

T H E B U L L E T I N

OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

REPORT OF BRITISH CONFERENCE

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
"COLD WAR"**

THOMAS F. HARDEN

**THE TROTSKYITE POLICY ON
INDONESIA**

LAWRENCE MARSHAL

**THE BRITISH LABOURITES NATIONAL-
IZATION FRAUD AND THEIR
TROTSKYITE SUPPORTERS**

ARTHUR PRIEST

**INCIDENTS IN THE MASS WORK OF
THE BRITISH TROTSKYITES**

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(1.) THE PRESENT PRE-WAR CRISIS

This conference meeting at a period of great danger and great potential opportunity for the international working class realizes that the economic antagonisms between capitalism on the one hand and the new economic form in Russia on the other hand are leading to the most devastating and destructive conflict ever witnessed by humanity.

The roots of the present pre-war crisis are to be found in the agreements at Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam. When the failure of the Nazi forces to achieve victory in Russia became apparent, the Anglo-American imperialist forces laid down in the agreements with Stalin the foundations for the forthcoming conflict. At these conferences huge territories were handed over to Stalin at a time when the Nazi armies were still deep in Russia and Stalin was consequently in no position to make such demands. Two characteristic examples are Yugoslavia and the Far East. In Yugoslavia the imperialists sacrificed their own government, their own army, and their own agent--Mikhailovitch--to Stalin. In the Far East despite the fact that Russian aid was not needed against Japan, Manchuria, North Korea and the Kuriles Islands were handed over to Stalin by the imperialists. The real significance of this becomes apparent when it is remembered that Russia had no navy of any significance and could not possibly have acquired the Kuriles Islands except as a gift.

What was the object of the imperialists' "generosity" to Stalin? The position at that time was that the imperialists had an immense superiority of men and materials but no ideological excuse for an attack on Russia. Such an excuse or basis had to be created. By giving these territories to Stalin, always with conditions attached, the basis was laid for future encirclement against the new "Hitler." Stalin grabbed the territories he was given and has maneuvered to retain them even at the peril of an open struggle with the imperialists.

Today in China, in Berlin and on a multitude of issues the basic conflict between the imperialists and Stalin has developed to such a point that Churchill at the Tory Conference at Llandudno can call for immediate war against Russia. The whole of Europe is in the throes of a pre-war crisis.

In the presence of this threatening catastrophe support to either Stalin or the imperialists means support to the very forces which are actively preparing for war. The victory of either of these forces means the continuation of the robbery and oppression of the working masses under conditions of indescribable misery.

Yet with the exception of the Workers League for a Revolutionary Party, every political tendency in the world lines up with one or the other of the two contending forces. The British Trotskyists have the dubious distinction of having one foot in each camp. Their policy of critical support to the Labour Government means support for a capitalist government which is engaged in preparations for war against Russia. On the other hand their slogan of "defend the Soviet Union at all costs" commits them to support of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the coming conflict.

Fortunately for humanity, a third alternative exists, a line which if adopted by the workers shows the way to preventing the oncoming war, overthrowing both capitalism and Stalinism and ushering in world wide Socialism. This confer-

once is convinced that only one such line exists in the world today, that is the line of the Workers League for a Revolutionary Party. Meeting as we do in Britain we analyze below the experiences of this country as related to and integrated with the problems involved in the struggle for a world revolutionary party.

(1.) THE POSITION IN BRITAIN. The Labour Government.

It is clear to the most advanced workers that capitalism whether in its backward form as in the colonies or in the most advanced stage of monopolist imperialist countries offers nothing to the workers but exploitation and oppression. Recently confusion has been created in the minds of many advanced workers by the Labour Government of Britain. This confusion stands on the premise that the British Labour Party and the Labour Government cannot in any sense be supported by the advanced workers. We are against the Labour Government, the Labour Party and all other forms of Social Democracy. The Labour Party is an instrument of capitalism. The British Labour Government is a capitalist government.

The principal item of the Labour Party's programme is the Nationalisation Fraud. A century ago Marx pointed out that the manufacturing industrial bourgeoisie would be helped in their struggle to extract surplus value from the working class if certain "nationalisations" were effected, and he mentioned the land, banking, transport, etc. What could happen is as follows:

The Land: Nationalisation would remove the remnants of the aristocratic and land owning class from their share of the surplus value.

Banking, Transport and Communications: (Railways, roads, postage, telephone)
These are services which are used communally by the capitalist class all of which, in the hands of private entrepreneurs demand a share of the total surplus value. Moreover, when nationalised they can be run more efficiently, reducing the amount of labour involved in the circulation of commodities and thus the drain on the surplus value which has been extracted from the proletariat at the point of production.

Mining (coal, etc.) Smelting and Steel Making, Production of Electricity
and generally these industries where the amount of fixed capital is in an overwhelmingly high proportion to the number of workers employed; actually where the ratio of constant to variable capital is very large.

The policy of capitalist nationalisation today derives from the following: The ruling class extracts surplus value from the workers at the point of production; other things being taken as equal, and evaluating the different skills of labour power the amount of surplus value filched from the workers in any given factory varies as the number of productive workers employed. But the capitalist price system is such that the capitalists in effect share out the total surplus value of which they rob the workers amongst themselves according to the total amount of capital that is required to be used in each particular industry.

It will thus be seen that the average rate of profit is dragged down by those industries where the amount of constant capital (i.e. capital which doesn't produce surplus value) is excessively greater than the amount of profit-producing variable capital.

Economically, the most revolutionary factor working against the continuance of the capitalist system is the tendency for the average rate of profit to fall; and if the high ratio capital could be extracted from the share out, this tendency would be temporarily reversed or at least checked, as there would be less capital to take shares in the total surplus value. Carrying out such a scheme is known as nationalization. It requires that whatever compensation is given is pinned down to a rate of interest less than the average rate of profit existing. Moreover, regardless of this, such a scheme allows the following maneuver.

The nationalized industries can then be re-equipped, re-industrialized with capital (that will not share in the total surplus value) at the expense of the community as a whole-- which means primarily at the expense of the working class-- but also to an extent, which is less in amount but greater in proportion, at the expense of the petty bourgeoisie-- tradesmen, professional men, shop-keepers, etc. In order to do this, the following must happen:

- (1) For any given total of home production for home use, more power stations must be built and fewer nylons produced.
- (2) For any given trade balance relationship, more factory plant must be imported, and less beef and bacon.
- (3) In general export trade must be improved by less being consumed by the workers and more being exported, also less goods for consumption imported.

In other words, food and clothing are changed into factories and machines to bring up to date the nationalized industries without putting into the productive system capital that would require a share in the total surplus value exploited from the working class. Such a programme could be carried out either forcibly by a fascist government-- a very expensive and dangerous way of doing it from the bosses point of view-- or much more efficiently and cheaply by a Labour Government if that government can get the support of the workers for its schemes. To carry it out, as the present Labour Government is doing, requires a tremendous propaganda campaign. The Tories help by denouncing the capitalist nationalization scheme as "Socialism." The Stalinists, the I.L.P. and the Trotskyites also help by pretending that the schemes are good for the workers, ONLY-- they are not efficient enough, or there is too much compensation, or the managers ought to be changed or only this or only that or anything except to expose the real capitalist anti-working class basis of any nationalization that is carried out by the capitalists.

The amount of compensation paid to the old owners of the industry is irrelevant to the workers. After all the bosses can only share out among themselves the surplus value that they have already stolen at the point of production, and the proportions in which they share it out hardly concern us. Needless to say, the renudiation of capitalist debt which we shall declare on the day of the revolution will include all the nationalization bonds, together with the American loan and all other state debts.

Moreover as this Nationalization fraud falls more and more heavily on the backs of the petty bourgeoisie, they will inevitably turn against the workers

and to fascism-- if they are allowed to believe that their suffering is due to working class schemes of nationalization. Only materialist economics can explain the truth to them and to the workers, and put the full blame for the falling standard of living where it belongs-- on the capitalist class-- its Labour agents and its "left" allies.

This conference is neither for nor against the bourgeois nationalization process itself, inasmuch as we regard it as a manifestation of the inevitable concentration and centralization of capital. However, we are against nationalization being represented as any form of socialism or step towards socialism or in any way beneficial to the working class.

We stand only for the world socialization of all the means of production by workers revolution. We are opposed to the utopian concept of socialism in any one country. In case of a victorious workers' revolution in Britain, we recognize that the former capitalist property belongs to the world working class, and that the economic as well as the political safety of the revolution demands its expansion on a world scale, as well as, in the meantime through the revolutionary world party taking all possible steps to provide for participation of the world working class in the socialization and control of the expropriated property. Such socialization demands workers control at all times of the expropriated property, with the election of all officials, including managers, and the right of recall.

The Labour Government has, during and since its election to power in 1945, when it was supported by all the opportunists from the Stalinists to the Trotskyites and the I.L.P., etc., proved itself an efficient tool of imperialism. From strike-breaking in Britain to vicious oppression of the colonial masses; from support to its partner, American imperialism, to the establishment of spheres of influence in Europe, the Labor Government stands condemned as an imperialist government.

Unlike the opportunists, who look upon the Labour Party as a reformist party (actually its phase of reformism is long past) this conference looks upon it as an instrument of capitalist reaction in labour disguise-- a capitalist party which performs the same function of managing the capitalist state machine as would the Tories or Liberals. The Stalinists and their hangers on, the Trotskyites, together with the I.L.P. all supported "Labour to Power" in 1945. And to a greater or lesser extent with "conditions" and "criticisms", except the C.P. (due to its latest left zigzag) they all support it today.

This conference stands in opposition to the Labour Party, the Labour Government, and the Trade Union bureaucratic leadership (which has become more and more an integral part of the state with the elevation of Trade Union bureaucrats to Government administrative boards.) We stand against all the opportunist parties which directly or indirectly support the Labour Party.

(3.) THE BRITISH STALINISTS AND THE RUSSIAN NATIONALIST BUREAUCRATIC WORKERS STATE.

The British Stalinist party, as all the other Stalinist parties, can only be understood in the light of its attachment to the Russian bureaucracy. The whole question of the characterization and role of the Stalinist state machine in Russia is a matter of paramount confusion in the minds of revolutionary-minded workers all over the world. This is particularly so in the case of many hon-

est ultra-left workers who translate the term "workers' state" in an emotional sense. This conference uses the term "workers' state" in its scientific sense i.e. an economic system in which the means of production have been expropriated, which at present exists only in a part of the world and on the basis of bureaucratic usurpation of working class power from the very inception of the revolution. This form of workers state is not only not progressive but has formed the base of the most vicious counter revolutionary and anti-working class force known to history. This conference declares that to defend in any way such a national bureaucratic workers state is to defend the interests of the ruling bureaucracy.

The Communist Party in Britain, as everywhere else in the world is potentially the largest counter revolutionary force within the working class. Although in the present situation in Britain, the Labour Government is the strongest counter revolutionary force, with any future radicalisation of the British workers the Stalinists can and will lead and betray the vast masses of the British workers as they have betrayed the Chinese, German, French and Spanish masses in the past, unless prevented by our political exposure.

The study of the role of the Russian Bolshevik bureaucracy is a primary task in exposing the betrayers of the socialist revolution. Only by arming the advanced workers with the knowledge of the facts can the way be cleared for the creation of a new world party. The Labour lieutenants of the capitalist class and the Stalinist nationalistic bureaucracy will never be exposed by any of their own public actions, for they will always find plausible excuses for even the most brazen anti-working class actions. Only by tearing the mask from the faces of the opportunists can the workers be freed from the grip of the counter revolutionary Stalinist, Trotskyite and Social Democratic forces.

This conference asserts that the main immediate task of revolutionaries in Britain is the circulation of the irrefutable evidence in our possession of the role of Trotsky and Trotskyism as a branch of the Stalinist system. By tracing and exposing the roots of nationalism and bureaucracy in the Marxist current during and before Lenin's time and connecting this with the role of the opportunists today the foundations can be laid for a new world workers party.

The present left zig-zag of the Stalinists corresponds to the world political situation. In the immediate situation the imperialist powers hold the trump card of atomic power as a stupendous military weapon in the developing conflict with Russia. While developing his military forces within Russia and in the satellite territories under his control, Stalin is faced with the need for political weapons to use in the present situation. Surrounded with the halo of the 1917 revolution, the Stalinist bureaucrats are attempting by the latest left zig-zag to use the militant workers as an instrument to be wielded in the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The whole history of the British and world Trotsky movement is a history of support to Stalinism. With the commencement of the latest Stalinist left zig-zag the British Trotskyites, the Revolutionary Communist Party, came out in support of the Stalinist maneuver, and even called for a united front with the counter-revolutionary Communist Party.

(4.) THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARIES IN THIS SITUATION

This conference recognises that its task is to work for the creation of a world revolutionary party. With the increased polarisation of forces into the two main present contending camps of Stalinism and Imperialism, the possibilities of attracting workers to a correct revolutionary line are greatly enhanced. In the immediate situation the main obstacle in the path of creating a genuine revolutionary organisation is Trotskyism. This is true because the advanced worker subjectively breaking with Stalinism in an endeavor to find a revolutionary base is likely to be attracted by the myth of Trotsky as the opponent of Stalinism. In the absence of political exposure, the Trotskyites lead back the subjectively revolutionary workers to the swamp of Stalinism from which they had attempted to depart.

This conference is for tearing away the advanced workers from their opportunist leadership and creating an organisation that will then go to the masses of the workers with a programme of mass work directed against Stalinism and imperialism. For this reason in the present stage we are against the "mass work" orientation for our organisation because such an orientation wastes the energy of the advanced workers, and has always built and can only build a movement to be captured by the opportunists.

Basing our line on a scientific interpretation of the basic teachings and theoretical postulates of Marxism, freed from all bureaucracy and nationalism, a Revolutionary Workers Party can in the coming period, gain the support of the vast majority of the workers who will find their interests in the sharpest conflict with the capitalists and the Stalinist bureaucrats. Such a party can proceed to engage in mass work, establish a world government of workers' councils, take advantage of the lessons of the Russian revolution to safeguard against any bureaucratic usurpation of workers power, and can proceed towards world socialism.

To this task this conference devotes itself. To this task it calls every revolutionary worker in Britain and elsewhere.

Signed:

CONFERENCE OF MEMBERS OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A
REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN BRITAIN -- November, 1948.

* NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 'COLD WAR' *

Since the last issue of THE BULLETIN, several events have occurred which now require analysis. These are: the economic recession in the USA, the appointment of Eisenhower to coordinate the USA armed forces, the declarations of the Communist Parties of Europe and the USA to the effect that they would support a Stalinist invasion of Western Europe, the trial of Cardinal Mindszenty followed by that of the Protestant clergymen in Bulgaria, and last, the establishment of the Atlantic Pact.

In order to properly evaluate these events, it is necessary to take a brief glance at history since the momentous defeat of the Nazi army in the key battle of Stalingrad. The failure of the Nazi army in Russia prompted the Anglo-American imperialists to reorient their ideological policy. This reorientation was motivated by the understanding that what the Nazi army failed to do had to be done under the leadership of the democratic imperialist powers. Stalin had to be cast in Hitler's role as an unprincipled aggressor seeking domination of the world. In the period 1943 to 1945 a series of agreements were worked out with Stalin giving him a free hand to grab the Baltic states, the Baltic nations outside of Greece, Western Germany, and enormous territories and concessions in the Far East. While Stalin eagerly took what was offered for his own opportunist reasons, the imperialists on their part were automatically furnished with a concrete basis for painting Stalin as the new enemy to peace after the war situation with Germany and Japan had been liquidated. In the imperialist calculations, the winning of this tremendously powerful propaganda weapon far outweighs the territorial gains of Stalin as it enables the building of a war atmosphere. Naturally, the imperialists hope to get everything back with interest not to speak of opening the closed Russian market to capitalist rule and stamping out the very idea of proletarian revolution.

But it is now evident that the tempo of development to an actual war situation was much slower than the imperialists anticipated. This was due to a variety of factors, the principal one being that the imperialists underestimated the ideological power of Stalinism. This was shown specifically during the subjectively anti-capitalist upsurge on the part of the French and Italian workers, which under all the circumstances inevitably led them into the Stalin camp.

The situation then presented itself as follows; On the one hand Stalin had crossed the established borders of the Soviet Union, had taken the territories left open to him by the bourgeoisie and by these very acts, had laid down the ideological basis for incitement of the masses against him as the "new Hitler." On the other hand, the task of the imperialists now became one of liquidating the Italian and particularly the French Stalinist "fifth columns" while unfolding the pro-war campaign. Not only was it necessary to get the Stalinists out of the cabinets of France and Italy, but, in the meantime, the imperialists had to go through a rather extensive demobilization because it was impossible to justify the maintenance of millions of men under arms for no apparent reason.

As long ago as last November, the bourgeoisie began its drive against the French Stalinists. In the past few weeks, this has been intensified by the arrest of several French Stalinists and by the increasing demand for the lifting of the parliamentary immunity from the Stalinist French leader, Thorez, preparatory to his arrest.

Against this background, we must now estimate the events set forth at the beginning of this article. The leave granted Eisenhower by Columbia University for the purpose of coordinating the armed forces of the USA is certainly a sign of increased imminence of war, not of lessening the "cold war" situation.

Nor, despite all the cries of its safeguarding the peace, can the North Atlantic Pact be regarded in any other way than as a step towards war. The real nature of the pact as aggressive is shown by the fact that it is ratified at a time when such authoritative spokesmen of the imperialists as Dulles, at the recent conference of Protestant churches, admitted that Russia does not desire to start war. This must be taken in conjunction with the protest against the pact made by Fadeyev, leader of the Russian delegation to the New York Conference of intellectuals, to the effect that the aggressive nature of the pact is shown by the fact that Russia was not even invited to participate in it. (The New York Times, March 28, 1949 p.1)

Another important factor at the moment is the economic "recession" in the USA. According to the authoritative United States News the unemployed already number 3,000,000 and the part time workers 9,000,000. LIFE, an important pictorial magazine of the American bourgeoisie, recently had an extensive article on the same subject with pictures. One picture showed a queue of unemployed workers in Baltimore, Md., extending for two city blocks.

The Kremlin bureaucrats have been counting on the development of the cyclic crisis of capitalism to stave off war. First, the crisis economically weakens the capitalist power to wage war. Second, the miseries engendered by the crisis drive the workers into opposition to the capitalists.

But there is another side to the "recession." The bourgeois leaders are well aware of the Stalinist speculation on the development of economic crisis. As everyone knows, the trump card of the imperialists is the atomic bomb. The strategy of the Stalinists is to stave off the war as long as possible, in the meantime working day and night on atomic fission. In such a situation, the appearance of a "recession" is much more likely to make the imperialists speed up their war preparations. In addition, as David Lawrence recently pointed out in the United States News, the whole basis of "American prosperity" rests on an artificial war economy. Thus both the political and economic aims of the American bourgeoisie, the leader of world capitalism today, point in the direction of war. And it is very significant, in this connection, that, despite the growing "recession" (or, perhaps, because of it), the USA along with Britain on April 2, 1949, unfolded a new stage in the war incitement campaign by official protests to Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania, castigating the Stalin regimes.

That the Stalinists themselves consider that war is not far off is shown by the next set of phenomena, the "trials" in Hungary and Bulgaria, and the declarations of the Stalinist parties everywhere pledging support in advance to potential or hypothetical Russian invasion.

Let us take first the "Lindszenty trial." In the Stalin-occupied territories, Poland and Hungary, the vast majority of the population is Roman Catholic. The Stalinist bureaucrats were well aware when they put on trial a Cardinal, a "Prince of the Church", that this would not only arouse intense repercussions in the capitalist countries but that it would serve to arouse a certain amount of discontent in Poland and Hungary. It appears that only the necessity of beheading the fifth column leaders of the bourgeoisie in view of an immediately menacing war situation would justify the assumption of the obvious risks to the Kremlin bureaucrats.

And how was this followed up? Not only by the Bulgarian "trials" of the Protestant clergy, welding both Protestants and Catholics into an anti-Stalinist front, but by declarations of all the Stalinist parties of support to Russia in the event of war. In the case of France, this directly played into the hands of the capitalists who used it to demand arrests and the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of Thorez. Only the feeling of the imminence of war would have necessitated

or prompted these moves on the part of the Stalinists.

Does all this mean that an immediate war is on the order of the day? Before the capitalists can launch the Third Intervention against the Soviet Union they will have to smash the Stalinist force in France, and probably in Italy, and they will have to unfold their campaign of incitement to a degree which would convince the ordinary worker that an actual danger threatens from Stalin's maneuvers. Both these prerequisites of war have been started and the task of preventing an atomic holocaust must be considered now.

The official Fourth International has adhered to the doctrines of Leon Trotsky with all the devotion that a member of the Cominform gives to Stalin. Never has there been a repudiation or modification of the doctrine of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union," and the "good soldier" thesis. At least as late as March, 1948, the British section of the Official Fourth International even laid down a "justification" for taking the side of the Stalinist bureaucrats in the threatening war when it represented the Stalinist rape of the Czechoslovakian workers as a working class victory. The official Trotsky leaders are lining up on Stalin's side which is the side of defense of Stalin's brutal labor camps, the Stakhanovite speed-up, the elimination of the trade unions as an actual working class defense agency, the degraded position of women and the youth, all under the slogans of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union."

Seemingly standing in opposition to both the imperialists and the Stalinists are the Shachtmanites, the Workers Party USA. In the April, 1940 issue of The New Internationalist, the Editorial Board appealed for support to that magazine and To Labor Action, their paper, under the heading: "THE THIRD CAMP HAS A VOICE! SUPPORT THE PRESS!" But what Shachtman and Co. meant by the "Third Camp" was indicated even that far back. Instead of telling the working class the truth, that every action of the workers came under the leadership of the Stalinists or the Social Democratic agents of the bourgeoisie, or both, that the great task was to expose the force of opportunism, to lay the foundations for a program and cadres that would work for a revolutionary proletarian policy, Shachtman spoke as follows:

"But in 1940, as in 1914, the Third Camp, the camp of the world working class, independent of either the 'democratic' or the totalitarian axis, is already beginning to rouse and stir underneath the stifling blanket of wartime dictatorship. We have vast confidence in the resourcefulness and invincibility of the Third Camp--inarticulate and unorganized today, but tomorrow, when war has shattered the rigid molds of world capitalism, the inheritors of the earth. The Third Camp is already fighting, against the 'democratic' empires, against the totalitarian regimes of Hitler and Stalin. It is waging the only just war, the war for socialism and freedom."

The Shachtman theory of an existing "Third Camp" thus started out with a monstrous lie, since it is evident that there was not a single word of truth in the above demagogic effusion. What has happened since then? The Shachtmanites have found elements of the "Third Camp" in the Italian imperialists at Trieste, in German Social Democracy in Berlin, in the bourgeois Mikolajczyk, and then when he ran away, in the PPS, whom they characterized as "reformist right or centrist Left" Socialists. In the November-December issue of THE BULLETIN we have given the evidence for the last statements. Suffice it to say here that whenever the Shachtmanites have looked for elements of an existing "Third Camp" they have turned up with supporters of imperialism in the fight against Russia. Nor could there be anything other than a reductio ad absurdum of this theory which takes as its postulate the existence of a "Third Camp" without political expression, without political history. Christian mythology speaks of Jesus having solely his "virgin" mother as a human parent. Shachtman mythology goes one better and brings into existence a "Third Camp" without any genesis, without political father or mother.

And one is amazed until the sponsors of the new theory of "immaculate conception" present to the astonished eyes of the waiting readers of the New International and Labor Action the petty bourgeois physiognomies of Mikolajczyk and the leaders of the German Social Democracy as the incarnation of the "Third Camp." More and more, this tendency approaches the standpoint of support of imperialism as "the lesser evil." In the last analysis the program of the Shachtmanites ties its supporters to imperialism, the same as the program of Cannon ties his supporters to Stalin.

To be sure, the program of each of the above groups has contradictory elements in the unprincipled scramble to attract supporters. On the one hand, although Cannon's program is mainly that of support to Stalinism (with, of course, the necessary "criticism", without which it would be useless to the Stalinists), by his Labor Party policy, he also manages to retain a foot in the imperialist camp. On the other hand, although Shachtman continually veers toward imperialism, he has a foot in the Stalinist camp by his spreading the myth of Trotsky as the main fighter against Stalinism and practically by his advocating for France the combination of the capitalist and Stalinist CP-SP-CGT government. But with the development of the cold war into a hot war situation the lines will become clearer and the basic tendencies within the Trotsky leadership will be, with Cannon for Stalin, with Shachtman for imperialism.

Today in order to prevent war, tomorrow to put an end to a war that may break out despite all efforts, we must rally the workers of the world to the extent of our ability around the slogan: Against both capitalism and Stalinism, For World Democratic Workers' Rule. And as a first means of attaining this goal we must overcome the Trotskyist snares which are preventing the most advanced workers from moving to a revolutionary policy.

Thomas F. Harden

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THE TROTSKYITE POLICY ON INDONESIA

The blunt and brazen Dutch attack officially aimed at the Soekarno government, but in reality against the Indonesian masses last December (1948) has once again torn off the liberal veneer of Western imperialism which has been recently talking in terms of "freedom for all peoples within the United Nations."

This brutal Dutch colonial assault has engendered such tremendous resentment among many workers everywhere, that even the representatives of the other imperialist powers are compelled to make a pretense of "opposition" in order to cover up their fundamental support to the Dutch imperialists.

The attack of the Dutch imperialists has, in turn, created a stir among the political organizations operating within the working class. A case in point is the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, which claims to be a revolutionary defender of the interests of the colonial masses in their attempts to achieve liberation from imperialist oppression.

In the Cannon Trotskyite organ "The Militant" of December 27, 1948, there is presented an article by Joseph Hansen entitled "How the Allied Imperialists Brought the 'Four Freedoms' to Indonesia." This article puts forward two fundamental facts which are common knowledge among revolutionary minded workers. The first is that the American imperialists have been the principal support to the Dutch robber gang in its efforts to maintain and extend its domination over Indonesia. It shows how after August 1945, when the war situation with Japan formally terminated, American arms, munitions and supplies were sent to the British and Dutch to help them fight the Indonesian masses. It mentions the American imperialists' refusal on the other hand to furnish war material to the bourgeois Indonesian "republican" leaders. When the bourgeois Indonesian Republic protested the American aid to the Dutch leaders, the then Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, cynically ordered the removal of the label "Made in the U.S..." from American weapons sent to the Dutch. Millions of dollars in lend lease, credits and now in Marshall Plan aid have been sent to the Dutch and not a penny in all this time to the bourgeois Indonesian leaders. The American State Department intervened in Indonesia to secure "truces" needed by the Dutch and various withdrawals and retreats of Indonesian troops into more vulnerable positions.

The U.S. government also used the United Nations talk-show to divert the attention of the masses to the diplomatic hocus vocus of cease fire orders, concessions, truces, etc., to enable the Dutch systematically to prepare their military efforts to crush the rebellious Indonesian masses. Even after the Dutch launched their assault in flagrant violation of even the United Nations "resolutions" the American and Dutch imperialists sit side by side today to forge a military alliance in Western Europe so that additional aid can be arranged for the Dutch armed forces. In the above-mentioned Trotskyite article, the general policy of American imperialism is indicated in this respect:

"The Truman Administration is interested in protecting Big Business holdings in the fabulously rich Dutch East Indies....

"Besides this, the Truman Administration follows a general policy of backing reaction in the Far East as it does elsewhere."

In China it has been Chiang Kai-Shek's dictatorship, in Indo-China the French colonial tyrants, and in Indonesia the Dutch imperialists. In addition, it counts the Dutch as allies in the projected war on the Soviet Union and consequently wishes to strengthen them." (Ibid, p. 3, Emphasis in original.)

It is apparent from the above analysis that the Trotsky leaders are fully aware of the role of the American imperialist government. A struggle by the masses for liberation in any corner of the world is a threat to American imperialism due to the latter's penetration everywhere within the structure of capitalist exploitation; existing military and administrative forces upholding this structure therefore must be strengthened and protected by the American bankers and capitalists. In Indonesia it is not at the moment a problem of the struggle of the masses but rather a preventive measure of the Dutch imperialists to consolidate their military position against the masses. These punitive measures are designed to wipe out any centers of opposition to Dutch colonial rule and to break the back of any Indonesian movement for a long time to come. Without the steady stream of American dollars and military equipment the Dutch imperialists could not maintain their position. Indeed, as this American aid is the present mainstay of the Dutch leaders, it is inconceivable that operations of the magnitude of those carried out in Indonesia could be planned without the secret connivance of the American imperialists.

As the Trotsky leaders know that the fundamental affinity of imperialist interests dictates American support to the Dutch leaders, what is the Trotskyite line in this sphere? This line is embodied in a request by James P. Cannon on the first page in the same issue of The Militant quoted above, addressed to ----the American imperialist government!

"In July, 1947, in the name of the Socialist Workers' Party, I requested you to take back the American Lend-Lease equipment the Dutch colonial despots were using at that time against the Indonesians. Instead your Administration continued to aid the Dutch imperialists, thus making possible the crimes they are now committing. I again call upon you to immediately withdraw all political and material support from the Dutch. This means not mere suspension of the Marshall Plan Aid to the Dutch East Indies, but complete suspension of all aid to the Dutch imperialists." (Ibid.)

This Trotskyite telegraphic appeal to President Truman creates the illusion that it is possible for the American Government to stop aiding the Dutch imperialist robbers when it is in the former's fundamental interests to continue such aid in one way or another. This type of chloroform has been peddled by the Stalinists and Social Democrats for years. Its purpose is to imbue the workers with the notion that they can pressure the agents of the class enemy to act on behalf of the workers. Letter writing to capitalist statesmen diverts attention and energy to a field harmless to the capitalists. The Trotsky theoreticians might argue that their "class struggle" appeal to Truman is really a form of exposure, that they themselves really have no illusions on how the American Government will act. In that case, the Trotskyites are practicing double bookkeeping with the workers as has been done for years by all the opportunist organisations

within the ranks of the working class. Where illusions exist that the capitalist government can be pressured to act in the interests of the workers, the Trotsky line helps to uphold them. Far from exposure, the implicit assumption in political double bookkeeping is that the masses are too stupid to understand the truth so that it is necessary to cater to their belief in falsehoods propagated by their enemies. That this political double face is a regular stock in trade with the Trotskyites can be seen in the fact that in Hansen's article it is noted that the interests of the American imperialists correspond with that of the Dutch imperialists, whereas the concrete line proposed in Cannon's article is an appeal to the American imperialists to withdraw aid from the Dutch colonial bosses.

The second point raised in Hansen's article relates to the basically reactionary policy pursued by the ruling colonial bourgeois clique heading the Indonesian government. This is stated in no uncertain terms by Hansen:

"The Indonesian capitalists and their political representatives bear a big share of responsibility for the success of the Dutch. As early as October 13, 1945, The Militant noted that 'It is self-evident that Dutch imperialism plans a frightful blood-letting in Java to retain their hated colonial rule...The Indonesian people are putting up a strong battle for their freedom, but already there are serious signs of weakness in the nationalist leadership.' We reported that the head of the Indonesian nationalists, Dr. Soekarno, 'issued direct orders to Indonesians in all spheres of life to cooperate with the Allied occupation force.'" (Ibid, p. 3.)

The colonial bourgeoisie form a link in the imperialist system and derive their sustenance by exploitation of the colonial masses. The native exploiters may differ at times with the imperialist overlords on the share of profits but these differences are always subordinated to the need of safeguarding the system of exploitation as a whole. This spells unity of the imperialist bourgeoisie with the colonial bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat. The road for renewed imperialist intervention in Indonesia was paved by the Indonesian bourgeois government when it conducted military operations against militant sections of the masses with a view toward driving out 'Communism.' A genuine struggle against the imperialists can only be conducted on a revolutionary basis led by the proletariat as Hansen knows and shows.

Hansen concludes his criticism of the Indonesian bourgeois leaders with the following moral:

"The Indonesian people will have to build a new leadership, one capable of successfully guiding a revolutionary struggle. This can come only from the Indonesian working class." (Ibid)

Here is a clear unequivocal recognition of the reactionary position of the colonial bourgeoisie and the necessity to build a proletarian party in Indonesia, with a revolutionary policy. But this is what the Trotskyites say in words. What is done in deeds is something entirely different. In the same telegram that Cannon sent to Truman we find the following sentence, which reveals the essence of the Trotsky policy:

"I ask you instead to extend full aid to the Indonesian people in their wholly justified struggle for freedom and independence." (Ibid, p. 1.)

Whom does Cannon mean by the Indonesian "people"? This is clearly indicated in another statement in the same issue of "The Militant;" "American labor, acting in its own interests, must vigorously intervene to support the appeal of the Indonesian Republic for aid in its struggle against the Dutch imperialists." (Ibid, my emphasis-LM)

The Indonesian people and the Indonesian bourgeois government are identified. Actually "full aid to the Indonesian people" as Cannon advocated in his telegram to Truman means full support to the government of Soekarno and Co., the betrayers and saboteurs of the struggle of the Indonesian masses for independence. Thus the real substance of the Trotskyite line on Indonesia is: support to the bankrupt colonial bourgeoisie. It is apparent that the analysis of Hansen on the perfidious role of the Indonesian bourgeoisie is mere camouflage for Cannonite support to this reactionary force. The manipulations of the Trotsky leaders on this question assume a consistent pattern.

Whereas Hansen shows that the American imperialists have been building up and defending the interests of the Dutch colonial rule since 1945 in Indonesia, Cannon, by his appeal to Truman, fosters the illusion that it is possible for the American imperialists to reverse their stand and withdraw aid from the Dutch imperialists. Whereas Hansen shows that the whole policy of the Indonesian bourgeoisie since 1945 was based on fear of the masses and consequently paved the way for the Dutch repressions, Cannon calls for aid to this Indonesian bourgeoisie. Where Hansen acknowledges that a proletarian party alone can emancipate the Indonesian toilers, Cannon addresses appeals to the American imperialists and to their labor agents, the Murrays, Greens and Lewises. (Ibid, p. 1)

That the Trotskyite leadership can not offer a correct line on the Indonesian situation is evidenced by its double-crossing game with the workers under its influence. If the Trotskyites were in a physical position to intervene first hand, they would be aiding the enslavers of the Indonesian masses through their line of support to the colonial bourgeoisie. Only a genuine revolutionary leadership can provide both the correct understanding and the program for the emancipation of the Indonesian workers from the domination of their imperialist and domestic exploiters.

Lawrence Marshall

December, 1948

THE BRITISH LABOURERS NATIONALISATION FRAUD
AND THEIR TROTSKYITE SUPPORTERS

The Nationalisation Fraud

The British Labour Government's nationalisation schemes have been presented by the capitalists and many political leaders within the working class as a step towards socialism. In actual fact, this nationalisation means the increased concentration of capital and the rationalization of industry in the interests of capitalism as a whole in Britain.

Either decrepit industries which private capitalism has drained and exploited to the point of collapse, or such enterprises as are calculated to improve the private economy, are nationalised. This is demanded by the interests of capitalism as a whole. In fact the very survival of British capitalism at the end of the late war demanded that those private industries which were in effect hampering capitalism as a whole should be nationalised.

The arch reactionary representative of capitalism, the Tory Winston Churchill, stated in the House of Commons on August 16th, 1945:

"The national ownership of the Bank of England does not, in my opinion raise any matter of principle....There are important examples in the United States and in our Dominions of central banking institutions." (My emphasis-A?)

The Tory diehard Churchill had no objection to the nationalisation of the Bank of England, he saw it was in the interests of British capitalism.

At the time of writing, the British Labour capitalist government has nationalised the coal industry, electricity and coal gas supplies, the railways and certain other branches of transport, civil aviation, the Bank of England, raw cotton buying, cable and wireless, and now has turned to the field of iron and steel production.

The coal mining industry was the first item on the Labour Party's programme for nationalisation. The British coal industry has been declining for years, in fact between 1942 and 1946 it was subsidised by the government to the extent of £27,500,000. In the Labour Party's own words:

"On 1st January 1947 the nation took over an industry which had been declining for a generation. Between 1919 and 1939 manpower declined by 400,000, yearly output fell by 56 million tons, coal exports fell by 47 million tons." (The Labour Party "Speakers' Handbook" 1948-9.)

As a result of the chaos in the British mining industry the whole of capitalist production was suffering. The failure of the privately owned coal industry to supply enough fuel to meet the requirements of British industry was perhaps the chief economic domestic problem which faced the ruling class in 1945.

In view of this situation the British capitalist class through the Labour Government paid the colossal sum of £60,000,000 to the owners of the land on which coal is mined and proceeded with the nationalisation and reorganisation of the mining sector of British economy.

The nationalisation of steel was an item on the Labour Party's election programme in 1945 and is at the time of writing the only industry on that programme "Let us face the future" which has still to be nationalised. The steel nationalisation bill is being "debated" in Parliament. The decrepit condition of the steel industry can be seen from the following information:

"Although steel is one of the foundations of the British economy, the basic plants had for some years received inadequate maintenance and little modernisation. At the end of the war, the industry was inefficient by contemporary standards, although a small amount of new capacity was highly efficient." (From the U.S. State Department Report on the United Kingdom's Part in the European Recovery Program, 1948.)

The British automobile industry has long suffered as a result of high prices and shortages of steel. Lord Nuffield, British auto magnate, declared in August 1955:

"The present state of affairs is disgraceful. Unless they change their methods I will go so far as to say we will buy steel outside this country. I only wish I were younger. I would set up a steel plant in this country and put them out of business."

Nationalisation of steel is obviously required and demanded by capitalism as a whole, due to the development of the war situation, with the consequent gearing of the whole economy for war, the primacy of this industry is recognised by the Labour government.

Basically the same process was carried out in the other nationalised industries. For example, on the question of the nationalisation of the railways, Churchill stated as far back as 1918:

"So long as the railways were in private hands they might be used for immediate profit. In the hands of the state, however, it might be wise or expedient to run them at a loss if they developed industry, placed the trader in close contact with his market, and stimulated development."
(My emphasis - A.P.)

If it were a fact, as the opportunists claim, that Labour Party nationalisation was a step towards the abolition of British capitalism we could rest assured that the British capitalist class would not have sat calmly by and allowed the nationalisation laws to be passed in their Parliament. Threatened with actual expropriation, the capitalist class, like all other exploiting classes, resorts to force. Of course it was necessary for the Tory party as the rightist representatives of the ruling class to conduct a sham opposition to the nationalisation measures both in the House of Commons and in their official press. One of the effects of this supposedly anti-nationalisation noise was to ensure more

favourable terms to the owners of enterprises scheduled to be turned over to the capitalist state.

The type of "public" ownership carried out by the Labour government is not a new phenomenon. For years local municipalities have owned water, gas and electricity supplies in some areas. In Birmingham there exists Municipal banking; the Post Office (which includes wireless transmission) and the London Passenger Transport Board have been "publicly" owned for years. Herbert Morrison, minister in the Labour government, once claimed that the Tories, by this form of public ownership, had achieved more "socialism" than the Labour Party in the past.

The policy of the Labour Party on nationalisation is a policy of direct support to privately-owned economy - the basic form of economy in England. The former private owners of nationalised industry are relieved of the task of administering their enterprises. Their investments are removed from the risks within the competitive private economy and their compensation and interest is paid out from the Treasury. Their financial holdings are now backed by Government security. This is simply double-entry bookkeeping. The Treasury pays out to the former owners dividends in the form of interest on state bonds which they hold as compensation for losing their industries. Profit from the newly nationalised industries goes back to the Treasury to help fill the gaps made by the payment of compensation and interest to the former owners, who reinvest their capital in the field of private economy.

To represent this titanic financial swindle as being in the interests of the workers is blatant charlatanism. It goes without saying that the Labour Party bureaucracy sells this swindle to the trade unions and other workers organisations as "Socialism" and succeeds in securing support among them.

British Trotskyites and Capitalist Nationalisation

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Trotskyites) pursued a policy of "Labour to Power" in the 1945 General Election and after the elections adopted the line of "critical" support to the Labour Government. What is the attitude of the Trotsky leaders toward the nationalization swindle?

The "Socialist Appeal" official organ of the R.C.P. for January, 1948, under the headlines "For Workers' Control of Transport" ran an article by S.J. Bidwell which commenced as follows:

"On January 1st the Railway industry became nationalised. This event is welcomed by the railway workers and the entire trade union movement....The Nationalisation of transport undoubtedly constitutes a progressive step." (Socialist Appeal, January 1948. My emphasis - AP)

By stating, without comment, that the railway workers and the entire trade union movement "welcome" nationalisation of transport, Bidwell obviously infers that he is in agreement with such "welcomes" to the Labour Party's nationalisation scheme. In fact he goes on to refer to the policy of stabilising British capitalism as "a progressive step." After evaluating nationalisation of the Railways as progressive and thus tying the Trotskyite worker to the Labour leaders' fraudulent capitalist game, Bidwell is forced to admit that the workers must have no "illusions" that industry will be run in their interests.

"Railway workers...look forward to a new era in which their standards will not be maintained at the present low levels in the interests of profit. But the workers must have no illusions that nationalisation automatically means that industry will be run in their interests." (Ibid. My emphasis -AP)

In whose interests then will nationalised industry be run? The answer which Bidwell avoids giving is that nationalised industry in a capitalist state is always operated in the interest of capitalism and bourgeois Britain constitutes no exception. It follows from Bidwell's own statements that the Labour Party's nationalisation schemes are carried out not in the interests of the workers but of the capitalists, and that to label those schemes as "progressive" is to mislead the workers.

After hailing nationalisation of the railways as a Progressive step Bidwell admits that nationalisation of the railways in Germany, South Africa and France did not make any fundamental difference to the conditions of the workers, and the same will be true in Britain;

"Instead of individual ownership the capitalist class as a whole will own the railways and other means of transport" (Ibid. Emphasis in original - AP)

This statement is true to fact and therefore we most emphatically go on record as condemning any propaganda that this can be considered in any way progressive for the workers. In outlining the framework of nationalisation of the railways Bidwell recognizes that

"...the shareholders are to receive enormous compensation. £1,024,000,000 is the sum to be paid in the form of Government bonds. It is estimated that this will also put the colossal sum of £30,000,000 a year in the form of interest into the pockets of the shareholders; with all risks eliminated their income is nearly the same as before." (Ibid.)

A very "progressive" step indeed - for the shareholders!

While upholding the basic principle of nationalisation, Bidwell uses "revolutionary" demands to provide a sugar coating for the bitter pill of support to Labour Party nationalisation. He demands that:

"...these eight holders who own over a million pounds each, and the ten thousand who own more than £10,000 each, must be expropriated." (Ibid.)

This line for the expropriation of a group of capitalists by the capitalist class, in this case the railway shareholders who hold above a certain amount of stock, has nothing in common with a revolutionary proletarian attitude. The expropriation of the whole capitalist class is the program of real revolutionaries. Bidwell "demands" that the big railway shareholders be expropriated. Expropriated by whom? His silence on this point can only mean the suggestion that the Labour Government should expropriate the big railway shareholders. Bidwell and the whole Trotskyite leadership know full well the role of Social Democracy as the prop of British capitalism in this as in every other situation. By supporting

Labour Party nationalisation and covering up this position with the use of a seemingly revolutionary demand that the Labour leaders should expropriate the big railway share holders, the Trotskyite leaders tie their followers to the swamp of Social Democracy.

This use of the most "revolutionary" demands as a cover for a reactionary policy is a common feature of the Stalinist bureaucracy and is mirrored in the British Trotskyite branch of Stalinism--the R.C.P. Bidwell concludes his article by paying lip service to the need of workers control in nationalised industry, another point which Bidwell "demands" of the Labour fakery. The above-quoted article draws attention to the fact that Benstead, a Trade Union bureaucrat, ex-general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, now gets nearly £100 per week on the Government's Transport Commission for nationalised industry - a very "progressive" step - for Benstead.

Bidwell ends his article with the slogans "No compensation to the big ex owners," "Workers control of the industry," "For socialisation - not state capitalism." Without pointing out that these slogans are only achievable by workers' revolution, Bidwell merely uses them as a cloak of "revolutionary" phraseology to tie the Trotskyite workers back to basic support of the Labour Party's nationalisation programme. By hailing Labour Party nationalisation as a "progressive" step and providing in the same article irrefutable evidence to the contrary, Bidwell seeks to lead his followers along the path of "critical" support to the Labour Party.

The British Trotskyite leadership in tying the vanguard workers to the Labour led capitalist government are faced with the dilemma of making the unsavoury dish more palatable. For instance, after greeting the nationalisation of the mines the "Socialist Appeal" is faced with the problem of giving a line to those miners who after nationalisation take strike action against their new employers --i.e. the Government's National Coal Board. The March 1948 issue of the "Socialist Appeal" dealing with such a strike of miners (at Waleswood) is forced to forget for the moment its policy of support for Labour Party nationalisation and states:

"In the final analysis the mines will only be operated in the interests of the miners and the working class generally when control has been taken out of the hands of the N.C.B. and a real socialist plan introduced, in the operation of which the miners will play their full part."

From the above quotation we gather that "the mines will only be operated in the interests of the miners and the working class" by the adoption of a "socialist plan." No such "Socialist plan" is in operation today so it follows that at present the mines are being operated in the interests of the capitalist class. Who is to introduce this "socialist plan"? about which the Trotskyites speak? The Trotskyite leaders do not draw the revolutionary conclusion that a real socialist plan for industry can only be introduced by workers' revolution. Their silence on this key point is eloquent, suggesting that this "socialist plan" of theirs is but another "demand" to be put to the Labour Party managers of British capitalism. It is another attempt to cover up basic support to Labour Party nationalisation by the ruse of putting forth "revolutionary" demands.

In March, 1948, continuing its policy of support to the Labourites, the

"Socialist Appeal" states in an article by Vincent Charles:

"Every Labour worker knows what would have been the disastrous consequences had the Tories come to power.... They (the Labour government - AP) have carried out the programme of nationalisation of coal, railways, gas electricity and the nationalisation of steel is being projected for the coming sessions of Parliament. All these have been opposed by the Tories."

Let this should sound too much like open propaganda for the Labour Party, the article states:

"Far from the bastions of capitalism being overthrown, they remain intact. The capitalists today are reaping profits greater than under the Tory governments before the war" (Ibid.)

Here again we have the Trotskyites first lauding the policies of the Labour government and then assuming a critical pose by condemning the greater profits of the capitalists today, which have resulted from the Labour Party nationalisation schemes.

As the working class in general and the miners in particular begin to see through the smoke screen of Labour Party nationalisation the Trotsky leaders are forced more and more to cover up their basic support to Social Democracy.

"Experience is teaching the miners that the coal board is capitalist - not only in its composition, but in its practices." (Socialist Appeal, October, 1948.)

Trotskyite policy on nationalisation stands exposed as having two sides. First and basically it gives support to nationalisation as "progressive." Secondly it covers up this basic support with "criticism" and "demands." It calls for workers control of industry; for nationalisation without compensation, knowing full well that the Labour Party will not carry out such demands. An honest revolutionary puts before the workers the exposure of the Labour Party and its capitalist nationalisation schemes as being reactionary. A genuine revolutionary points out that the Labour government is a capitalist government which works in the interests of the capitalists, not of the workers.

Quoting a Trotskyite policy resolution adopted by the National Committee of the Engineers' Union, the "Socialist Appeal" for October 1948 refers to it as an "excellent" resolution:

"This National Committee considers that the nationalisation of the engineering, shipbuilding, ship-repairing and other basic industries is an urgent necessity. It recognises, however, that the payment of compensation, as in the coal and railway industries, places a crippling burden on such industries at the expense of the working class. Further, this committee recognises that in so far as the nationalised industries are controlled by boards composed of trusted capitalist representatives, these industries will not function basically in the workers' interests, and lacking workers' control, as in the

R.O.F.'s the workers in these industries will suffer the ills of capitalist society. This committee demands, therefore, from the Labour government that it nationalise the engineering and all basic industries, without compensation, and that these industries be placed under the control of democratically elected committees of workers and technicians." (Socialist Appeal, October 1948.)

This Trotskyite resolution CALLS FOR nationalisation of the engineering industry by the Labour government "without compensation" and under "workers' control." Basic support for Labour Party nationalisation is covered by "demands" upon the Labour fakery that they carry out a policy in the interests of the workers. A real revolutionary tells the workers that the actual role of the Labour Party is to keep the workers chained to capitalism. The exposure of Social Democracy is a vital task of the revolutionaries, and such exposure must begin with the exposure of the Trotskyite leaders who give basic support to Social Democracy and the capitalist class.

The Trotskyite policy resolution quoted above calls for the nationalisation of an industry (engineering and allied trades) which is not on the Labour Party programme for immediate nationalisation. The Trotskyites struggle to outshine the Labour Party on the nationalisation question by complaining that nationalisation of industries is not proceeding fast enough! At the time of the Austin-Nuffield automobile fusion the "Socialist Appeal" asserted:

"This fusion of Austin-Nuffield should be symbolic to workers and serve to exert pressure to stiffen the backs of their leaders who are hesitant about speedy nationalisation." (Socialist Appeal, Mid-October 1948.)

Lest the Trotskyite worker may be hesitant about a desire for speedier nationalisation as a whole, the "Socialist Appeal" softens the blow with the words:

"But with complete nationalisation, the interests of the working class can only be fully served if the workers, through their organizations, participate in management and control." (Ibid.)

From this it follows that first the workers should "exert pressure" on their leaders who are hesitant about "speedy nationalisation." When nationalisation is accomplished, the Trotskyites advocate that the workers participate in the management and control while in the organisations and under the thumb of the Labour fakery.

How are the workers to manage and control nationalised industry? The Trade Unions are linked inseparably with the Labour Party bureaucracy, the whole leadership of the existing workers' organisations is consciously opportunist and would prevent workers from revolutionary action. Only proletarian revolution can bring about workers' management and control of industry. The Trotskyite leaders know this but befog the workers with a myth about management and control of nationalised industry being a possibility through the present labour organisations.

Since the reorganisation of the coal industry by bourgeois nationalisation has failed to improve materially the condition of the miners, the "Socialist Appeal" for Mid-October, 1948, raised the cry for increased wages and increased mechanisation of the mines.

"Coal cutters before guns" necessitates a basic change in the economic policy of the Labour government. It requires the drawing up of an overall socialist plan in which the representatives of the organized working class movement would play their full part side by side with the Government, whilst at all times remaining answerable for their policy to the rank and file." (Emphasis in original - AP)

Trotskyite concern over the low coal output of nationalised mines is palmed off under a utopian "socialist" plan (no doubt to be "demanded" from the Labour leaders) where the workers would play their FULL PART (in the interests of increased coal production we suppose) SIDE BY SIDE with the capitalist Labour government.

Neither Labour Fakery nor Trotskyite Trickery.

Advanced workers who stand in opposition to Stalinism and Capitalism can find no solution for the working class in Labour Party nationalisation and its support from the Trotskyite R.C.P.

Nationalisation represents plainly and simply an attempt to stabilise British capitalism by the Labour government. We are against representation of these schemes as being in any way "progressive" for the workers. We are against capitalism and for exposure of the Labour government. We are against the opportunist Trotskyite leadership which by its line on Labour Party nationalisation ties the advanced workers to Social Democracy and through Social Democracy to capitalism.

Only the socialisation of the world's means of production by proletarian revolution can solve the problems confronting the international working class. Socialised property would be the property of the world proletariat; the workers of every country would participate in the administration and management and also derive full benefit from socialised property in all parts of the world. World revolution is the only way of establishing anything "progressive" for the workers, giving workers control at all times and stages of development of the expropriation. The election of all officials and management with the right of recall would be a basic principle of world socialisation.

Arthur Priest
Birmingham, England
November, 1948

INCIDENTS IN THE MASS WORK OF THE BRITISH TROTSKYITES

The Dockers' Strike of the Summer of 1945

In March 1945 a 20,000 strong dock strike had been temporarily suspended on the promise by Trade Union officials Donovan (Labour) and Barratt (Stalinist) of the Stevedores' Union that a Committee of Inquiry would be set up to examine the administration of the National Dock Labour Corporation. Class conscious workers realize that this sort of Committee is just an excuse for delaying the struggle and weakening the spirit of the workers.

Now these Trade Union leaders continuously opposed the workers' strike activity and worked in harmony with the bosses. This fundamental feature was clearly understood by the Trotskyite Revolutionary Communist Party as indicated in their remarks in the Socialist Appeal for Mid March 1945:

"Until a rank and file leadership is built, until the dock workers learn to organise against Union officials as well as bosses, there can never be complete victory."

It is obvious that a class struggle policy in this situation presupposes a line for the removal of the crooked Trade Union officials. Yet the concrete Trotskyite proposal to the dockers was to urge these very Union officials to organise for the coming struggle!

"DOCKERS! Insist that your Executive Council campaign and organise for:
"..3) ELECTION OF TRADE UNION OFFICIALS EVERY TWO YEARS
"..4) SAME RATE OF PAY FOR UNION OFFICIALS AS THE WORKERS
"..7) FOR A NATIONAL RANK AND FILE CONFERENCE". (Ibid, my emph.CPS)

To tell the dockers to "insist" that the Labour and Stalinist leaders do this, that and the other is to mislead the workers into thinking that they can pressure these hardened bureaucrats into fighting against the bosses in the workers' interests. In this way, the working class is taught to concentrate on trying to persuade or force the Labour misleaders to do jobs that can only be done by the workers themselves. Incidentally, if the Trade Union leaders are "forced" into carrying out any demand of the workers, it is done in such a way as to mislead the workers and safeguard the interests of the capitalists. This happened later when the strike resumed and the Labour agents of the bosses had occasion to use point number 7 above.

The line of "bring pressure to bear" on the bosses' industrial agents is the Trade Union counterpart of the political line of "bring pressure to bear" on the bosses' governmental agents. In Trotskyite politics this is the line of "critical support" to the Labour Party. Such a line, whether applied in the industrial field or in the political field directly, can only have the effect of confusing the workers, preventing a class struggle policy, and thus helping the bosses.

As the workers begin to be disillusioned with the labour and Stalinist misleadership, they tend to turn to or at least start to listen to the Trotskyites. But instead of guiding these advanced workers on the revolutionary path, the

Trotskyites tie them back to Stalinism or to Social Democracy. This is evidenced by such slogans as "Force the Trade Union leaders to fight for working class demands" and "Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme."

Of course the dockers demands were not satisfied and it was clear that another struggle was brewing. On the 28th of May, the dockers were faced with a cut in wages (by the cancellation of the Western Front Agreement) and this was followed by demands and counter demands between the bosses and the workers.

At a time when the dockers should have been busy organising a rank-and-file movement against the Trade Union bureaucrats in preparation for the coming struggle against the employers, the R.C.P. gave the workers the following advice:

"TASKS OF THE DOCKERS IN THE COMING PERIOD

"...in order to combat these attacks it is imperative that the workers insist that the E.C.'s break the fetters of the industrial truce and turn the Trade Unions from appendages of the employing class into fighting organs of the working class."
(Socialist Appeal, Mid-July, 1945.)

AS we see, on the very eve of the resumption of the strike, the Trotskyites were preaching reliance on the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class. The line was to "insist" the E.C. do this, "demand" the bureaucrats do that. With the same breath, the RCP was calling for a national link up of the rank and file committees. This language gave a revolutionary sound to the Trotskyite line which in effect was to limit the actions of the workers to the confines set by the Trade Union bureaucrats. History has always shown (as this strike has) that when an organisation uses both revolutionary sounding slogans and reactionary slogans, the latter constitutes the line while the former sugar coats it for the militant workers. Regardless of the amount of influence that the Trotskyites actually had among the dockers, they must share the responsibility for enabling the Trade Union leaders once again to fool the workers in the interests of the bosses.

It is important to note that even the Trotsky call for a national rank-and-file link up was not politically defined. There was no indication either beforehand or subsequently, that a rank-and-file movement requires correct political leadership. NO MATTER HOW MILITANT, any other leadership is bound to fail and will probably betray the workers. What was required by the masses was a rank-and-file movement led by comrades politically clear as to the nature of the struggle and as to the nature of the Labour and Stalinist leadership. But today this means also awareness of the role of those "left-wingers" (Trotskyite and otherwise) who preach either reliance on the bureaucrats or militancy without political clarity.

Within a few days after the resumption of the strike, the Labour Government (elected with the enthusiastic help of the R.C.P. among others) intervened as a strike-breaker by sending troops into the Surrey Docks to unload ships. The R.C.P. reported in the Socialist Appeal of August 1945:

"The fact that their own Union leaders oppose the action of the dockers condemns these Union leaders as reactionary bureaucrats. This experience has demonstrated clearly to all militant dockers that they can expect nothing from the Union bureaucrats. It is this realisation that has caused the dockers for the first time to form a rank and file committee and to establish contact with other workers throughout the country. The Progressive Committee is an excellent step in the right direction but its basis must be extended...."

To have the word of the Trotsky writers for it! According to the Trotsky writers, the militant dockers were aware of the reactionary line of the leadership. What then should the strategy be? The same article continues:

"...to facilitate this and at the same time create a national consciousness amongst the dockers, the dockers should instruct the Union leaders to call a conference...the T.U. leaders will try to avoid this demand..." (Ibid)

Once again we meet with the pernicious idea that the T.U. leadership can be "forced" to act against their employers--the bosses. The effect of the Trotsky line could only be to tie the dockers to their traitorous leaders.

Moreover, the Progressive Committee is hailed as an excellent step in the right direction. There is not a single effort at political criticism either of the P.C. or of its members individually. All the R.C.P. demands of the Committee is militancy, not political clarity.

This diversion of attention from political lines was not accidental, and was consistently developed in the Trotskyite program for this strike. The above quoted article states that "The bosses are provoking the dockers, the dockers' only answer can be thorough organisation and preparedness." (Ibid.)

Here is the essence of the matter. Organisation in what form? Under whom? And on the basis of what political line? What the dockers, and the Progressive Committee, needed most of all at that time was rapid and concentrated political education on the true nature of their struggle and of the role of the Labour Party, the Stalinists and the Trade Union leaders. The political guidance furnished by the Trotskyites consisted in exhorting the dockers to "Demand that the Labour Government force the employers to concede the dockers' demands."

The answer of the Labour Government was to use troops to break the strike. Instead of clearly exposing the unalterably reactionary nature of the political and industrial agents of the capitalist class, the Trotskyites fed the workers the poison that these enemies of proletarian struggle could be pressured to act against the bosses.

As the strike developed, the lead temporarily went out of the hands of the old established bureaucrats and the Progressive Committee came to the fore. Naturally without a correct political understanding, the members of this committee were easy prey for the Stalinists and other reactionary forces giving lip service to strike

action. As the weeks dragged by, the Trade Union leaders (Donovan and Co.) worked feverishly to break the back of the strike. With the Progressive Committee leading the dockers into a blind alley, it was inevitable that the reactionary forces would end up victorious. After eight weeks, and after the necessary preparations behind the scenes, a national conference of the Dockers was called. The slogan that the Trotskyites had been plugging throughout the whole period ("Demand that the Trade Union leaders call a national conference,") was fulfilled. What the Trotskyites palmed off as a slogan of exposure was in reality a cover for the rotten policies of the Labourites and Stalinists.

What was the role of the Progressive Committee which the R.C.P. had hailed as "...an excellent step in the right direction" ? (Socialist Appeal, August, 1945) Here is the answer given the very next month by the Trotsky leaders in the issue of their paper of September, 1945:

"...the case for return to piece work was presented by the P.C. as a means of strengthening the dockers' struggle by legalising their so-called 'go slow' policy. The P.C. stated that at the end of the 28 days' notice * they would be in a better position to lead the struggle. Only on this understanding did the men agree to return to work. What actually happened? Within ten days of making this pledge, the Progressive Committee decided to dissolve! ..this act which is either a product of naive faith in the Donovans or of underhanded Stalinist work...never have workers shown such militancy...only a militant leadership based on a clear understanding was needed."

Precisely! But the Trotskyites had prevented the "clear understanding" they speak about by telling the workers to "Demand that the Labour Government force the employers to concede the dockers' demands," "instruct the Union leaders to call a conference" hail the Progressive Committee as "an excellent step in the right direction..."

Instead of warning the workers all the time that the only path for them was to rely on their own strength, to elect politically clear leaders devoted to the cause of the proletariat, to fight the Trade Union bureaucrats as the hardened agents of the bosses and the Stalinist gang as the agents of the Kremlin bureaucracy, to prepare the struggle against the Labour Party Government acting as the executive committee for the bosses, the Trotsky leaders drugged the workers with the line of pressuring the bureaucrats. By this means, the Trotsky leaders handcuffed the militant workers and tied them to the agents of the capitalists.

What are the lessons of the defeat of the dockers' strike? The lessons spell the need for political clarity among the workers and among their leadership. Political clarity which will expose the Labourites as agents of the bosses and the Stalin gang as agents of the Stalin bureaucracy in Russia. Political clarity which will teach the workers to have no trust in those traitors who cannot be forced to act in the workers' interests. Political clarity which will teach the workers to distrust, not only the direct agents of the bosses, but also those who under the cover of "criticism" preach that the proletariat can force the enemies

*28 days notice to terminate the agreement. This was the legal requirement and it was given by the dockers on the day they resumed work (C.P.S)

of the workers to act against the interests of the capitalists. As the workers become disillusioned with the classical organisations whose leadership has betrayed the proletarian struggle, they will turn to the organisations claiming "opposition" to the betrayers. It is our task to prevent the Trotskyites from tying these leftward moving workers back to the organisations they have just left. That is the real lesson to be learned.

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* THE CULT OF THE LEADER *

Immediately upon the conclusion of the recent Budapest trial, a storm of protest arose throughout the whole capitalist world. The Pope publicly shed tears over the fate of Cardinal Minstenty and addressed a cry of dolor to the whole world. Throughout the whole Catholic world, prayers rent the air together with cries of indignation from the whole hierarchy at the condemnation of a "prince of the Church." American Secretary of State, Acheson and President Truman condemned the sentence of the Cardinal as an act of barbarism. In this article we touch on only one aspect of the question, important though the whole matter is as an indication of the growing war tension. The point we are treating in this article is the leit motif running through all the protests, which were confined solely to the life sentence of the "prince of the church." Now, in the trial there were six defendants, four of whom were priests. But no one from the Pope to Truman even mentioned any of the other sentences, despite the fact that Ispak, the aide of the Cardinal also received an identical life sentence. To Pope and Cardinal, to Secretary of State and President, the primate was everything, the small fry nothing, deserving neither of prayer nor sympathy.

This is easy to understand in the case of the Catholic Church with its hierarchic structure, with its contempt for the mentality of the followers, and its exaltation of the leader.

But, strangely enough, we find that this glorification of the leader and this contempt for those "below" exists within the so-called revolutionary movements as well. At the beginning of 1919 civil war swept Berlin. Under the hegemony of the Spartakusbund, a putsch was launched in which ten thousand workers laid down their lives. The putsch was long and bloody and the spirit of the Spartacist workers was such as to move even a bourgeois diletante writer, Ben Hecht, to build a whole section of his novel "Erik Dorn" around the "heroic, nameless workmen with guns." At the end of this fight, the German Social Democratic leadership turned over to the nationalist butchers the captured Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The Freikorps men proceeded to brutally murder the two leaders of the Spartakusbund.

On March 2, 1919 the First Congress of the Communist International met in Moscow. It was a stirring occasion. People came from all over the globe and packed the hall. A representative of the Spartakusbund was present in the person of Hugo Eberlein. Lenin called the Congress to order and made the opening speech. From the International Publishers' edition of the Selected Works of Lenin, we quote the opening of this historic meeting:

"In the name of the Central Committee of the R.C.P., I declare the first International Communist Congress open. First of all, I will ask those present to rise in honor of the memory of the best representatives of the Third International: Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. (All rise.)" (Vol. X p. 26)

Not one word here from Lenin about the 10,000 slain workers. Nor did any of the delegates even suggest to add "and the workers who perished along with the leaders." The record does not disclose that Eberlein did anything else than rise. To the first meeting of the Communist International, as thirty years later to the representatives of the Catholic Church and world imperialism in the case of the condemned at the Budapest trial, the leaders were everything, the followers nothing.

T.F.H.