. Cannon-Shachtman's whitewash of Muste's record blocked the path of a real enlightenment of the Musteite following. The Musteite followers united with the Trotskyite outfit taking with them the whole political garbage of Musteism.

From every angle it becomes clear that the fusion with Muste was a maneuver at the top between the leaderships of two opportunist organizations. "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" — this was the essence of the political basis of the fusion. If Cannon and Shachtman were really interested in clarifying the Musteite rank-and-file and winning them to Marxism, they would have had no reason to whitewash Muste. Their covering up of this small-time labor faker reveals the essence of this shabby maneuver.

It is by such tactics that Cannon-Shachtman build the Trotskyite movement. The result for the followers of Cannon and Shachtman has been to become entangled with one political swindler after another. Through deals such as these, Cannon and Shachtman have kept their followers from the Marxist path and have helped to perpetuate the huge structure of opportunism in the working class.

The truly Marxist method of building a proletarian party is to break decisively and permanently with every brand of opportunist swindler.

A. Burke  
May 4, 1945

A Compilation of articles appearing in THE BULLETIN

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