
Eastman Drops His Mask

by Max Bedacht

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Max Eastman has finally dropped his mask. Last year, in the controversy arising over his book, *Since Lenin Died*, he partially succeeded in fooling some friends of the Russian Soviet Revolution. He was at least given the benefit of the doubt. Though all agreed that he had selected impermissible methods of fighting, yet some still refused to question his motives. But now even the blindest of his friends must be disillusioned; and those of them who are genuine friends of the Russian Revolution must tell and show Eastman that he has forfeited the right to be tolerated in a society of men who value faithfulness towards the working class.

The late differences of opinion and disagreements within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union caused the hopes of the enemies of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution to rise high for an early disintegration of the leader of this revolution, the Bolshevik Party.¹ All the vultures of capitalism gathered expecting that the revolution is at the point of death and that their insatiable appetites could soon feed on its carcass.

Here the dangers of such internal fights as that of the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition against the Central Committee of their party are demonstrated by an undeniable example. Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev, as the leaders of the struggle against the leading committee of the Bolshevik Party, were the force upon which counterrevolution within and without Russia

¹ Reference is to the battle then raging between the majority Stalin-Bukharin faction and the United Opposition of Leon Trotsky and Grigorii Zinoviev in the Soviet Union.

pinned its hopes for a defeat of that party and consequently of the proletarian revolution. This was not the selection of Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev, but it is the result of the objective situation.

Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev saw their effort. They gave up their destructive struggle. And on the very day when the long-expected and welcomed news arrived of Trotsky's and Zinoviev's submission to the revolutionary discipline of their party, Eastman explodes his stench bomb of "revelations." Arm in arm with the *New York Times* and the United Press, Eastman challenges the leaders of Revolutionary Russia to give justice. Justice to whom? Justice to the capitalist world which the *Times* and the United Press represent? Or justice to the Russian revolutionists whom the *New York Times* and the United Press covered, and to this day cover, with the mud and slime of their continuous slanders and attacks? Justice to Trotsky and Zinoviev, who declare on the same day that they have done wrong in organizing their fight against the Central Committee of their party? Or justice to Eastman, who has played the most contemptible role in all social movements, that of a spy and a Judas?

Either Forger or Spy.

Eastman is either a forger or a spy. He either made up his "documents" out of whole cloth — or he obtained them under false pretenses of friendship to make money out of them by selling them to the enemy.

Eastman's "revelations" are partly purported documents, partly Eastman's commentary on them. Some of these documents are supposed to be internal papers of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Eastman vouches for their genuineness. We doubt their genuineness, because we know Eastman.

We have no desire to protect the *New York Times* or the United Press from a forger and his products. But we desire to warn the consumers of these products, the readers.

Eastman Pestered Trotsky.

Eastman is introduced by the *Times* as the official biographer of Trotsky. Trotsky, however, denied that Eastman was his biographer more than a year ago. Trotsky declared that Eastman pestered the life out of him for material and even wanted him to read Eastman's manuscripts. But Trotsky refused in unmistakable terms and declared that Eastman alone must carry the responsibility for his writings. Eastman's book on Trotsky was refused publication by the state printing establishment in Russia *on Trotsky's own recommendation*.² But now, to bolster up Eastman's credibility as a witness against the Russian Revolution, he is all of a sudden introduced as an official biographer of Trotsky.

To show Eastman as a liar we can present better testimony. Eastman claims that he took up arms for the opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Let us hear what members of this opposition have to say about St. George Eastman.

Eastman, the Monstrous.

Krupskaya, writing about Eastman's "defense" of Trotsky last year, says: "Eastman writes monstrous things." "Eastman knows nothing." "Eastman invents fiction." "Eastman's writings insult Trotsky." "Eastman perverts the truth."

And Trotsky declares of Eastman's "defense" of him: "Eastman's assertions are untrue." "Eastman's assertions are based on fantastic rumors." "Eastman is wrong." "Eastman sneers with vulgar aplomb." "Eastman commits calumnies on the leaders of our party." "No sincere worker will believe Eastman."³

Let us go further into Eastman's motives. He is activated, he says, by his love for democracy. It is for this love that he appeals to the *New York Times* and the United Press. It is for this love

² Reference is to the book *Leon Trotsky: The Portrait of a Youth*. New York: Greenberg Publishers, 1925.

³ It merits mentioning that Eastman later translated Trotsky's *The Real Situation in Russia* (1928), the three volumes of *The History of the Russian Revolution* (1932), and *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937).

that he pockets the fat fee which he received for his mental excrements on the Russian Communist Party. But the Russian Communist Party has overwhelmingly repudiated Trotsky and Zinoviev. In the exercise of their inner party democracy, the workers organized in the Russian party have declared in overwhelming numbers that they stand with the Central Committee of their party. This makes it clear that Eastman is not appealing to democracy in the Russian party against the Central Committee. He is appealing to counterrevolution against the Russian Revolution.

Revealed in Full Glory.

The readers of Eastman's epistles are not fools. In his very articles they see Eastman revealed in the full glory of his real self: that of a paid hireling of the capitalist class caught in the attempt to undermine what is most sacred to the workers of the world at present, the Russian Revolution.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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