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# A History of the Struggle Against Trotskyism

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## Introduction

Ours is a time of mounting ideological struggle between the forces of the old capitalist world and the new socialist world. The apologists of imperialism are aiming their blows at the Marxist-Leninist doctrine which they are trying by every means to discredit and distort. In these efforts an important part has been assigned to various revisionist, opportunist concepts whose protagonists are doing their best to help the attempts of imperialist propaganda to discredit and vulgarise the proletarian ideology. This, however, does not prevent the opportunists and revisionists from calling themselves advocates of Marxism and socialism.

To counteract the move towards the Left, which is including ever wider social groups in the leading capitalist countries, the bourgeoisie needs a strategy which can feed on these growing sentiments and sap their strength in the same way as right-wing opportunism (reformism) used the revival of the working-class movement at the turn of the century. In the past the bourgeoisie supported the extreme forms of right-wing opportunism. Now it supports the extreme forms of "left"-wing opportunism, the typical manifestation of which is Trotskyism. It is worthy of note that Trotskyist literature is printed in millions of copies in capitalist countries, and is even recommended as reading matter for students. The books of Trotskyist authors are readily accepted for printing, well paid for and widely advertised in the press, over the radio and on television.

All sorts of myths are being propagated about the "revolutionary idealism" of Leon Trotsky and his "heroic" personality. Capitalist propaganda lumps Trotsky together with such outstanding thinkers and revolutionaries as Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin, and attributes to him deeds which he never performed.

The bourgeoisie is pinning its hopes on Trotskyism as a kind of "unifier" of all "left"-wing opportunist groups. For their part, anarchists and other representatives of the far "Left" as often as not yield to Trotskyism and fall into Trotskyist positions. This they do in the hope of benefiting from the protection the bourgeoisie has given to Trotskyism.

"Left"-wing opportunism has always been one of the most dangerous enemies of the revolutionary movement. It was vigorously opposed by Marx, Engels, Lenin and their followers. In our days when, besides the anarchists, Trotskyists and other pseudo-revolutionaries, "left"-wing opportunism is also embraced by the Maoists, the danger of covert opportunism has greatly increased.

"Left"-wing opportunism is a product of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness.

When it so happens that the petty bourgeoisie follows a consistently revolutionary line, it inevitably becomes convinced by its own experience that it needs proletarian leadership. In that case petty-bourgeois revolutionariness comes close to proletarian revolutionariness.

It is quite another matter when in its revolutionary struggle the petty bourgeoisie in whole or in part, gravitates towards the big bourgeoisie and rejects leadership by the working class

and its revolutionary vanguard. In this case petty-bourgeois revolutionariness is a stumbling block for the revolutionary movement.

"Left"-wing opportunism and outright right-wing opportunism are two sides of the same coin. Right-wing opportunists weaken the revolutionary movement, because they refuse to oppose the bourgeoisie, far preferring to come to terms with it. The "Left," who vociferously denounce any agreement with the bourgeoisie, in actual fact weaken the revolutionary movement by drawing various groups of its participants into disastrous adventurism. Both right-wing and "left"-wing opportunism have one fundamental feature in common—lack of confidence in the revolutionary forces of the working class and its political vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist parties.

In practical terms the political tenets of "left"-wing opportunism and right-wing opportunism are similar to the point of being identical, largely because of their common origin. Right-wing opportunists support "left"-wing opportunists; they borrow ideas and concepts from them, while the "left"-wing opportunists revise their own views in line with the latest theoretical and political guidelines of right-wing opportunism. In the process the "leftist" brand of opportunism often aligns itself with right-wing opportunism and eventually becomes identical with it. This serves to illustrate the intermediate character of "left"-wing opportunism which starts from ultra-revolutionariness, moves towards opportunistic class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and then ends up

by joining in outright counter-revolutionary activities.

The unity of "left"-wing opportunism and right-wing opportunism is clearly epitomised in Trotskyism which has its origin in reactionary petty-bourgeois revolutionariness. This brand of revolutionariness belittles the historical role of the working class, its party and its ideology. At the same time the Trotskyist theories include right-wing opportunist conceptions which the propagandists of the bourgeoisie advocate with so much zeal, for they have long since learned to distinguish the opportunist face of Trotskyism from its leftist mask.

## "Organisational Opportunism" vs the Proletarian Party

Lenin's entire theoretical and practical work serves as a model of tireless struggle against right-wing and "left"-wing opportunism.

"There it is, my fate. One fighting campaign after another—against political stupidities, philistinism, opportunism and so forth.

"It has been going on since 1893. And so has the hatred of the philistines on account of it."\*

Trotsky was among those who hated Lenin and his followers for their implacable stand against any ideology alien to the proletariat. Lenin's fight against Trotsky and against Trotskyism was part and parcel of the Bolshevik party's work of exposing opportunism and disarming it.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 35, p. 259.

At the earliest stage of this struggle liberal Populism and "Economism" were put to rout and virtually ceased to exist. The liberal populists, who reflected the interests of the well-to-do members of the capitalist-oriented rural community in Russia, advocated petty-bourgeois socialism. They denied the historical role of the proletariat and rejected Marxism which they considered unsuitable in, as they put it, the exceptional conditions of Russia. They also ignored the class stratification of the peasantry itself. For their part, the "Economists," though they called themselves Marxists, also denied the historical role of the proletariat as the leader of the working people. They believed that the proletariat should confine itself to an economic struggle for better conditions of life and work, and that all political struggle of the people against czarist despotism should be guided by the bourgeoisie. The "Economists" considered that the proletariat had no need of a political party, they belittled the importance of revolutionary theory and advocated the spontaneity of the working-class movement. They were guided by the opportunist ideas of Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932), which they tried to force upon the Russian working-class movement.

At first Trotsky embraced the concepts of liberal Populism. But at the end of the 19th century he joined the working-class movement in the south of Russia (Nikolayev and Odessa), although he still remained opposed to revolutionary Marxism. Trotsky's ideological stance at that time was closest to "Economism."

The ideological defeat inflicted on Populism and "Economism" under Lenin's guidance was

an important victory for creative Marxism which was taking root in the Russian working-class movement. This also meant a defeat for Trotsky.

The significance of the struggle against opportunism, including incipient Trotskyism, in the historical conditions of that time can be summed up as follows:

The spontaneity of the working-class movement was discredited; the Marxist doctrine was tested and its validity proven as a powerful ideological weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat in Russia and elsewhere in the world; the militant, revolutionary spirit of this theory and its implacable opposition to the bourgeois ideology and towards opportunism were manifested beyond any doubt.

Also proven was the importance of the political struggle of the working class as the leader of all the working people, and its leading role in the struggle of the masses for democracy, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in the struggle for socialism.

The idea was expounded and defended of setting up a militant proletarian party as vanguard of the proletarian movement, a party which would organize this movement and shape proletarian consciousness on the basis of the scientifically based Marxist doctrine.

These important conclusions were all lost on Trotsky whose knowledge of Marxist literature, besides, was only superficial. For example, his favourite books included the works of Ferdinand Lassale (1825-64), a petty-bourgeois opponent of Karl Marx and one of the best-known opportunists and collaborators with the bour-

geoisie which encouraged and promoted their activities in the European working-class movement. Trotsky was so much taken with Lassale that he even called him "the third, junior classic of Marxism". No wonder, then, that he first formulated his notorious theory of "permanent revolution" in an article dedicated to the memory of Lassale. In fact, Trotsky described this theory as an extension of Lassale's ideas.

The petty-bourgeois character of Trotsky's outlook was again clearly manifested at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.

This Congress, held in July-August, 1903, played an historic role in that it put the Russian, and later the world working-class movement on revolutionary Marxist-Leninist lines. The Congress set up a Marxist proletarian party in Russia, which served as a model for all truly revolutionary proletarian parties in other countries. At the Congress, "economism" was delivered the coup de grâce. It was the first time in the history of the proletarian movement that the programme of the political party of the working class contained a clause on the dictatorship of the proletariat, which made the RSDLP into a militant organisation ready to guide the proletarian struggle towards a victorious socialist revolution.

In the course of the discussion of the Party Programme Trotsky joined forces with the right-wing opportunists at the Congress. He tried to reduce to naught the practical significance of the concept of proletarian dictatorship for the RSDLP. He said that the dictatorship of the proletariat would be possible only

when the Social-Democratic Party and the working class became "most nearly identical," and the working class itself constituted the majority of the nation, i.e. when the majority of the population of the country became members of the Social-Democratic Party. In the conditions of the capitalist development of Russia this moment would have taken a long time in coming. It was not accidental, therefore, that one of the "economists" who was vehemently opposed to the inclusion of the item about proletarian dictatorship in the Party Programme, said after the Congress: "I wholeheartedly agree with Trotsky's views on the question of proletarian dictatorship."

The lack of understanding of the role of the Marxist Party as the leader of the class struggle of the proletariat, which is so characteristic of the opportunists of every kind, was demonstrated in the course of the debate about the wording of the first clause of the Party Rules. The opportunists at the Congress put up a united front against Lenin's formulation of the first paragraph which dealt with the principles of Party membership. Lenin's view was that a member of the Party was a person who not only recognized its programme but also worked in one of its organisations. However, when the matter was put to the vote the opportunists managed to push through Martov's<sup>1</sup> wording of the first paragraph of the Party Rules. This formulation did not stipulate the obligatory participation of the members of the Party in the work of any of its organisations. Significantly, Trotsky unhesitatingly upheld Martov's suggestion.

The opportunists in Russia and elsewhere in the world placed their greatest reliance on the spontaneous development of revolutionary processes. They claimed that all the Party had to do was register these processes and not direct them. Hence the rejection of Lenin's idea of creating a party which would be a militant contingent and the vanguard of the proletariat, a contingent which was capable, as recorded in the RSDLP Programme, of directing the proletariat's class struggle in all its aspects.

Lenin strongly criticised the aberrations of opportunism in matters relating to the organisational question, and showed that Martov's wording flung the door open to all kinds of unstable, vacillating and opportunist elements.

This formulation stretched the meaning of what a Party member should be out of all proportion, while the task was to exclude from the Party all those who were not prepared to fight for its cause to the end. Lenin wrote: "It would be better if ten who do work should not call themselves Party members (real workers don't hunt after titles!) than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member. . . It is our task to safeguard the firmness, consistency, and purity of our Party. We must strive to raise the title and the significance of a Party member higher, higher, and still higher. . . "\*"

After the Second Congress, at which a split occurred between the revolutionary Marxists who received most of the votes in the elections to the leading bodies of the Party (the Bolshe-

viks) and the opportunists (Mensheviks), Lenin assumed leadership of the Bolsheviks in the struggle for uniting the Party in line with the basic principles approved by the Congress. But the Mensheviks, including Trotsky, tried in every way to subvert the realisation of the decisions of the RSDLP Second Congress and sought to prevent the Party from consolidating its ranks.

Despite the fact that they had been in the minority at the Congress and that they had failed to enlist support at the local Party organisations, the opportunists continued their struggle against Lenin and his followers and headed for an open split in the Party ranks. Being unable to impose their views upon the Party they hoped to win over to opportunism at least some of its members and, in the event of success, to set up an anti-Leninist party which would be prepared to collaborate with the liberal bourgeoisie. "Realising that they could not convince the Party, they tried to gain their ends by disorganising the Party and hampering all its work," Lenin wrote at that time. \*

Lenin's principles of party unity were set out in his book "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" which was published in May, 1904. In this book Lenin laid bare the substance of the basic contradictions between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks and showed that the inner party crisis was the result not of personal differences between leaders, as the Mensheviks

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 6, pp. 503-504.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 7, p. 358.

alleged, but of the opposition on the part of the opportunist members of the RSDLP to the creation of a militant centralised party, a working-class vanguard welded together by the ideological unity and strict discipline of its members, a party which rejected collaboration with the liberals and which was uncompromisingly opposed to any manifestation of opportunism within its own ranks. Lenin exposed the opportunist allegations of the Mensheviks, including Trotsky, and formulated the main organisational principles of Bolshevism which served as the cornerstone of the revolutionary Marxist Party.

The Party, said Lenin, was to be the vanguard, the frontrank detachment of the working class. It differed from the main mass of the proletariat by the high order of its political consciousness and organisation.

The political consciousness of Party members comes from their knowledge of the Marxist doctrine, which alone can show the proletariat the way to its liberation.

Organisation is the result of the strict discipline of all members of the Party, the result of the subordination of the minority to the majority, the result of centralism in the organisational structure of the Party. "In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organisation. . . . The proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organisation, which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the senile rule of the Russian autocracy nor the senescent rule of internatio-

nal capital will be able to withstand this army."\*

To weaken the impact of Lenin's book the Mensheviks mounted a slanderous campaign against the Bolsheviks. Their creed was set forth in Trotsky's book, "Our Political Tasks," published in the autumn of 1904, which he dedicated to his "dear teacher Pavel Borisovich Axelrod," one of the Menshevik leaders. What brought Trotsky close to the Mensheviks was their common conciliatory attitude to all the varieties of opportunism in the working-class movement, their understanding of the Party as an amorphous conglomeration of rival trends within the Party. Trotsky's outlook, which was clearly petty-bourgeois by nature, could well be judged from the fact that he did not accept Party discipline, that he gravitated to such organisational and ideological forms of Party life that were open to bourgeois individualism, various "interpretations" of Marxism that could well accord with all shades of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology.

Trotsky's pamphlet was hailed by the Menshevik leaders. In a letter to Axelrod, Martov wrote that the pamphlet was "very good, although uneven."

The pamphlet was directed against Lenin's principles for the building of a party. Trotsky, like the Mensheviks, accused the Bolsheviks of formalism, fetishism of Party Rules. He said that the Bolsheviks sought to install the Party above the working class, to establish a "dictatorship over the proletariat." He alleged that

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 7, p. 415.

the Bolsheviks sought to build the Party on the model of a capitalist factory, to turn members of the RSDLP into obedient "cogs" and "screws." He described the practical work based on the principle of division of labour between individual members of the Party as a method designed to kill all initiative and political consciousness. Trotsky's writing was an attempt to back up the Menshevik plan for turning the RSDLP into a loosely organised non-militant organisation which would deflect the proletariat from the revolutionary struggle, an attack against Lenin's doctrine on the building of a party of a new type, and an attempt to sanctify the alliance of the Marxist intelligentsia with the liberal bourgeoisie.

Lenin described Trotsky's pamphlet tersely: "Reading this pamphlet one can clearly see that the 'minority' has tied itself up with such lies, is acting so falsely, that it will not be able to create anything viable." \*

It was not accidental that the pamphlet brought a word of approval from the liberals. In October, 1904, the liberal magazine "Liberation" praised it, but at the same time criticised Trotsky for the "tactless" and "unseemly" way he had chosen for his attacks on the Bolsheviks.

The praises lavished on Trotsky by the Menshevik leaders and the bourgeoisie went to his head. His sense of proportion was so obviously lacking that he even began to conspire against Dan for the purpose of winning influence in the Menshevik party. In defence of F. Dan<sup>2</sup>,

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 46, p. 389 (in Russian).

one of the leaders of Menshevism, Potresov, wrote that Trotsky easily changed his views, depending on circumstance, that he fought shy of open debate, and was a cunning dodger. In September, 1904, Trotsky announced that he belonged to no faction. In actual fact, he had never broken with Menshevism, either ideologically or tactically.

Trotsky wore this badge of "non-factionalism" throughout the rest of his political life; in fact it was his political banner in the shadow of which he wanted to set up his own faction aimed at setting up an anti-Leninist party that would rally all the opponents of the creative Marxist teachings.

At the beginning of the first Russian revolution Trotsky "leaned left" and formed a close relationship with Parvus (A. L. Gelfand), who had originally hailed from Russia, then lived in Germany and who, at the turn of the century, was associated with the left-wing section of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Parvus had a decisive influence on Trotsky's views. With a solid background of formal education and theoretical knowledge he managed to inculcate in his pupil "ultraleft" views which Trotsky readily espoused and adhered to throughout the rest of his life and which he eventually passed off as his own "theoretical discoveries."

At the beginning of 1905 Trotsky and Parvus came to Russia where they established active working co-operation with the Mensheviks. The two men established close contact with Menshevik organisations and Menshevik newspapers. In the spring of 1905 the Mensheviks pu-

blished Trotsky's brochure "Before January 9," the introduction to which was written by Parvus. Lenin wrote at the time that "Trotsky... returned to the Mensheviks in 1905 and merely flaunted ultra-revolutionary phrases." \*

Trotsky's fascination with leftist phraseology did not affect the opportunistic petty-bourgeois essence of his views and served to illustrate his instability and his desire to adjust his views to the conditions of the mighty revolutionary upsurge in Russia.

Trotsky aspired to be an independent theoretician in the social democratic movement in Russia. But Lenin showed that Trotsky's claim was built on sand, that Trotskyism was a mere repetition of Menshevik and other opportunist concepts and was not an original, independent theory. Lenin also pointed out that Trotsky had a very scant following.

In 1906 Lenin wrote: "It is quite possible that there were some 'Parvusites' and Trotskyists among the Mensheviks. At any rate I was told that there were about eight of them; but... they had no opportunity of making a show." \*\*

After the defeat of the first Russian revolution of 1905 when the most reactionary elements in the country rose to crush the revolutionaries, the unstable petty-bourgeois elements were so frightened by the reprisals unleashed by the czarist government that they decided to make a clean break with the RSDLP. Most of the Mensheviks joined the "Liquidators" and thus severed the last few strands that linked them to the Party. The "Liquidators" were so

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 16, p. 391.

\*\* Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 324.

called because of their readiness to dissolve ("liquidate") the illegal social democratic organisations in order to win from the government the right to a legal existence. Clearly, since such a "party" had lost its militancy it no longer presented a threat to the autocracy. By contrast, the so-called Otzovists (i.e. "recallers"), the petty-bourgeois elements who temporarily sided with the Bolsheviks, insisted that all legal forms of Party work be rejected and that the Party itself be turned into a small sectarian group divorced from the masses. Both the Liquidators and the Otzovists opposed Lenin's Bolshevik principles of Party life, and Lenin's doctrine of the Party as the militant vanguard of the working class and all other workers, as the leader of the masses in their revolutionary struggle.

In this critical situation when it was just as important to eradicate right-wing and "left"-wing opportunism as it was to save Party organisations and individual members of the Party from police reprisals, there were some who took up the defence of both the Otzovists and the Liquidators. Their chief advocate was Trotsky. Falsely claiming to be above factionalism he assailed Lenin's principles for the building of the Party. Verbally, Trotsky disagreed with the wreckers of the Party, but actually he helped them in every way. He was against the expulsion of opportunists from the Party and in fact regarded the Liquidators and the Otzovists as legitimate by-products of the theory and tactics of the Russian social democrats.

Trotskyism which had grown out of the "organisational opportunism" of the Mensheviks

opposed adherence to the Party principles and advocated the transformation of the Party into a jumble of hostile factions and trends. By trying to split and disorganise the Party Trotsky sought to transmute it.

He misinformed the West-European social-democratic parties, tried to present the Bolsheviks as responsible for the crisis in the RSDLP, and accused them of conducting disruptive activities. At the same time he attempted to build himself up in the eyes of the West-European social democrats as the sole protagonist of the ideas advocated by the majority of Russian Marxists.

He established close contact with Karl Kautsky<sup>3</sup> and other opportunist leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. The newspaper "Vorwärts" and the magazine "Neue Zeit," the organs of the SDPG, readily published various anti-Bolshevik lampoons penned by Trotsky. At the same time they closed their pages to Lenin and his supporters who wanted to reply to the slanderers.

In their letter written to the SDPG headquarters, Lenin, G. Plekhanov<sup>4</sup> (who at that time was opposed to the Liquidators) and Polish Social-Democrat A. Warski described the publication of one of Trotsky's articles in "Vorwärts" as "an unprecedented act that flies in the face of international solidarity and brotherhood as far as Russian social-democracy is concerned." \* Lenin laid bare Trotsky's duplicity in these words: "...when Trotsky tells the German comrades that he represents the 'general Party ten-

dency' I am obliged to declare that Trotsky represents only his own faction and enjoys a certain amount of confidence exclusively among the Otzovists and Liquidators." \*

Trotsky was fiercely opposed to the ideological irreconcilability of the Bolsheviks. His "realism" amounted to the defence of opportunism and justification of Menshevism. The Mensheviks were well aware of that. "The sheer weight of things drives Trotsky down the Menshevik road despite his ill-matching plans to 'synthesize' historical Menshevism and historical Bolshevism. This fact, and also the fact that his actual movement does not fit with the professed pattern of his views, drove him into the camp of the 'Liquidators' bloc where he has outdone all the others in fulminating against Lenin," wrote Martov in May, 1912. Lenin's comment was short and to the point: "Trotsky follows in the wake of the Mensheviks, taking cover behind particularly sonorous phrases." \*\*

To put an end to the "crisis of unification" precipitated within the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party by Trotsky and other defenders of the Liquidators and the Otzovists, the Sixth All-Russian Party Conference which opened in Prague on January 18, 1912, purged the Party of the Liquidators, Trotskyists, Otzovists, etc. whose behaviour had been beyond all bounds, and declared that they could no longer stay in the Party because they had disobeyed the Central Committee and could not therefore

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 47, p. 297 (in Russian).

\* V. I. Lenin, Coll. Works, Vol. 16, p. 391.

\*\* V. I. Lenin, Coll. Works, Vol. 16, p. 374.

"take advantage of the good name of the RSDLP."

In putting up a joint opportunist front against the solid Bolshevik Party line, Trotsky took upon himself the ignoble task, as Lenin put it, of scraping together a bloc of Liquidators, Otzovists and other enemies of Bolshevik partisanship. He thus hoped to create the backbone of a future anti-Leninist reformist party.

Trotsky's call to create a united opposition to struggle against the Bolsheviks was responded to by the opportunist leaders who had been expelled from the Party. They forgot their petty quarrels and factional differences, at least for the time being, and acquiesced in Trotsky's leading the dance. Lenin was right when he said at the end of 1910: "At this time of confusion, disintegration, and wavering it is easy for Trotsky to become the 'hero of the hour' and gather all the shabby elements around himself. The more openly this attempt is made, the more spectacular will be the defeat." \*

Trotsky's new unification gambit was a signal failure.

The Organisational Committee set up in January, 1912, which included Liquidators, Bundists,<sup>5</sup> Otzovists and Trotskyists, called a conference of the opportunists in Vienna at the end of August, 1912. This conference proclaimed the creation of a bloc in the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. This August Bloc of opportunists set out to disrupt the Party from within and turn it into an appendage of the political organisations of the liberal bourgeoisie.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 17, p. 21.

Trotsky merely repeated the allegations of the Liquidators when he said that the time of illegal Party work had run out. That was an outright switch-over of the Trotskyists to the positions of liquidationism, a clean break with the principles of a proletarian party.

The pressure of the mounting revolutionary proletarian movement set off a process of rapid disintegration inside the August Bloc. One of the first to leave it was Trotsky himself. In 1913 he left the editorial board of the Liquidators' publications and in February 1914 set up a "non-factional" journal, the "Borba" (Struggle). "The famous uniters even failed to unite themselves," was Lenin's comment.\*

Trotsky did not formally withdraw from the August Bloc as such. According to Martov, all of Trotsky's actions at that time were guided by his megalomania and sense of injury because he thought his writings had not been given proper attention in the Menshevik publications. Martov said that Trotsky's letters to this effect were just as peevish as his complaints were groundless.

Trotsky's tacit withdrawal from the alliance with the Liquidators was nothing but a trick. He merely wanted to disassociate himself from his former allies at a time when their position was being undermined by the pressure of the mounting revolutionary working-class movement in Russia. Trotsky maintained close contact with the Menshevik party on all key ideological and political questions right up until 1917.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 20, p. 159.

Trotsky's drifting away from the outright opportunists at a time when the revolution was imminent showed a certain logical sequence: the developing revolutionary situation at the end of the 19th century forced Trotsky to break away from the "Economists"; the first Russian revolution swung Trotsky from the right-wing Menshevik position to the "left" position of Parvus; after the defeat of the revolution of 1905-07 he entered into an alliance with the Liquidators (opportunists); but in the conditions of another revolutionary upswing in the country Trotsky tried another "tack" and did his utmost to prove that he was still more "left" than the Mensheviks.

In the years of the first world imperialist war Trotsky intensified his splitting activities in the world arena. He helped Kautsky's followers to prevent the revolutionary social democrats from uniting on internationalist lines. Trotsky insisted that the internationalist unity of proletarian parties could not be restored unless the struggle against opportunism was discontinued. This in effect amounted to a complete capitulation of the left-wing elements and the adoption by them of the opportunist principles. In September, 1915, Lenin called Trotsky a lackey of opportunism who was "straining every effort to 'gloss over' the differences, and 'save' the opportunism." \*

At the end of 1916 Trotsky went to the United States where he openly joined the outright opportunists, this time in the office of a newspaper of Russian socialists-in-exile, the "Novi

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 35, p. 206.

Mir" (New World) and together with them launched a struggle against the Bolsheviks and other internationalists. This behaviour provoked an angry outburst from Lenin in February, 1917: "That's Trotsky for you! Always true to himself—twists, swindles, poses as a Left, helps the Right, so long as he can..." \*

This devastating characterisation summed up Trotsky's many years of struggle against the Bolshevik Party.

In trying to revise the Marxist doctrine about the dictatorship of the proletariat Trotsky denied the need for the proletarian party of a new type, the weapon of this dictatorship. This line Trotsky held all his life. It was this opportunist rejection of the Bolshevik principles of Party life that stood at the back of his furious activity aimed at splitting the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the international communist movement. As is known, Trotsky's dissent eventually led him to the betrayal of the cause of the revolution and he finally landed in the camp of anti-Communists and bitter enemies of the Soviet state.

## THE PSEUDO-REVOLUTIONARINESS OF TROTSKYISM

The main specific feature of Trotskyism which distinguished it from all other varieties of "left" and right opportunism was the so-called theory of permanent revolution. This

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 35, p. 288

"theory" was based on a voluntaristic idea of fanning the flames of a world proletarian revolution. Today this idea has been embraced by Maoism and other forms of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness. Trotsky regarded this theory which he had borrowed from Parvus as his (Trotsky's) principal "contribution" to the Marxist doctrine, and employed it to attack the very essence of Leninism—the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of socialist revolution.

Lenin, like Marx and Engels, believed that the advanced European countries were ripe enough for a proletarian revolution. In his reply to the Mensheviks, who thought otherwise, Lenin wrote in 1905: "...in Europe the conditions for socialism have reached not a certain degree of maturity (as the Mensheviks insisted—Author), but maturity in general."\* By contrast, in Russia which was lagging behind these countries both politically and economically, socialism could be established only in the course of struggle not only against capitalism, but also against the remnants of feudalism which were most fully embodied in the autocratic rule of the landlords and the czar. In this situation socialist changes were of necessity to be preceded by democratic changes, since the democratisation of public life and removal of the remnants of serfdom was always regarded by Lenin as a most important condition for socialist revolution.

Lenin and all Marxists regarded the revolution that was coming to a head in Russia as a bourgeois-democratic revolution. However, it

could not be a mere repetition of the classical bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the early capitalist era when the bourgeoisie emerged as a revolutionary, and historically progressive class. The key role in this new revolution was to be played by the proletariat because it was not only the strongest but also the only consistently revolutionary class of Russian society. The bourgeoisie in Russia was more concerned with making a deal with the czar rather than fighting him. In these conditions the proletariat could and had to act as the leader of the revolution in order to accomplish the democratic changes in the country and, on the other hand, to ensure conditions for its further struggle for socialism. The proletariat which formed a minority of the population had an ally in the form of millions of peasants who could support the proletariat in its struggle for socialism.

The Mensheviks and other opportunists distorted the teaching of Marx and Engels by insisting that, since the immediate aims of the revolution were bourgeois, it should be led by the bourgeoisie, while the task of the proletariat was to conserve its strength and organise for the subsequent struggle for socialism. Thus the Mensheviks consciously aimed to put the fate of the revolution into the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie, the class enemy of the proletariat. The opportunists ignored the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and its dual nature (that the working peasant was not only an owner but also, and primarily, a labouring man) and therefore disbelieved that the proletariat could form a strong alliance with it.

By its experience accumulated over the first

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 9, p. 82.

months of the revolution of 1905 the proletariat showed the hollowness of the Menshevik concept of the revolution. Drawing on this experience Lenin, in 1905, developed his doctrine about the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its alliance with the peasantry into a consistent theory of the growth of bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. Of great importance here was Lenin's conclusion about the nature of the political power that would emerge following a victorious bourgeois-democratic revolution. Unlike the Mensheviks who considered that all political power must be concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie, Lenin showed that in this case the revolution in Russia would not be brought to completion, because the bourgeoisie would use its dictatorship to achieve a compromise with the autocracy. The only guarantee of the complete victory of a bourgeois-democratic revolution would be the establishment of a rule supported by the classes which were interested in the ultimate liquidation of the autocratic regime in the country. Lenin regarded the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry as this form of political power, the executive body of which must be a provisional revolutionary government established with the active participation of the proletarian Party.

In Lenin's view, the bourgeois-democratic revolution could grow into a socialist revolution by way of gradual transformation of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants into the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus an intermediate link was

found to connect into one whole the two stages of the revolution, the democratic and the socialist, and to make the utmost use of the victory of the people over the autocracy in the interests of socialism. Lenin's idea which was founded on a strictly scientific analysis of the realistic correlation of class forces in the revolution enjoyed the support of the proletarian masses, giving them a clear insight into their final objective—socialism.

The attitude of the Mensheviks to Lenin's conclusions was one of open hostility. He was accused of departing from Marxism, of petty-bourgeois extremism and adventurism. The Mensheviks persisted in saying that socialism would be possible in Russia only after a great majority of the population had become proletarian (in the course of the capitalist development of the country), or after socialist revolutions won in the more advanced countries. Until then, any attempt of the proletarian Party to form a government by relying upon the support of the peasants would, they said, tend to make the revolution more petty-bourgeois than proletarian, which in turn would put back the prospects of achieving socialism. Parvus and Trotsky attacked Lenin's theory of revolution from largely similar positions, throwing in a lot of leftist phraseology. For example, Parvus demagogically called for the formation of a purely workers' government and not a workers' and peasants' government. He completely ignored the existing balance of forces in the country which were such that no government, however revolutionary, would have been able to stand up to the forces of the counter-revolution

without enlisting the support of the peasants who formed the overwhelming majority of the population. Supported only by the minority it would be neither stable nor truly democratic. Thus, Parvus' catchcry "No czar, but a workers' government" was nothing but a revolutionary-sounding phrase reflecting mistrust in the possibility of an alliance of workers and peasants.

Trotsky borrowed Parvus' idea and tried to create on its basis his own concept of revolution, different from those of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Such was the origin of the notorious theory of "permanent revolution" espoused by Trotsky to oppose Lenin's doctrine about the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. Trotsky wrote later that his views which formed the substance of this theory had taken shape in 1905. In actual fact he had borrowed this idea from Parvus.

The theory of "permanent revolution" reflected Parvus' anarchistic allegation that the proletarian Party must always, and under all circumstances, work hard in order to be "more revolutionary than anyone else." Exposing the leftist adventurism of this thesis Lenin pointed out that it was the job of the proletarian Party not to play at revolution, and not to embark upon revolution for the sake of revolution, but to guide the class struggle of the proletariat in the name of its emancipation. The Party, he said, advanced and supported only such revolutionary slogans as would help strengthen the working class, making it the leader of the revolutionary struggle of all people. Lenin wrote:

"We shall not even try to keep up with the revolutionariness of a democrat who is detached from his class basis, who has a weakness for fine phrases and flaunts catchwords and cheap slogans... On the contrary, we will always be critical of such revolutionariness; we will expose the real meaning of words, ... and we will teach the need for a sober evaluation of the classes and shadings within the classes, even in the hottest situations of the revolution." \*

Trotsky's fascination with revolutionary phraseology which was embodied in his theory of "permanent revolution" did not arise from any excessive revolutionary zeal on his part: when concrete revolutionary action was called for he usually took a passive stand. Trotsky needed leftist phraseology in order to present the Bolsheviks as inconsistent revolutionaries who were conditioning the proletariat to reject radical revolutionary activities and accept "self-limitation."

The theory of "permanent revolution" boils down to the following. Since the Russian bourgeoisie had lost its revolutionary spirit and was unable to lead the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the proletariat must establish its own dictatorship by using its dominant position in the country; this dictatorship would be a dictatorship of a minority because the "anti-socialist" peasants would withdraw their support of the proletariat as soon as it began to carry through the socialist programme; such dictatorship could be saved only by revolutionary proletariat of other countries; therefore the prin-

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 8, pp. 290-291.

cipal task of proletarian rule which would establish itself as the result of the victory of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, was to stimulate proletarian revolution in more advanced countries in every way possible. Only in the international arena, said Trotsky, could the national problems of the Russian revolution be solved. He also considered obliteration of the facets of the various stages of revolution (both inside and outside Russia) to be the essence of the tactics of the proletarian Party.

Trotsky, like the Mensheviks, sought to discredit Lenin's concept of revolution as "non-Marxist." At the same time he presented his "theory" of "permanent revolution," a term he had borrowed from Marx and Engels, as an outstanding contribution to Marxism.

However, the founders of scientific communism put an entirely different meaning into this term. Speaking against bourgeois domination of the working-class movement in the conditions of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, they insisted that the proletariat must go beyond the stage of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democracy. "...our task is to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has won state power..."\* Lenin's theory also stipulated that the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution was to be an uninterrupted process. Lenin wrote to this effect in 1905: "...from the democratic revolution we shall at once, and precisely in accord-

\* K. Marx, F. Engels. *Sel. Works in 3 Volumes*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

ance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution."\*

Trotsky replaced the idea of uninterrupted revolution with a demand for the immediate accomplishment of all of its tasks. In his view the proletariat had to overthrow czarist autocracy, establish its own dictatorship and carry out democratic changes, declare a programme of socialist transformation of society, ensure the victory of the revolution on a national scale, carry this revolution far beyond the borders of Russia, and do many other things all at the same time. In other words, what he advocated was the same old "all or nothing" concept preached by the anarchists. By permanent revolution, Marx, Engels and Lenin meant its development from one stage to the next. Trotsky's interpretation, by contrast, rejected all these stages.

The stage-by-stage development of revolution is not a product of an intellectual exercise, as Trotsky tried to picture it, but a product of the objective historical process. Revolutions come about not at the will or whim of revolutionaries, but stem from a whole complex of objective and subjective factors. The main factor is the support of the revolutionary vanguard (the Party) by the overwhelming majority of the people. According to Trotsky, the mere "wish" of the proletarian vanguard was sufficient to by-pass the stage of bourgeois-democratic revo-

\* V. I. Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 236-237.

lution and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotsky proposed that the same "show of will" be exercised to do away with the national framework of the revolution by turning it into a total revolution of the world proletariat.

The socialist revolution in the conditions of Russia would have been impossible without the preceding stage of democratic revolution. The existence of this stage did not put off the full victory of the proletariat, as Trotsky thought, but, on the contrary, brought it nearer, because it helped to rally round the working class that part of the population which had not yet come to realise the necessity for the socialist transformation of society. On the other hand, since it was the Russian proletariat, and not the bourgeoisie, that had proved to be the most consistent champion of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the bourgeoisie thus revealed its counter-revolutionary essence, its desire to keep in step with czarism. As a result, its influence on the proletarian masses went down considerably. Despite the fact that the Russian proletariat was not very numerous at the time, by its victory in the socialist revolution in 1917 it was much more successful than the more experienced and more numerous proletariat of the West-European countries.

Trotsky tried to maintain that the participation of the "anti-socialist" peasantry in the revolution, and of its representatives in the government of democratic dictatorship would impede the full victory of the proletariat. But in fact, the support of the peasants increased the strength of the proletariat in the struggle

against the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, heightened the sense of the revolutionary identity of the peasants themselves and rallied round the proletariat the peasant elements which, like the working class, were interested in the early victory of a socialist revolution.

The national scope of the revolution was another question that played a large part in Trotsky's theories. He alleged that national boundaries constituted a hindrance to the progress of the Russian proletariat to victory, although obviously it was much easier for the proletariat to cope with its "own" bourgeoisie than to wage a war against the bourgeoisie of other countries at the same time. Trotsky's reference to the authority of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels who had prophesied that a proletarian revolution in any European country would spread to other countries was nothing but a political stratagem. The point is that Marx and Engels lived in a different historical epoch, when the level of capitalist development and the revolutionary movement of the proletariat was about the same in all the leading West European countries. In those conditions a revolutionary movement initiated by the proletariat in one country could have immediately been followed by the proletariat in other countries.

Being aware of the vulnerability of his position and trying to reinforce it with additional arguments, Trotsky, in the years of the First World War, zealously advocated the opportunistic theory of the "stagnation" of capitalism. Trotsky alleged that capitalism throughout the world had "over-ripened" so that a mere push was necessary to cause it to fall and give way

to socialism. Trotsky persisted in these views until the end of his life. Flying in the face of the facts Trotsky insisted, even in the mid-1920s, that capitalism was unable to develop its productive forces, that it could no longer maintain the standard of living for the peoples which they had reached in the past, and therefore the overthrow of capitalism was a simple matter which required no elaborate preparations. He wrote: "If it turned out that capitalism could make nations richer, and their work more productive, this would mean that we (the Communist Party—Author) have sung a dirge for capitalism much too early, i.e. that we have taken power into our hands much too early in order to build socialism."

That was a typically opportunist position. On the one hand it meant a rejection of the work aimed at alerting the masses to a revolution and a passive waiting on the part of the proletariat for the time when capitalism would collapse of its own accord. On the other hand, it would encourage a pessimistic, near-capitulatory sentiment among the workers who saw in practice that capitalism was still a formidable force.

Trotsky relied on the spontaneity of proletarian action and advocated an adventuristic course of disorderly, ill-organized and technically unprepared rebellion. His slogan: "All or nothing" which lay at the basis of his rejection of the stage-by-stage development of the revolution actually played into the hands of the opportunists.

Marx and Engels had already ridiculed such an interpretation of the term "permanent re-

volution." In 1873 the anarchists wrote boastfully in connection with the revolutionary events in Spain that "nothing has yet happened in Barcelona, while the permanent revolution has already moved to squares and public places." Engels ironically commented that this was a revolution of anarchists "which consisted in a lot of din and which, therefore, was 'permanently' rooted to one 'place'".\* Advocating this "permanently rooted" revolution was exactly what Trotsky did, for he ignored the only possible way of development pointed out by Lenin. While rejecting the significance of the democratic revolution as the most important stage on the way to the socialist revolution, Trotsky insisted that there was no need for setting up a broad coalition of the proletarian and non-proletarian masses. This position was especially clear in Trotsky's attitude to the peasantry. "From the Bolsheviks Trotsky's original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while from the Mensheviks it has borrowed 'repudiation' of the peasantry's role," Lenin wrote.\*\*

According to Trotsky, the multi-million peasantry played, to say the least, a secondary role in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This assertion stood in flagrant contradiction to reality, when literally every day brought fresh facts that the feudal-capitalist regime in Rus-

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\* K. Marx and F. Engels. Coll. Works, Vol. 18, p. 463 (Russ. ed.).

\*\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 21, p. 419.

sia was opposed not only by the proletariat but also by the peasantry, which was an equally formidable enemy of the autocracy.

It is true, however, that Trotsky, who declared that the Russian proletariat had fallen heir to the historical functions of bourgeois democracy, admitted that the peasantry, being reactionary and hostile to socialism, could follow the proletariat spontaneously, for the mere reason that they were "politically barbarous, primitive and spineless." This they would do, Trotsky insisted, only until the proletariat proceeded to carry out its socialist programme.

Unlike Trotsky and other opportunists, Lenin showed that radical bourgeois democracy in Russia was embodied not by the opportunistic liberal bourgeoisie, as the Mensheviks said, and not by the proletariat, as Trotsky insisted (because it was interested in the final and complete victory of socialism and therefore set out to achieve not only bourgeois-democratic goals), but first and foremost by the multi-million peasantry of Russia. The peasants fought against the regime of the czar and big land-owners as an independent and active revolutionary force. Unfortunately, in the 1905-07 revolution the proletariat and the peasantry acted separately, independently of each other, and there was no alliance between them. That circumstance spelt defeat for the revolution.

As we said before, the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry was the only true embodiment of the alliance of workers and peasants at the stage of the democratic revolution, the main

result of their joint struggle. It was this dictatorship that guaranteed the stability of the victory of the people over the rule of the czar and the landlords, that helped create the necessary political conditions inside the country to ensure the development of the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. By opposing this vitally important idea of Lenin's Trotsky opposed the creation of the only possible guarantee of the victory of socialist revolution in Russia.

Lenin regarded an armed uprising as the only way to establish a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

Trotsky believed that political power could be wrested from the autocratic regime of Russia by way of a general strike of the proletariat, a strike which could play the role of a people's uprising and serve as a signal for a world proletarian revolution. "A general political strike is an uprising in its substance," said Trotsky. He allowed the possibility of an armed uprising only as an extreme, purely defensive measure of the proletariat to protect its gains from counter-revolution, and therefore was opposed to making military and technical preparations for it. He was also opposed to taking practical measures to equip workers with arms and organise them into combat units. He held that the main force of any uprising was not the organisation and arming of the people but... their readiness to die! That was a logical outcome of his adulation of spontaneity in the working-class movement and his underestimation of the organising and directing role of the proletarian vanguard.

In later years, too, Trotsky continued to cling to his earlier theoretical postulates. He placed his hopes for a new revolutionary upsurge in Russia on a European war or on a proletarian revolution in Western Europe. "Otherwise," he said in 1911, "one should not expect that Russia's masses will be forced upon the path of general strikes and uprisings in a year or two from now." But in fact, it was no time at all before the country was in a grip of strike action taken by the Russian proletariat as a consequence of the heinous crime of the czarist authorities on the River Lena.<sup>6</sup> Two years later Russia was on the threshold of a new revolution from which czarism was temporarily saved by the outbreak of the First World War.

Most of the leaders of social democratic parties in various countries called for "national civil peace" for the duration of the war and joined in the chorus of open advocates of the defence of the respective imperialist fatherlands. The opportunist-ridden Second International ended its existence. Almost all the socialist parties of the belligerent countries banded together with the imperialists and supported the policy of exterminating their class brothers on the other side of the front-line.

It was only the Bolsheviks who, supported by small groups of revolutionary Marxists in other countries, maintained a truly internationalist position. They called upon the working class to oppose the war and the imperialist governments responsible for the war, and to have no part in the fight against "military attacks

from outside" as was the slogan of the social-chauvinists.

The war had exacerbated all the contradictions of capitalism. It had also torn the mask off whole parties and social groups and exposed the true face of the political leaders who fought to retain their grip upon the people.

All this necessitated the further development of the Marxist doctrine in order to make it applicable in the conditions of a new era, that of imperialism. The revolutionary theory of the proletariat had to sum up all the new historical facts which had come to light during the first imperialist war, interpret them scientifically and map out plans for speedily solving the problems which the imperialist war had raised and aggravated to the utmost.

Lenin's theory of socialist revolution had entered a new phase of its development. Basing himself on the doctrine he had developed in the years of the first Russian revolution, that of the growth of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, Lenin summed up the experience of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in all countries and formulated his general theory of the world revolutionary process. The correctness of this theory was subsequently borne out by the Great October Socialist Revolution and by the socialist and national liberation revolutions which followed it.

Lenin's principal work written at the time of the first world imperialist war was "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" (1916). In his doctrine on imperialism as moribund and decaying monopoly capitalism, as re-

presenting the stage of the eve of the proletarian revolution, Lenin exposed the opportunist leaders of the Second International who refused to enlist the working masses for the cause of the revolution.

Now that the war was on, the opportunists, who had feared revolutionary action by the proletariat in peace-time, cried that the revolution could not be accomplished until the end of the war. They claimed that the war was an accidental phenomenon which had nothing to do with the nature of the social system of capitalism, that imperialism itself was nothing but a political superstructure over the "immutable" capitalist foundation.

Karl Kautsky, leader of international centrism, a trend which Trotsky also subscribed to, advanced a theory according to which the end of the war would be followed by an era of "peaceful" capitalism free from conflicts. Kautsky called this new phase of capitalist development the highest, and most progressive. It was only in this phase that he thought the victory of the proletarian revolution was possible, a revolution which he pictured as coming about only as the result of simultaneous action by the proletariat in all countries mature enough for socialism.

Lenin exposed the fallacy of Kautsky's theory and made this important scientific discovery: in the epoch of imperialism capitalism develops still more unevenly both economically and politically. This discovery served as the theoretical basis for his hypothesis that conditions for socialist revolution matured at a different rate in different countries.

The spasmodic character of capitalist development, which was particularly evident in the epoch of imperialism, inevitably heightened the distinctions as regards the subjective and objective conditions for the class struggle of the proletariat in different countries. The size of the proletarian population, its proportion to the total population, its composition, its political awareness and organisation, the influence it exercised on the other sections of the working population, the strength of the bourgeois state it had to deal with, the total power—economic, political and ideological—wielded by the ruling classes, the degree of exploitation of the proletariat, the ability of the bourgeoisie to maintain and spread its influence on the working class through the "labour aristocracy", etc., were different in different capitalist countries. These multifarious conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat made it impossible to accomplish a proletarian revolution in all or most of the leading capitalist countries simultaneously.

At the same time the growing unevenness of the economic and political development of capitalism, with the accompanying exacerbation of the imperialist contradictions and bitter conflicts and wars between individual capitalist states would have prevented them from forming a solid counter-revolutionary front against the proletariat which had been victorious in any one of them. This fact would make it possible to consolidate the victory of the socialist revolution in one country in spite of hostile capitalist encirclement.

Lenin formulated this important conclusion

for the first time in his work "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe" written in 1915. Lenin proved the absurdity of Kautsky's idea of creating a United States of Europe (or of the whole world) as a precondition for the victory of the proletarian revolution, and stressed that this slogan misinterpreted the fact that socialism could win in one country. "Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone," wrote Lenin.\* In his other work, "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution" written in 1916, Lenin reiterated his earlier conclusion that "...socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois."\*\*

Having studied the laws of the latest stage of capitalism Lenin evolved a new approach to the democratic and socialist tasks of the proletariat, which at that time was of utmost importance for the revolutionary movement in Russia. He further developed the theory of the growth of the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution and showed that in the epoch of imperialism which was characterised by the offensive or monopoly capital against the remaining vestiges of free competition and political freedoms, the struggle for democracy was objectively directed not only against the pre-bour-

geois despotic regimes but also against the new despotism of the imperialists who sought to suppress democracy in order to perpetuate their rule throughout the world.

Lenin's conclusion about bringing into closer relationship the democratic and socialist tasks of the proletariat in the epoch of imperialism widened the front of proletarian struggle for democracy to be waged by the working class not only in the countries where democratic revolution was imminent but also in more developed countries which had long since passed the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolutions. On the other hand, any genuinely democratic movement in the conditions of imperialism inevitably took the form of anti-imperialist struggle, which objectively made it part of the world revolutionary process.

Lenin's clear-cut concept of the revolution became an object of attack by opportunists of every shape and kind who sought to camouflage their inaction and their unwillingness to call on the workers for revolutionary action by referring to the fact that no revolution had taken place in other countries. One of the most rabid opponents of Lenin's pioneering conclusions was again Trotsky. He refused to admit that the new epoch of world capitalist development had exacerbated the internal contradictions of that system to breaking point and moved mankind close to a victorious proletarian revolution. Trotsky, following in Kautsky's wake, alleged that imperialism was not a qualitatively new stage of capitalism but was a mere policy of the bourgeois states aimed at expanding their territories, eliminating national

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 21, p. 342.

\*\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 23, p. 79.

fragmentation and creating a "world economy". Trotsky went so far as to consider this reactionary and predatory policy of riding roughshod over the rights of whole nations to be progressive and said that "the proletariat cannot stand up to imperialism."

Trotsky did not deny the fact that the war had brought the revolutionary situation to a head, but, like Kautsky's followers, believed that the world war did not express the essence of the latest phase of capitalism, that the war was an accidental and transient factor, that imperialism had created conditions for the "peaceful" development of capitalism, for uniting capitalist monopolies into one "super" monopoly, and for merging capitalist monopolies into a United States of Europe. Trotsky alleged that the tendency towards world-wide economic centralisation was basic to imperialism. According to Trotsky the very idea of imperialism was to build up an integrated "world economy." He said that "great national powers" would in the period of post-war capitalism be replaced by an imperialist super-power. Pointing out the similarity of Trotsky's views to those of Kautsky Lenin stressed that both of them refused to acknowledge the profound inner contradictions of capitalism.

Trotsky rejected Lenin's conclusion about imperialism heralding the proletarian revolution. He also fiercely opposed Lenin's evaluation of the prospects of this revolution, tried to prove that modern capitalism sought to even out the economic and political development of individual countries, and denied the fact that capitalism was developing more unevenly than

at any time before. He alleged that the differences between individual countries in the 19th century had been much greater than they were in the 20th century, that the 20th century had "levelled off" the whole world. Trotsky admitted that the levels of capitalist development in the leading West European countries were not the same, but that compared to the countries of Africa and Asia they nevertheless represented capitalist Europe as one whole, a Europe which was ripe enough for socialism.

Lenin resolutely opposed such a mechanistic approach to the interpretation of the law of uneven economic and political development of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism. He pointed out that the crux of the matter was not the level of capitalist development achieved in individual countries, which indeed was becoming more and more even, but the increased difference in the rate of this development, which made it fitful and erratic. The old epoch of a fairly calm and smooth development of capitalism had given way to "an epoch which is relatively much more violent, spasmodic, disastrous and conflicting..."\*

Until the end of his life Trotsky was adamant in his rejection of Lenin's conclusion about the possibility of achieving victory for socialism in one or several countries. In the same way as Bernstein and the other "founding fathers" of revisionism had described Marx's pronouncement about the dictatorship of the proletariat as a "chance remark," Trotsky tried to present Lenin's conclusion as some sort of a

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 22, p. 104.

"slip of the tongue," although what Lenin expounded was nothing accidental but was aimed directly at exploding the Trotskyist and Kautskyite political precepts. In defiance of the facts Trotsky tried vainly in later years to prove that the author of the theory of victory of socialism in one country was Stalin who had allegedly distorted Lenin's position on this question. Now, Trotsky's thesis is being widely taken up by all the bourgeois and revisionist falsifiers of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Trotsky adopted a completely negative stand with regard to Lenin's conclusion about the need for bringing the socialist and democratic tasks of the proletariat into closer relationship. He declared that the struggle for democracy belonged to the past stage of the proletarian movement and claimed that imperialism had removed all the other problems facing the proletariat but one, which was the attainment of political power.

By belittling the importance of the democratic tasks of the proletariat, tasks which in fact had grown in the era of imperialism, especially in the course of the world war, Trotsky further emphasized the mistakes inherent in his views on the nature of and prospects for the revolution in Russia. During the war he became still more firmly set in his views about the redundancy of the democratic stage of the revolution, and insisted that the petty bourgeoisie, and especially the peasantry, were no longer interested in the overthrow of czarism. By rejecting the decisive role of the peasants in the Russian revolution, said Lenin, "Trotsky is in fact help-

ing the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by 'repudiation' of the role of the peasantry understand a refusal to raise up the peasants for the revolution."\*

Trotsky, who thought that another revolution in Russia was impossible, opposed the principal tactical slogans of the Bolsheviks aimed at releasing the revolutionary initiative of the working class: "turn the imperialist war into a civil war," and, "seek the defeat of one's own government." Against the first of these two slogans he advanced his pacifist slogan: "peace at any price." He alleged that the war drained the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and made social democracy powerless in the face of the combined strength of the government inside the country and unable to take co-ordinated action on an international scale. Following this line of reasoning Trotsky insisted that the proletariat must achieve peace before getting down to the carrying out of revolutionary tasks. "The first condition for starting a civil war is to end the imperialist war," he said.

Significantly, Trotsky failed to follow up his "peace programme" with practical anti-war actions. While agreeing with the Bolsheviks that the imperialist governments were unable to conclude a democratic peace Trotsky would go no further than preaching peace in abstract terms instead of calling upon the workers and all sincere opponents of the war to overthrow such governments, as the Bolsheviks sought to do. According to him this preaching was to be a universal means of setting a revolution in motion on a European and world-wide scale.

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 21, p. 420.

However, he had no suggestion to offer as to how to overthrow the imperialist governments without civil war.

Against the other Bolshevik slogan, "seek the defeat of one's own government," Trotsky, and other opportunists, counterposed the dangerous formula: "neither victories nor defeats." Lenin called upon all genuine revolutionaries to repudiate their "own" governments, not to support them, but to fight for their overthrow. That was the only way to convert the imperialist war into a civil war, to take advantage of the government's military reverses to ensure the victory of the revolution. "A revolution in wartime means civil war; the conversion of a war between governments into a civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ("defeats") of governments; on the other hand, one cannot actually strive for such a conversion without thereby facilitating defeat," wrote Lenin.\*

By advancing the slogan, "neither victories, nor defeats" the opportunists sought to retain a semblance of "loyalty" to internationalism and at the same time to be on good terms with the outright social-chauvinists who advocated the defence of the "imperialist fatherlands." They were also careful not to alienate the jingoistic petty-bourgeois elements. Trotsky criticised the Bolshevik position on the grounds that the defeatist tactics would allegedly do harm to the German working class whose chances of winning its struggle would be reduced, should the militarists win the war. Trotsky

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 21, p. 276.

used this false premise to slanderously accuse the Bolsheviks of departing from the principles of proletarian internationalism and of selling out the interests of the German working people.

The "neither-victory-nor-defeat" slogan doomed the proletariat to a passive waiting for the cessation of hostilities at the front and deprived it of the possibility of using the revolutionary situation precipitated by the war for fighting the anti-popular governments. Lenin pointed out that "on closer examination, this slogan will be found to mean a 'class truce', the renunciation of the class struggle by the oppressed classes in all belligerent countries..."\*

The revolutionary situation in Russia towards the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 bore out the correctness of Lenin's policy of orienting the Party to a decisive struggle against the rule of the czar. The February revolution which put an end to czarism confirmed the correctness of all the theoretical and tactical positions of the Bolsheviks which they had defended against the Trotskyists and other opportunists. The Russian revolution of February, 1917, was bourgeois-democratic with regard to its tasks, and proletarian-peasant as regards its driving forces and methods of accomplishment. With the victory of this revolution a revolutionary government was formed—the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the organ of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Soviets were set up in other cities as well. The proletariat and the army (which consisted mostly of peas-

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 21, p. 278.

ants) followed the Soviets. However, the Mensheviks and the SR's<sup>7</sup> who, supported by the numerous petty bourgeoisie, managed to take the key positions in many Soviets, handed over power to the anti-popular bourgeois Provisional Government on the pretext of "using the bourgeoisie in the interests of the revolution." This new government obstructed democratic changes in the country and was bent on the prosecution of the war to a victorious end. As a result political power in the country was divided between the Soviets and the Provisional Government.

Dual power was a distinctive feature of the Russian revolution, a feature which did not fit in any theoretical patterns. But the very fact that the Soviets (it is worthy of note that the Soviets of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Yekaterinburg, and Krasnoyarsk were dominated by the Bolsheviks from the very start) shared political power in Russia, facilitated the struggle of the proletariat for its dictatorship and made it possible to direct the revolution into peaceful channels. It was necessary to work for concentrating all state power in the hands of the existing democratic institutions in order to gradually transform the democratic dictatorship of the people into the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat and the working peasantry, in line with Lenin's theory of the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. Lenin set out the essence of the new tactical directives of the Bolsheviks in his "April Theses" (1917) which were overwhelmingly approved by the party.

Lenin's call for a socialist revolution, for a

struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in "backward" Russia was fiercely attacked by the opportunists. As if anticipating the writings of Trotsky and the modern falsifiers of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the "ideological rearmament of Bolshevism" in 1917, the Mensheviks alleged that Lenin had taken up the Trotskyist position and that he had borrowed the slogan of Trotsky and Parvus: "no czar, but a workers' government."

The opportunists deliberately kept silent about Lenin's criticism of the Trotskyist theory of "permanent revolution" which he voiced in many of his speeches and articles in the pre-October period. In March and April, 1917, Lenin repeatedly stressed the fact that Trotsky's tactics were sheer adventurism. If the Bolsheviks had supported Trotsky's slogan, "no czar, but a workers' government," they would have been in danger of falling into subjectivism, "...of wanting to arrive at the socialist revolution by 'skipping' the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement."\*

Vainly trying to identify Trotskyism with Leninism, the propagandists of Trotskyism alleged in the past and are alleging today that, since in 1905 Lenin was opposed to the "workers' government" slogan upheld by Parvus and Trotsky, and in 1917 himself called for proletarian dictatorship, this means that, despite the different theoretical premises, the final conclusions of Lenin's and Trotsky's concepts of re-

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 24, p. 48.

volution were virtually the same. In actual fact, these allegations have no substance. The point is that Trotsky applied his formula to the first, i.e. democratic phase of the revolution which he wrongly identified with the socialist phase. Lenin, on the other hand, applied his slogan of proletarian dictatorship only to the second, i.e. the socialist phase. Therein lies the difference between Lenin's revolutionary realism and Trotsky's adventurism.

Lenin stood for handing political power over to the existing Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Lenin stressed that it was the exercise of full political power in the country by the Soviets (the organs of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry which in future was to take the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat) that would ensure the fastest and the most painless advance of the revolution along socialist lines. He regarded the slogan "All power to the Soviets" as applicable both "in the event that Russia will yet experience a special 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry' independent of the bourgeoisie, and in the event that the petty bourgeoisie will not be able to tear itself away from the bourgeoisie and will oscillate eternally (that is, until socialism is established) between us and it." \* In Lenin's view, the Soviets, which enjoyed the support of the great majority of the people, were the highest expression of the democratic character of the Russian revolution, a form of government which "repre-

sents the first steps towards socialism." \* Trotsky, on his part, held that a proletarian revolution in Russia was possible only in "pure form", i.e. without the participation of the peasantry, the country's biggest social class.

The enemies of Leninism deliberately shut their eyes to the fact that the proletariat had a mighty potential ally in the struggle for socialism. This ally was the multi-million village poor driven to despair by the burden of war, by the cruel exploitation of the big land-owners and capitalists and by the anti-popular policy pursued by the bourgeois Provisional Government. Tens of millions of these peasants (a great many of whom were armed, being on active service) constituted a formidable force which was rising with increasing vigour not only against the big land-owners but also against the imperialist bourgeoisie.

It was this great force that Lenin had in mind when he stressed that in Russia proletarian political power could exist only in the form of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the rural poor. The part of the April Theses dealing with the agrarian question pointed to the necessity of intensifying the class struggle in the village and of expediting the process of the separation of the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasantry from the jingoist kulaks (rich peasants) and other well-to-do village elements.

In contrast to Lenin's views, Trotsky, who in principle rejected the very possibility of creating a truly democratic proletarian govern-

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 24, p. 51.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 24, p. 241.

ment in the country, in actual fact also rejected the truly socialist character of the "workers' government" which he himself called for settling up. He disbelieved in the possibility of a genuinely socialist revolution in Russia and insisted that, prior to the victory of a world proletarian revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat must not go beyond performing purely democratic tasks. This, according to Trotsky, was the only way the dictatorship of the proletariat could "hold out", i.e. ensure the support of the people. In 1928, when Trotsky was no longer in the Communist Party, he wrote in his article "Draft Programme for the Comintern. Criticism of the Main Principle": "Has Russia matured for socialism? No, it has not. It has matured for proletarian dictatorship as the only method of resolving the immediate national (i.e. purely democratic—author) problems."

In Trotsky's view the dictatorship of the proletariat "born in a backward country as the result of a proletarian revolution" was identical with the regime which was to succeed czarism as the result of the victory of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, i.e. the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. In his article, "The Permanent Revolution and Lenin's Political Line", (1928), Trotsky wrote: "It is true that the Bolshevik slogan (democratic dictatorship—Author) has indeed been carried out... But it was carried out not before the October Revolution but after it." The conclusion which followed from this was that in October, 1917, a "democratic revolution was accomplished", i.e., according to Trotsky, the

proletarian revolution which triumphed in Russia was not socialist but only democratic in its aims and tasks.

Trotsky returned to Russia (in May, 1917) as an arch opponent of the Bolsheviks. Nevertheless, he refused to "dissolve" in any of the Menshevik organisations which at that time had their own recognised leaders, and which, besides, were in the grip of a serious crisis. Instead, Trotsky became a member of the Interregional United Organisation of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party which held a conciliatory, centrist position.

At a conference of this organisation in May, 1917, Lenin proposed that this organisation unite with the Bolsheviks. But Trotsky, whose influence at the conference was substantial, succeeded in getting this proposal voted down. Posing as a champion of the unity of all social democrats he demanded that a unity conference be held with the Bolsheviks, members of the Interregional Organisation and even outright Mensheviks taking part. Trotsky favoured the unification of the Party on Trotskyist and Menshevik lines and not on the Bolshevik principles.

After the July, 1917 demonstration<sup>8</sup> Trotsky was arrested by the Provisional Government. While he was in prison the Interregional Organisation joined the RSDLP (Bolsheviks). According to one of the members of this organisation Trotsky had tried to frighten them by alleging dictatorial practices by the Bolsheviks and to persuade them to join the Bolshevik Party as a separate, compact group. Trotsky sought to retain within the Bolshevik Party his

own political organisation which he could later use in his struggle against Lenin.

After the Interregional Organisation had joined the RSDLP(B) Trotsky continued to reject the necessity for scrupulously working with the masses. According to him, the working class of Russia would fail in its efforts, however great, to achieve socialism if there was no successful world proletarian revolution in the near future. Conversely, he said, with the success of a world revolution, all the Russian working class would have to do was to raise the banner of proletarian revolution, give the revolution a push in the right direction, in other words, to accelerate the revolutionary processes, and then leave it to the European proletariat to finish the job.

It was not accidental, therefore, that Trotsky reduced the whole idea of guidance of the proletariat by its vanguard to the formula "not to quail" at the crucial moment. This stand clashed with Lenin's strictly scientific approach to the guiding role of the Party in the revolution and in all essentials was nothing more nor less than a preaching of passivity. In a way, Trotsky's views were akin to the rebellious concepts of the anarchists who believed that, given a well-advertised slogan, a revolution could be touched off at the drop of a hat.

In the crucial days of October, 1917, at the turning point of world history, Trotsky did his utmost to dampen the fighting spirit of the revolutionary proletariat. Like all the opportunists he believed that a true popular uprising must assume the form of a spontaneous outbreak of the masses aimed not so much at removing the existing government as at bringing

armed pressure to bear upon it in the hope that, thus coerced, it would "concede" political power to the revolutionary proletariat. The military and technical preparation for the uprising and its accomplishment according to the rules of military strategy and tactics, all of which Lenin insisted upon, Trotsky called "conspiratorial intrigues". In Trotsky's view, purely military operations in the course of an uprising could be carried out only on a defensive and very limited scale. He relied mainly on legal means of struggle, especially on purely parliamentary forms, and considered that it was only the congress of Soviets to be called at the end of October, 1917, and not the revolutionary people, that had the right to decide the question of political power.

In his numerous articles and letters written in the period shortly before and during the armed uprising in October, 1917, Lenin exposed Trotsky's anti-revolutionary political line. He wrote: "To insist on connecting this task (the task of taking over political power—Author) with the Congress of Soviets, to subordinate it to this Congress, means, to be merely **playing at insurrection** by setting a definite date beforehand, by making it easier for the government to prepare troops, by confusing the masses with the illusion that a 'resolution' of the Congress of Soviets can solve a task which only the insurrectionary proletariat is capable of solving by force." \*

The victorious uprising, which took place many hours before the opening of the Second

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 26, pp. 143-144.

Congress of Soviets, proved the Bolsheviks right. The Congress which met in the conditions of proletarian dictatorship sanctioned by an overwhelming majority of votes the transition of all state power in the country to the Soviets. It also elected the world's first government of workers and peasants with Lenin at the head and adopted its political platform set forth in Lenin's famous Decrees on Peace and Land.

Trotsky and the other opportunists who had fought Lenin suffered a crushing defeat.

## The Adventurism of Trotsky's Concept of the Building of Socialism

After the victory of the October Revolution the key task of the Bolshevik Party was to consolidate the revolutionary gains and to make the Soviet state a bulwark of socialism. On their part the "left"-wing opportunists, including Trotsky, tried to force upon the Party their concept of "instigating" a world proletarian revolution even if it meant rejection of the clear-cut, scientifically supported policy of building the foundations of a new socialist system in Soviet Russia herself.

Whereas the classics of Marxism-Leninism saw the supreme internationalist duty of the proletariat in doing "the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and

awakening of the revolution in all countries"\* the "leftist" phrase-mongers tried to put the burden of responsibility for the accomplishment of these tasks which the Russian proletariat could and had to carry out by itself, on a world proletarian revolution. On the very next day after the success of the October armed uprising, Trotsky said at the Second Congress of Soviets on October 26, 1917: "...we hope that our revolution will spark off a European revolution. If the insurgent peoples of Europe do not crush imperialism we shall be crushed. There is no doubt about that."

The primary condition for the building of a socialist society was the immediate withdrawal of Soviet Russia from the war. However, Lenin's tactic aimed at concluding a separate peace with Germany was bitterly opposed by Trotsky and the "Left communists" headed by Bukharin<sup>9</sup> who advocated a world proletarian revolution and who placed all their hopes on a "revolutionary war" against imperialism.

Trotsky insisted that there were no conditions for building a socialist society in Soviet Russia and therefore considered that the Russian revolution was doomed even if it managed to repulse the military intervention of the imperialists. At the 7th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in March, 1918 he said: "If the world revolutionary proletariat fails to repulse German imperialism it will mean that Soviet rule is too heavy a burden for it to carry; from this it follows that we have come much too early and must go under-

ground..." "No amount of philosophising or manoeuvring can save us. To put it squarely, we can be saved only by a European revolution."

Suiting action to his words Trotsky wrecked the peace negotiations with Germany at Brest-Litovsk where he, as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, headed the Soviet delegation. Trotsky was under specific instructions from Lenin and the Council of People's Commissars to sign a peace treaty immediately even if Kaiser Germany presented an ultimatum containing harsh and predatory terms. He failed to comply with this directive and, on receiving an ultimatum in which the German military command threatened to resume operations unless the Soviet representatives agreed to sign a peace treaty immediately, refused to do so. The German invaders thus had a pretext for launching a well-prepared offensive against Soviet Russia on all sectors of the front. Moreover, Trotsky said that although the Soviet republic did not sign the peace treaty it nevertheless would end hostilities against Germany, would disband its army and would seek protection from the world proletariat. He even sent the Soviet Supreme Command a telegram in which he, allegedly acting on behalf of the government, proposed to start demobilisation of the army. It took Lenin's personal intervention to have this absurd directive cancelled. Referring to this episode in the early history of Soviet Russia Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's wife, described Trotsky in her memoirs as: "A lover of fine words, who liked to strike an attitude, he thought not so much of how to get the So-

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 28, p. 292.

viet Republic out of the war and give it a respite to recuperate and rally the masses, as to cut a figure ('We conclude no degrading peace, we fight no war'). Ilyich called this a lordly, grand-seigneur pose, and the slogan an adventurist gamble which gave the country over to pillage and anarchy, a country where the proletariat had taken over the helm of power and great construction was being started."\*

The Peace of Brest<sup>10</sup> which was signed soon after stipulated immeasurably harsher terms than those contained in the previous peace offer rejected by Trotsky.

Lenin vigorously condemned Trotsky's adventuristic policy. The readiness of Trotsky and the leaders of the "Left communists" to attempt to set off a world proletarian revolution at the cost of losing Soviet power aroused universal indignation. In the course of the struggle for the Peace of Brest, Lenin made this important conclusion which then served as the cornerstone of Soviet policy in the international arena: "...the preservation of the republic that has already begun the socialist revolution is most important to us and to the international socialist movement..."\*\*

Lenin's conclusion that the outcome of a world proletarian revolution would hinge primarily on the situation in the world's first country of the victorious proletariat was an important contribution to the theory of socialist revolution in the post-October period. The emergence of the Soviet state began a whole

series of revolutionary processes which have wrought many changes in the world over the past 50 or so years. Today the world socialist system is in the centre of the world revolutionary process, and it is the prime internationalist duty of working people in all countries to defend this system, and to work for its unity and growing power and influence.

Trotsky, who had no faith in the possibility of building socialism in "backward" Russia, tried to apply the same "method" of subjectively stimulating objective processes, a method which was characteristic of his position on questions of international politics. He held that the principal functions of the state were administrative, that the new society was being born not in accordance with objective laws but in accordance with the will and whim of its leaders. He called for making wide use of forced labour. "Man is a rather lazy animal," he said at the 9th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1920. And as such he must be "disciplined and spurred on."

After the end of the civil war<sup>11</sup> the dissidents in the Party drew the membership into a long discussion about the role of trade unions within the system of proletarian dictatorship. This intra-Party debate aggravated still further the difficult situation in the country caused by the post-war economic dislocation. The anti-Leninist "leftist" groupings which assumed demagogic names such as "workers' opposition",<sup>12</sup> the group of "democratic centralism",<sup>13</sup> etc. demanded that such anti-Leninist factions and groupings be allowed to exist legally. They also demanded that the Party relax its control in

\* N. K. Krupskaya. "Reminiscences of Lenin." Moscow, 1959, p. 447.

\*\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 26, p. 452.

Soviets, trade unions and economic organisations. Their demands in fact echoed the slogans of the outright enemies of the Soviet state who also posed as champions of "democracy", i.e. freedom for all forces hostile to socialism to engage in anti-Soviet activities.

Trotsky took advantage of the attacks mounted by the "democratic centralists" and the "workers' opposition" on the policy of the Party with regard to trade unions, and joined in the struggle on a platform of his own. Backed by his supporters he tried to force upon the trade unions his policy of "tightening the screws".

In Trotsky's view the trade unions were to become, after the proletariat took power, "the vehicles of revolutionary repression". They must be given the right to "order" and to mete out punishment, he said, otherwise they would become "a mere formula without substance". In his pamphlet, "The Role and Tasks of Trade Unions" Trotsky set out a programme for abolishing trade unions as public organisations called upon to defend the interests of working people and to help the Party in the communist upbringing of the masses. He also advocated the idea of the "coalescence" of trade union organisations with economic bodies, concentration in their hands of the entire control of production, and transformation of trade unions into bodies for the militarisation of labour—not only of the workers but also of the peasants. Trotsky in fact proposed that forced labour be introduced in all spheres of life of Soviet society and called for the abolition of the principle of economic incentive.

At a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Party, Trotsky's theses were turned down and on Lenin's motion a resolution was passed stressing the need for democratisation of trade unions, for strengthening their ties with the people and for vigorously combating all manifestations of bureaucracy and formalism in their work. Lenin described Trotsky's speech as an attempt at "creating a faction on a faulty platform."\*

Common to all the anti-Leninist platforms was the gratuitous and essentially anarcho-sindicalist demand for turning over some of the key government functions, including control of the national economy, to trade unions. Their authors also propounded similar views on the question of work among the people, views which they tried to force upon the Party and which were highly damaging to the cause of socialism. All of them rejected Lenin's thesis about the role of trade unions as the school of communism and were against meticulous educational work with the people, which was the only way of making the working people the true and sole masters of the socialist economy. Another feature common to the anti-Leninist groupings was their desire to weaken the proletarian state, undermine the unity of the Party and play down its leading role in the life of Soviet society—all under the guise of working for "democracy" and fighting bureaucracy. Lenin regarded the rejection by the opposition of the leading role of the Communist Party in the entire system of the proletarian state as

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 32, p. 46.

being a "radical theoretical departure from communism and a deviation toward syndicalism and anarchism. . ." \*

The Party sought to win over the overwhelming majority of the people to socialism, to turn all working people into politically aware builders of the new society, and to make it possible on this basis to achieve spectacular economic and cultural progress unprecedented in history so that socialist society would serve as a model for all progressive mankind. In the Party's view these were the basic aims of the transitional period from capitalism to socialism. Hence the Party's concern for democratising the Soviet social system, for drawing ever more sections of the population into the struggle for socialism. The Party's basic aim was to achieve these goals with the wide support of the people, together with the people.

Lenin repeatedly stressed that the function of the proletarian state was not violence but creative work, the building of a new society. This, in turn, demanded that the working people enjoy the greatest possible measure of democracy.

Trotsky did not recognize the profoundly democratic character of the Soviet state, and made use of the word "democracy" only as camouflage, as an excuse for his attempts to remove the economic bodies from Party control. In the course of the discussion on trade unions the Trotskyists made demagogic play with the expression "industrial democracy" to bolster up their ideological platform.

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 32, p. 246.

The open enemies of Soviet rule lost no time in profiting from the dissident activities of the Trotskyists and other factionists and attacking the young Soviet republic whenever the opportunity offered. For example, they struck at Kronstadt where Trotsky's supporters who were in command of the navy failed to take timely measures to anticipate a counter-revolutionary mutiny which had been four months in preparation.<sup>14</sup>

Speaking at the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) which opened on March 8, 1921, Lenin again stressed that the leading role of the Party was the source of the strength of the proletarian dictatorship. The most important condition enabling the Party to play this role was its own strength which it drew from the unity of its ranks. "The political conclusion to be drawn from the present situation is that the Party must be united and any opposition prevented," he said. \* Lenin emphasised that the Party must give unstintingly of its efforts in the building of the new society, must do it patiently and painstakingly, overcoming all possible conflicts by way of friendly criticism and self-criticism and not by way of political struggle which was the method proper only in relations between hostile parties and classes.

The participants in the Congress overwhelmingly approved the historic resolution, "On Party Unity", written by Lenin in which he reiterated his conclusion that what the Party needed was not formal unity, but teamwork

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 32, p. 193.

and the single will of all its members. The resolution proscribed factionalism in the Party and proposed that all factional groupings be dissolved. It read: "Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall entail unconditional and instant expulsion from the Party." \*

The concepts embodied in this resolution served to further develop the doctrine of the militant Marxist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat, the doctrine evolved by Lenin in the determined struggle against the Mensheviks and Trotsky back in the formative years of the Bolshevik Party. Trotsky did not dare to speak out at the Congress against the resolution, but throughout the remaining period he was in the Party he fought to have the resolution rescinded and to turn the Party into a conglomeration of dissident, and often hostile, groups.

A history-making decision taken at the 10th Congress of the Party was on the New Economic Policy (NEP).<sup>15</sup> This policy was a continuation and further development of the scientifically based programme of socialist construction which Lenin had formulated as far back as the spring of 1918. The NEP covered a comparatively long period over which socialist changes were to be effected and thus provided for their greater stability and completeness. It also ensured lasting success for the building of socialism carried out by politically aware people of the whole country.

The New Economic Policy aimed primarily at consolidating the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry and at putting this alliance

on a solid economic footing. It was only by enlisting the support of the workers on the land that the proletariat could be successful in accomplishing all the tasks of socialist construction.

Lenin's view was that the attitude to the peasantry should have top priority as the central issue confronting the Party in the period of transition from war to peace. By giving precedence to the trade-union question over all others, the Trotskyists deliberately ignored the role of the peasantry as the closest ally of the proletariat in the building of a socialist society. To overcome the vacillations of the peasants by the use of force, including military force, was Trotsky's adventurist policy which he tried to impose upon the Party in the belief that only force could protect the proletarian dictatorship from "petty-bourgeois, peasant counter-revolution".

The Party vigorously rejected Trotsky's militarist-bureaucratic view on the problem of the relations between the proletarian state and the mass of the people, primarily the peasant population, and prepared the ground for the unanimous adoption of the new economic policy.

But Lenin was far from idealising the peasantry and insisted that the Party view it realistically as the largest class of small owners with all the specific features characteristic of the fact. Therefore the first measures taken under the New Economic Policy did not provide for a rapid expansion of the economic positions of socialism in Soviet Russia. Lenin wrote: "By adopting NEP we made a concession to the peasant as a trader, to the principle of private

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 32, p. 244.

trade..."\* The Party deliberately gave the peasant a chance to see for himself that he could not fight poverty single-handed. It was only in this long but sure way that the working peasants could be brought to socialism. That is why Lenin called the NEP a strategic manoeuvre designed to regroup the class forces in order to mount a socialist offensive of broader front and greater depth than it had been under "war communism".<sup>16</sup>

Lenin stressed that NEP "will afford us a wider front for our offensive in the near future, will provide a strong economic link with millions of small peasants, with the mass of the peasantry, will make invincible our alliance, the alliance of workers and peasants, the basis of our entire Soviet revolution and of the whole of our Soviet republic."<sup>\*\*</sup>

Having failed in their attempts in the discussion on the trade unions to force upon the Party military-bureaucratic methods of work among the people, the Trotskyists did not dare to take an open stand at the Congress against Lenin's policy for consolidating the alliance with the peasantry by economic means and not administrative pressure.

Nevertheless, they tried to put their own "Left opportunist" interpretation on the new economic policy. For example, Trotsky exaggerated the danger of petty-bourgeois anarchy and identified the petty-bourgeois masses, and

primarily the peasantry, with the outright enemies of socialism. In this light he regarded NEP as a concession to capitalism, as a recognition by the proletariat of its inability to overcome petty-bourgeois chaos without the assistance of a world proletarian revolution.

"We firmly rely on revolution in Europe," said Trotsky. "The new economic policy is a mere stratagem to keep pace with its development... If the capitalist world lasts several more decades it will thereby seal the fate of the socialist revolution which will either have to go through the phase of bourgeois democracy or rot away 'in other forms'."

Exposing Trotsky's adventuristic rhetoric Lenin pointed out that although the world proletarian revolution was gathering strength, it was not proceeding as fast as the Bolsheviks would have wished.

The slowing down of the development of revolution in Europe after the civil war in Soviet Russia gave Lenin reason to conclude that the new Soviet state would for a long time yet have to exist and build socialism alone, surrounded by hostile capitalist countries. This conclusion, which caused panic among the Trotskyists and other opportunists who believed that socialism could not be built in Russia without the early victory of the proletariat in Europe, never shook the confidence of the Bolsheviks in the policy inaugurated by the victorious October Revolution and aimed at the establishment of a socialist society in Russia. This confidence was inspired by Lenin's theory of socialist revolution which proved scienti-

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\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 33, pp. 467-468.

\*\* Ibid., Vol. 44, p. 487 (in Russian).

fically the possibility of the victory of socialism first in one country.

In his article "On Co-operation" Lenin again pointed out that the Soviet state had all that was necessary and sufficient for the building of socialist society. He said that the Soviet people could, with their own resources and with the moral support of the working people of other countries, create a socialist society, build a developed, modern economy by way of socialist industrialisation and eliminate the last existing classes of exploiters and also prevent the very possibility of their revival in the future by converting small-commodity production by the peasants into a large-scale socialist economy. Lenin's plan also provided for a cultural revolution in the country.

History has since shown the correctness of Lenin's view about the building of a socialist society in the USSR. Over the several years it was in force the New Economic Policy made possible the rapid progress of the Soviet national economy. "We are getting back on our feet alone, without outside help," Lenin wrote at the time.\*

But Trotsky and his followers did not want to admit to the facts. Trotsky continued to criticise, saying that although the Russian proletariat had been in power for five years already, and in spite of some initial progress in economic rehabilitation, Russia had not moved an inch closer to socialism. He set forth these views in the introduction to his book, "The Year 1905", published in 1922, in which he ur-

ged the Party, as he had done before, to start artificially a world proletarian revolution.

The year 1923 saw a powerful upsurge of revolutionary activity by the West European proletariat (the last such manifestation in the post-war period). In some countries the revolutionary situation was near flash-point. In Germany, for example, a proletarian revolution loomed close in the autumn of 1923, but, betrayed by the opportunists, the German workers were defeated by the bourgeoisie. At the end of 1923 the revolutionary wave began to ebb, while capitalism entered a period of partial stabilisation in Europe and America.

The revolutionary events in Germany aroused fresh hope for the victory of its proletariat in the near future. Trotsky capitalised on this hope to make a case for his theory of "permanent revolution". He declared that the victory of the German proletariat was a foregone conclusion and that this victory would confirm the correctness of his, Trotsky's theory. He maintained this line of argument in his attacks on the policy of the Communist Party and alleged that by engaging in "little things" (that is how Trotsky dubbed the efforts of the Party and the people to build a new, socialist society) the Party was thus dissipating the strength of the Russian proletariat and was diverting its attention from giving "effective" assistance to the German revolution. In Trotsky's view Soviet Russia could render such assistance to the proletariat of Germany only by dispatching the Red Army there.

He also alleged that the domestic policy of the Communist Party was not sufficiently "re-

\* V. I. Lenin. Coll. Works, Vol. 36, p. 586.

volutionary" either. The effects of the war, which had not yet been completely overcome, led to serious economic difficulties. Wages were low. In the autumn of 1923 the country was in the throes of a "market crisis" caused by exorbitant prices on manufactured goods. Trotsky tried to put the whole blame for these difficulties on the Party, despite the fact that many of them were objective in character, and were even aggravated by the Trotskyists themselves. For example, Piatakov who was deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the National Economy<sup>17</sup> and who was a Trotsky supporter, gave orders in the summer of 1923 "to make the maximum profit" which resulted in a catastrophic rise in the price of manufactured goods.

The upsurge of activity among the working people, new tasks facing the country in the struggle to build socialism, and the difficulties that had yet to be overcome put great demands on Party organisations, on their leaders and rank-and-file members alike. In these conditions the Party set about implementing the decisions of its 10th Congress aimed at advancing inner-Party democracy.

In an effort to make capital out of the legitimate desire of the communists to lift some of the restrictions imposed on inner-Party democracy in war-time, Trotsky, who had shortly before demanded that the "screws be tightened", now posed as a most zealous champion of inner-Party democracy.

The Trotskyists decided to strike at a time when Lenin was laid low by illness and could not take part in the work of the Central Com-

mittee. They hoped that without Lenin the Party would not be able to stand up to them. However, at the plenary meeting held in September, 1923, the Central Committee voted for Lenin's political line, scorning Trotsky's provocative activity designed to split the Party ranks. At this meeting the Central Committee turned down Trotsky's adventurist proposal to dispatch the Red Army to Germany in order to "fan the flames of a proletarian revolution in Europe."

It was also decided to include some leading Party workers in the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic in order to strengthen Party control in the army. Trotsky strenuously objected to this decision of the Central Committee and demonstratively left the hall. A few days later he sent a letter to the Central Committee in which he sharply criticised the entire activities of the Party.

Trotsky's letter was followed by the so-called "Statement of the Forty-Six" addressed to the Central Committee. It was signed by those who had been active in the earlier opposition groups: the "democratic centralists", "Left-wing communists" and Trotskyists. Though the statement was not formally signed by representatives of the "workers' opposition", they shared the views set forth in Trotsky's letter and in the "Statement of the Forty-Six". Taking advantage of Lenin's illness all opposition groups now launched a sweeping offensive on the Party.

Trotsky and the authors of the "Statement" attacked the Party's economic policy. Trotsky alleged that the country was "on the verge of

a general economic crisis". The splitters demanded that the Party take no part in the control of the national economy.

The Trotskyists alleged that the real cause of the "market crisis" was not the high prices on manufactured goods but the lack of "an overall economic plan". By planning, the Trotskyists meant a voluntaristic and bureaucratic administration of the national economy with no regard for its actual needs. In short, they demanded that the use of economic means of control of the economy be replaced by outright administrative pressure.

Lenin believed that the key problem of economic planning was to bring under control the spontaneous free market which in the period of the transition from capitalism to socialism served as a link between the socialist economy and the small-commodity production of the peasants. He urged that a detailed study be made of the peasant economy and, in drawing up national plans, the possible ups and downs in its development and consequent fluctuations on the peasant market be allowed for so as to co-ordinate the development of industry with the condition of the peasant economy.

For their part the Trotskyists proposed that the peasant economy be subordinated to "the dictatorship of industry". Trotsky maintained that state-controlled industry must develop independently of the peasant market, otherwise it would find itself subordinated to this market due to its weakness and would thus lose its socialist character.

Following up the slogan of the "dictatorship

of industry" Trotskyist theoretician E. Preobrazhensky even tried to formulate a law of "primitive socialist accumulation". He based his law on the assumption that the proletarian state must "turn to the advantage of socialism the pre-socialist economic forms", i.e. the peasant economy. The idea, he said, was not to "take from petty-bourgeois producers less than did capitalism, but to take more." The Trotskyists also regarded the rise in prices of manufactured goods and the unlimited issuance of paper money as an additional source of funds. In their view the countryside must be made into "a colony which will make it possible to accumulate capital." In fact, this proposed course of action meant a renunciation of socialism that the Party had set out to build in the interests of all working people, including the peasants.

The Trotskyists posed as defenders of the "interests" of socialist industry. But in actual fact they stood for "rigid concentration" which meant in effect the abandoning of all branches of industry which at the time were running at a loss, and primarily heavy industry, which was to become the material and technical base of socialism. The Trotskyists also proposed that the shortage of goods which would have inevitably followed the closure of factories and plants, in fact whole industries, should be made good by imports, which they called "commodity intervention" in punning reference to the military intervention against the Soviet republic. This policy would have aggravated the conditions, difficult as they were, in Soviet industry and would have turned the country into

an agrarian appendage of the world capitalist system.

The opposition groups also submitted a programme of their own on organisational Party questions. For example, they declared themselves opposed to the Party organisations having a leading influence on the work of the Soviets and economic bodies, slanderously alleging that "the Party organisations have usurped the economic bodies". What the Trotskyists were aiming at was not proletarian but petty-bourgeois inner-Party "democracy" which they interpreted in their own way as renunciation of firm Party discipline, freedom of factions and groupings, the right of a minority to ignore the opinion of the majority, etc.

Acting without the knowledge of the Central Committee, the Trotskyists circulated their factional documents among the local organisations, thereby disorganising and dividing the Party.

To preserve unity in the Party the Central Committee insisted that the questions raised by the opposition be discussed in a business-like manner. The Central Committee included Trotsky on the commission which was to draft a decision on remodeling the style of Party work so as to allow more inner-Party democracy. Trotsky tried to avoid taking part in the activities of the commission on the pretext of ill health. But the commission decided to move its meetings to Trotsky's apartment and the latter willy-nilly had to join in its work.

Trotsky suggested that the draft resolution include two items. According to the first item, all those who were "against exercising democracy" had to be removed from their jobs. That

was a new edition of the idea of "shaking up trade-union leaders", a proposal which Lenin had strongly criticised. Now Trotsky wanted to apply the same principle to the Party apparatus. The second item was about banning factions and groupings.

Trotsky was forced to acquiesce in the adoption of the clause on the banning of factions but at the same time thought the existence of groupings possible and admissible. This was tantamount to advocating the legalised existence of the factions which had been banned at the 10th Congress of the Party. The commission turned down Trotsky's proposals. After a detailed discussion the draft drawn up by the commission was approved by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. For tactical reasons Trotsky voted for the draft but the day after the publication of the document he addressed another letter to Party organisations.

In this letter Trotsky misinterpreted the newly adopted decision of the Central Committee "On Party Building," and called the principle of democratic centralism<sup>18</sup> "bureaucratic" and "apparatic". He declared freedom of factions and groupings to be the highest principle of democracy, demanded that the role and influence of Party control be reduced and described "apparatic pressure" to be the source of all the reverses suffered by the Party and the Soviet state. He tried to win over to his side politically unstable communists—former Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Bundists, and also the Party youth, especially students, whom he called the "true barometer of the Party".

In view of the continuing factional activities of the Trotskyists the Central Committee held a general Party discussion in the course of which the Trotskyist opposition suffered a resounding defeat: it was supported by less than 10 per cent of all communists.

In January, 1924, the 13th All-Union Party conference adopted a resolution, "On the Results of the Discussion and on the Petty-Bourgeois Deviation in the Party". It read in part: "The opposition is not merely an attempt to revise Bolshevism, it is not only a direct departure from Leninism but it is a clearly petty-bourgeois deviation. There is no doubt that this opposition reflects the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie on the positions of the proletarian Party and its policy."

In January, 1924, the Soviet land suffered a most grievous loss. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin died after a long and severe illness.

After Lenin's death hundreds of thousands of people responded to the call of the Communist Party of Russia (Bolsheviks) Central Committee to join the Party. Over a short period the number of Party members doubled. As a result, the percentage of workers in the Party rose from 44 per cent to 60 per cent.

The Lenin Enrolment in the Party exposed the slanderous allegations of the Trotskyists about the "bureaucratisation" of the Party, about its alienation from the masses, and foiled the conspiracy of the opposition aimed at undermining its unity. The youth with whom the Trotskyists had been flirting also declared their loyalty to Lenin's ideas.

The victory of the Leninist policy of the

Party was consolidated at its 13th Congress which was held in May, 1924. It instructed the Central Committee to ceaselessly guard Party unity.

Shortly after the 13th Congress of the RCP(B), the Comintern held its 5th Congress. Delegates from Germany, France, Britain and the United States jointly proposed the endorsement of the decision of the 13th Congress of the RCP(B) on the results of the discussion. The 5th Congress of the Comintern approved the resolutions of the 13th Party conference and the 13th Congress of the RCP(B) which denounced the platform of the opposition as "a platform with a petty-bourgeois deviation, its (the opposition's—Author) actions as threatening the unity of the Party and, consequently, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics".

## The Ideological and Political Bankruptcy of Trotskyism

The Party was working hard to create the necessary economic and political prerequisites for building the foundation of socialism. With the country moving forward with gathering momentum, the progress achieved in all spheres of life inspired the people with growing enthusiasm and with confidence in the goals set by the Party. Only those who deliberately shut their eyes to the facts could dispute the correctness of the Party's policy, which was approved and supported by the whole nation. But this is precisely what the Trotskyists and other anti-Leninist elements did. Their attitude was not accidental, for their political platform had nothing in common with the interests of the Party or the people. It factually reflected the sentiments of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements which feared the victory of

socialism in the USSR and were badly shaken by its successes. As could be expected, therefore, the greater these successes the more fiercely the Trotskyists and other opponents of Leninism attacked the policy of the Party.

After the severe setback they suffered in the course of the political discussion in 1923, the Trotskyists waited for a suitable moment to resume their attacks. Immediately following Lenin's death, when the question of Party unity was of crucial importance, when the Party was especially concerned to ensure that the Marxist-Leninist theory was preserved unsullied, and when no opportunism in whatever form could be tolerated, the Trotskyists published a number of articles in which they tried to denigrate Lenin's role and revise his teachings. This sally by the Trotskyists aroused the well-justified indignation of the communists. The newspaper "Pravda", the Party journal "Bolshevik" and other periodicals roundly condemned the opportunists. The journal "Bolshevik" wrote in those days: "Such mistakes must be dealt with unmercilessly in order to nip revisionism in the bud."

The ideological struggle against Trotskyism assumed a still more acute form at the end of 1924 after the publication of Trotsky's article, "The Lessons of October" in which he tried to replace Leninism with Trotskyism. In this article, which was the introduction to a collection of his works entitled, "The Year 1917," he tried to force another discussion on the Party with the object of establishing his own, anti-Leninist political line in the world international communist movement. The principal lesson of

October, Trotsky said, was to stand fast so as not to "quail" at the crucial moment. He maintained demagogically that the Comintern leadership and the RCP(B) had "quailed" in October, 1923, when the revolutionary events in Germany were gaining momentum. Trotsky charged that the Executive Committee of the Comintern had not called upon the German proletariat to start an all-out action, and that the Central Committee of the RCP(B) had not rendered "assistance" to the German revolution by sending the Red Army to Germany. Trotsky's article aimed to show that there was a strong man at the Central Committee and that man, in fact the only one who could lead the world proletariat to victory, was Trotsky himself.

But the true position was that the German revolution had failed not because of any "indecision" of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Central Committee of the RCP(B), but because a considerable section of the German proletariat had still trusted the right-wing opportunist leadership of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which was fighting not so much against the bourgeoisie as against the Communist Party of Germany and the Comintern. Moreover, the situation had been aggravated by the mistakes made by the right-opportunist leaders of the Communist Party of Germany—Heinrich Brandler,<sup>19</sup> August Thalheimer<sup>20</sup> and others, who followed the Trotskyist line. Trotsky made these charges against the RCP(B) and the Comintern, which he held responsible for the failure of the revolution in Germany, in an endeavour

to clear his supporters who were really responsible. As is known, the consistent Leninists in the Communist Party of Germany were among those who were in the front ranks of the struggle in the German revolution. Ernst Thälmann,<sup>21</sup> who at the time was the leader of the communists in Hamburg, led an armed uprising of Hamburg workers which was the climax of the revolutionary events in Germany in October, 1923.

Trotsky tried to uphold his allegation about the domination of the "right-wingers" in the RCP(B) and the Executive Committee of the Communist International by shamelessly falsifying the history of the Party. In "The Lessons of October" he alleged that at the time of preparation for the October Revolution the RSDLP(B) was eroded by contradictions. In his view these contradictions could have brought about a situation when "the revolution could have gone out of control by our Party. This means that we could have witnessed an uprising of workers and peasants without Party leadership." This did not happen, continued Trotsky, only because the Party managed to "re-arm itself" with the help of his, Trotsky's theory.

Trotsky denied the universal, internationalist character of Leninism and tried to ascribe to it some sort of characteristics peculiar only to the "peasants from the backwoods of Russia". He sought in every way to contrast Lenin to Marx, reserving the superior bench of philosopher and theoretician for Marx and reducing Lenin to the status of mere practitioner.

In our time all of these inventions have been

borrowed by anti-communist propaganda and are being used by the imperialists in their struggle against the Soviet Union, against the Communist Parties and Leninism, and against the revolutionary movement.

The Party exposed the falsity of the Trotskyist allegations about the so-called ideological re-armament of Bolshevism in 1917, and debunked the theory of "permanent revolution" which it had fought against in 1917 and at even earlier stages of its history.

All communists unanimously denounced Trotsky's attacks against Lenin and Leninism. "We declare that we shall not tolerate any encroachments on Lenin's teaching which embodies the interests of the working class and which led it to victory in the October Revolution," reads the resolution of a Party meeting held at the "Trekhgornaya Manufaktura" textile mill in Moscow. "The crooked mirror of Trotskyism, which distorts the past, present and future development of the proletarian struggle must be thrown away and smashed to smithereens," declared the participants in a plenary meeting of the Transcaucasian Territorial Party Committee in their resolution.

In response to the demands of communists, the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission<sup>22</sup> of the RCP(B), at their joint plenary meeting (January 1925) discussed Trotsky's latest statement and condemned it by an overwhelming majority of votes.

The plenum pointed out that all of Trotsky's speeches and writings against the general Party line stemmed from the semi-Menshevik rejection of the leading role of the proletariat

in relation to the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian strata of the working population, from the denigration of the Party's role in the revolution and in socialist construction, and from lack of appreciation of the fact that the Communist Party could carry out its historic mission only if ideologically and organisationally united. "In their general form Trotsky's pronouncements against the Party can be summed up as a desire to transform the ideology of the RCP(B) into a new version of Bolshevism 'modernised' by Trotsky, a Bolshevism without Leninism. This is not Bolshevism, but a revision of Bolshevism. This is an attempt to replace Leninism with Trotskyism," reads the resolution of the plenum.

The plenum decided to remove Trotsky from the posts he held as People's Commissar of the Army and Navy and Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, and warned him that as a member of the Bolshevik Party he was required to obey Party discipline not only in words but in his practical work, to renounce all activities hostile to the ideas of Leninism.

Communists throughout the world also stepped up their struggle to stamp out Trotskyist influence in some Communist Parties, to rout both "Right" and "Left" opportunists in their midst, many of whom, including H. Brandler and A. Thalheimer in Germany, Boris Souvarine<sup>23</sup> in France, Amadeo Bordiga<sup>24</sup> in Italy and Ludwig Lore<sup>25</sup> in the United States acted in full agreement with Trotsky and the Trotskyists on some questions.

The Communist Parties intensified their work

with the people. Some of them improved their tactics with a view to making them more specific, especially with regard to the peasants. More attention was now being paid to the study and propaganda of Leninism. In France, regional and district schools and a central Lenin Party school were set up for this purpose, in Britain, special schools of political education, and in Germany and Norway, local Party organisations set up Lenin circles. The Comintern Executive Committee took measures to expedite the publication of Lenin's works in some European languages.

The victory scored by the Party over the Trotskyists in 1923-24, and the support of the actions of the RCP(B) by the fraternal Parties cleared the way for routing Trotskyism as a doctrine.

To help the Trotskyists, Kamenev and Zinoviev formed an anti-Leninist group known as the "New Opposition". There is nothing accidental about the fact that the leaders of the "New Opposition", who had always leaned towards Trotsky's views, finally took an openly Trotskyist stand. Just like Trotsky himself, they were greatly influenced by the opportunist ideology and had embraced many of the threadbare precepts of the Second International. They were not free from vacillations and extremist judgements, which was characteristic of Trotskyism and other varieties of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness.

Like Trotsky, the leaders of the "New Opposition", who for the time being were forced to camouflage their essentially Menshevik views, tried to use Lenin's illness, and then his

death, to launch an all-out offensive on the Leninist policy of the RCP(B). Taking advantage of the indignation of the rank-and-file communists aroused by the publication of "The Lessons of October", Zinoviev and Kamenev demagogically accused the Central Committee of having a conciliatory attitude to Trotsky and posed as the only consistent fighters against Trotskyism. But the Party, which well remembered their opportunistic and capitulatory behaviour in 1917, had no illusions about the true essence of the views and political credo of Kamenev and Zinoviev. Following in Trotsky's footsteps, these two ignored the decisions of the 10th Congress of the Party and set about forming an anti-Party faction with its centre in the Leningrad Party organisation. This faction formed the core of the "New Opposition".

The essence of the political platform of the "New Opposition" was clearly manifested shortly before the 14th all-Union Party conference when, at a meeting of the Political Bureau, Kamenev, with Zinoviev's support, announced that he was against the inclusion in the draft theses of the conference "On the Tasks of the Comintern and the RCP(B) in Connection with the Enlarged Meeting of the Comintern Executive Committee\*" of an important item which stated Lenin's position on the possibility of victory of

\* A reference to the fifth, enlarged plenary meeting of the Comintern Executive Committee (April, 1925) which reviewed the tasks of the Communist Parties in view of the subsiding revolutionary movement in Europe and the post-war stabilisation of capitalism. The plenum also denounced Trotsky's "The Lessons of October" and in this way expressed its attitude to the struggle of the RCP(B) against Trotskyism.

socialism in the USSR in conditions of the delay of a world proletarian revolution. It is worthy of note that, shortly before, the Party had waged a fierce ideological struggle against Trotsky in defence of this fundamental thesis of Leninism. Now Trotsky's new supporters alleged that the country was unable to eliminate its technical and economic backwardness and therefore had to choose between waiting for the victory of a proletarian revolution in the industrially advanced countries in the near future or selling itself into bondage to world capital, i.e., renouncing socialist construction.

After the 14th Party conference (April, 1925) the leaders of the opposition moved further away from the basic Party line. The pretext for their renewed bitter attacks on the Central Committee was furnished by the opportunist views expounded by Bukharin shortly before the 14th Party conference. In a speech to Moscow Party activists he said that the kulaks were about the only hope Soviet power had in the countryside, that the kulak farms were "growing into the body of socialism". In contrast to Lenin's policy of strengthening the alliance with the middle peasants and relying on the village poor, Bukharin advanced the slogan "Get Rich!" which oriented the Party towards the support of capitalist elements.

Aware of the pernicious substance of this statement, the Central Committee nevertheless refrained from openly denouncing Bukharin's position so as not to divert the attention of communists from the struggle against the "Left" opportunist deviation which at that time was more dangerous than Right opportunism.

The "New Opposition" took advantage of this circumstance and added to its list of charges against the Central Committee of indulging in a conciliatory attitude to Trotsky, another accusation—that of "pandering" to Right opportunism.

Trotsky was not idle either. In the autumn of 1925 he made several statements which showed that he had moved still further away from the Party line. In his pamphlet, "To Socialism or Capitalism?", he strongly attacked Lenin's plan for creating a developed socialist economy independent of the foreign market and charged that the Party wanted to build up an "exclusive" national economy "isolated" from the rest of the world. He held that by "shunting" money and resources to the accelerated development of heavy industry the Party would slow down the tempo of Soviet economic progress instead of speeding it up. Trotsky called Soviet industry "state capitalist industry" (the mammoth "trust of trusts" in the hands of the state), and alleged that the Soviet economic system was "growing into" the world capitalist market.

Trotsky urged that the world division of labour which had taken shape under capitalism should not be ignored. In practical terms this would have perpetuated technological and economic backwardness in the USSR. He also called for stepping up the import of manufactured goods, and for throwing the doors open to private, and especially foreign capital.

The "New Opposition" also considered that the nation's economy should of necessity remain agrarian over a long period. It vigorously

opposed industrialisation and favoured the rapid development only of the light industry and the few branches of heavy industry which supplied farm machinery for agriculture. It was particularly vehement in its criticism of the Leninist policy of strengthening the alliance of the working class with the middle peasant. It maintained that it was only capitalist differentiation in the village with the attendant mass proletarianisation of the peasantry that could ensure a truly stable alliance between the working people of town and countryside.

At its 14th Congress in December, 1925, the Party gave battle to the "New Opposition."

Acting on Lenin's belief that the nation had all that was necessary for building a socialist society the Congress declared that, even without early victory of the world proletarian revolution, socialism would still triumph in the USSR. The political report of the Central Committee and the speeches of delegates cited impressive facts testifying to the successes achieved in the building of socialism, to the reality of socialism.

The Congress summed up the experience accumulated over several years and declared that the country would enter upon socialist industrialisation as the principal and decisive stage in the great work of socialist economic reconstruction. The participants in the Congress confirmed their loyalty to the Leninist general political course of building socialism by transforming the USSR into a powerful industrial state.

This was a fitting reply to the opportunists and scare-mongers who maintained that the economic backwardness of the country could not be overcome.

The Congress warned against underestimating the danger of the kulaks (rural capitalists) but at the same time stressed that, in the final period of reconstruction when the most important task of the agrarian policy in the rural areas was that of winning over the middle peasant, the "leftist deviation" directed against the middle peasant was the main danger. The exponents of this deviation were the Trotskyists and the "New Opposition."

The Congress then concentrated its work on the question of Party unity, on ways and means of overcoming the sharp inner-Party antagonisms created by the dissident activities of the "New Opposition." In the course of the debate the "Opposition" shed their "Leftist" mask and showed beyond any doubt that their political platform was ridden with opportunist disbelief in the revolutionary forces of the working class, that their ulterior aim was to revise the fundamental principles of Leninism.

Meanwhile the members of the opposition intensified their factionalist activities in the Leningrad Party organisation in an effort to tear it away from the Party. They grossly violated inner-Party democracy by disrupting the circulation of "Pravda" and other central newspapers in Leningrad, and by persecuting communists who supported the basic Party line at the Congress. In view of the difficult situation in Leningrad, the 14th Congress issued an appeal, "To All Members of the Leningrad Organisation of the RCP(B)" calling upon the Leningrad communists to fight factionalism. In response to this appeal the communists

of Leningrad stiffened their resistance to the opposition.

The great majority of the Party membership resolutely condemned the capitulatory stand of the opposition which in effect rejected the gains of the October Revolution. Nearly all—96 per cent—of the Leningrad communists supported the decisions of the Congress.

The opposition also signified their full agreement with the decisions of the 14th Congress and avowed their readiness to be disciplined members of the Party. But in actual fact they continued to drift further and further away from Leninism and from the Communist Party towards Trotskyism.

The "New Opposition" and the Trotskyists set up clandestine anti-Party groups and sent their representatives to various branch organisations which established contact with local functionaries who were opposed to the Party and instructed them on forms and methods of factional activities. The survivals of the earlier anti-Leninist groupings, including those of the "workers' opposition", also began to be active again. Acting in collusion they conspired to create a joint bloc of all anti-Party elements in the country.

At the joint Plenary Meeting in July, 1926, of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party(B) (the Russian Social-Democratic Party was renamed the CPSU(B) after the 14th Congress), the opposition submitted a statement signed by Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and ten other of its prominent members. It represented, in effect, the platform of a joint Trotskyist-Zi-

novieville anti-Party bloc headed by Trotsky. Significantly, it was Trotsky who, on behalf of all the members of the opposition, read out this statement at the plenum. It contained nothing but the old, threadbare Trotskyist and Menshevik views, which had been repeatedly denounced by the Party, on the fundamental problems of the international communist movement and the building of socialism in the USSR. For all its fancy wording the statement was loaded with slander and falsehood such as the allegation that the Central Committee of the Party had renounced the course of promoting world proletarian revolution. The opposition accused the Party of "national seclusion" and demanded that the only realistic, Leninist policy aimed at achieving the maximum possible results in one country for the subsequent development of revolution in other countries be replaced by the adventuristic policy of export of the revolution.

On questions of domestic policy the opposition again assailed the Leninist stand about the possibility of the victory of socialism in the USSR and dubbed it "another edition of the Monroe Doctrine" ("America for the Americans"). The authors of the "statement" demanded that the rate of industrial growth be increased ("superindustrialisation"), but at the same time objected to the priority development of heavy industry and proposed that the stress should be laid on the development of light industry on the grounds that the policy of industrialisation being followed would eventually end with the USSR in hock to world capitalism. They also maintained that the peasantry

should be exploited "to serve the needs of socialist accumulation".

The opposition also fought against Lenin's co-operative plan, especially against the idea of uniting the peasants on production principles, and recommended that agriculture develop along capitalist lines, similar to those of American farming. It also voiced its disagreement with the fact that the Soviets were playing an increasingly active part in the village. For example, they said, that the growing political awareness of the peasants would help strengthen the influence of capitalist elements in the country. The members of the opposition reiterated their allegations about the non-socialist character of the October Revolution and the Soviet state and that the policy being followed for the development of the economy was not socialist, but merely a continuation of the capitalist economy.

The splitters attacked with particular vehemence Lenin's principles of inner-Party life. Demagogically calling themselves supporters of inner-Party democracy, they demanded that Party discipline be relaxed and that factions and groupings be given the right to legal existence.

At the July, 1926, plenary meeting the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission condemned the importunity of the opposition and called upon all Party organisations to nip all manifestations of factionalism in the bud.

Having suffered a defeat at the plenum the opposition, with Trotsky's wholehearted approval, began making preparations for an all-out

attack against the Party. However, these efforts were frustrated right from the start. In Moscow, for example, 99.5 per cent of the communists at their meetings supported the policy of the Party and its Central Committee. In Leningrad, where many leaders of the opposition, headed by Zinoviev, had arrived, just on 99 per cent of the communists voted for the resolution denouncing the opposition.

After their attempts to have a full public discussion of their platform had failed the opposition promised to discontinue their factionalist activities. This, however, they did only in order to save themselves from a total rout. They were stalling for time with the intention of bracing themselves for further attacks against the Party.

In the spring and summer of 1927 the international situation was highly unfavourable for the USSR. In February, the British Government protested to the Soviet Union about the support extended by its working people to British miners, and about its sympathetic attitude to the revolution in China, and threatened to sever diplomatic and commercial relations. The British imperialists also instigated a number of incidents with the object of whipping up anti-Soviet hysteria. Instigated by the British, Chinese armed gangs raided the Soviet embassy in Peking. A day later Russian counter-revolutionaries residing in China made an assault on Soviet trade and banking offices in Tientsin. In May, 1927, British police wrecked the premises of the Soviet trade delegation and ARCOS (All-Russian Cooperative Society, Ltd.). A fortnight later, the Conservative government of

Baldwin and Chamberlain broke off diplomatic and trade relations with the USSR. In June, 1927, the Soviet ambassador to Poland, P. Vokov, was assassinated. Many acts of provocation and sabotage were committed on Soviet territory itself. All these events posed a real threat of war to the Soviet Union.

It was in this difficult situation facing the young Soviet state that the Trotskyist-Zinovievite opposition decided to resume their attacks on the Party.

At the very time when Britain broke off relations with the USSR, eighty-three well-known members of the opposition submitted a declaration to the Central Committee in which they threatened to split the Party unless another general Party discussion was begun immediately. The letter which accompanied this document, also Trotsky's statement and still another letter to the Central Control Commission (June and July, 1927) were a move of treachery since they said that the opposition would continue to fight for replacing the leadership of the Party and the Soviet Government even if the USSR were invaded from outside. Thus, a kind of united front was formed between the British imperialists who were threatening the USSR with war and the opposition which was trying to use this threat for intensifying its struggle against the Party.

The opposition accused the Party of deviating to the "right" and going over to the positions of "national socialism". They charged that the Party wanted to withdraw its support for a world proletarian revolution and form an alliance with right-wing social-democratic lead-

ers, right-wing elements in the national-liberation movements and, inside the country, to rely primarily on the kulak.

In complete contradiction to the facts the opposition maintained that bourgeois elements were taking over the national economy and the state apparatus and that the Party was ignoring the village poor and needy workers, that its policy was aimed at lowering wages, increasing unemployment and worsening the conditions of work and intensifying it.

The leader of the opposition, Trotsky, declared that politically the proletariat was "folding up", that the revolution was slipping into "political twilight". At the same time renegades from Marxism, who had been expelled from fraternal Communist Parties for siding with Trotskyist dissident "ultra-left" groups, openly urged their supporters to treat the Soviet Union like "any capitalist state". This sounded like a clarion call for struggle against Soviet rule.

The opposition set up a carefully camouflaged factional organisation with a national centre and local committees in many areas of the country with a view to creating a Trotskyist party in the future. These opposition groups commenced covert activities against the Soviets. They circulated illegal literature full of hostility for Soviet rule, spread slanderous rumours, tried to create dissatisfaction with the policy of the Party among the people, and obstructed the enforcement of various political and economic measures taken by local Party organisations.

The Trotskyists and Zinovievites tried to cover up their treachery with pseudo-revolution-

ary phraseology, styling themselves as the "Leninist opposition", but all the time they come closer and closer to the position of outright counter-revolution.

In view of the growing activity of the Trotskyists and Zinovievites the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, at their plenary meeting held on July 29-August 9, 1927, again discussed the question of the anti-Party activity of the opposition bloc. The plenum recommended that the opposition comply with the requirements of the Party Rules, stop immediately their factional work and renounce the policy directed against the unity of the Party and the Comintern.

The enemies of Leninism rejected this proposal and demanded that the struggle against the opposition be discontinued. Only when the question was raised of removing Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee did the opposition make a statement in which they ostensibly agreed to accept the demands of the plenum. But even then they made a reservation that they would continue to adhere to their views and would fight for them "within the limits of the Party Rules". This meant that they not only did not discontinue their factional activities but, on the contrary, conducted them on a wider scale and in more virulent forms.

It was clear that the opposition was redoubling its efforts to create a new, Trotskyist counter-revolutionary party in the hope of presenting the CPSU(B) with a fait accompli and thus forcing it to agree to the legal existence of such a party.

To put a stop to the dissident activities of the opposition, which threatened the very existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a joint plenary meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission held in October, 1927, decided, in response to numerous demands of Party organisation, to remove Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee.

Thus isolated, the opposition nevertheless let loose a torrent of abuse and threats. In a long speech Zinoviev stated the key points of his platform and said that the opposition would continue to violate Party discipline as it had done in the past.

The opposition abandoned the method of ideological polemics for outright factional activities bordering on undisguised anti-Sovietism, and appealed to all recalcitrant elements to fight against the Party apparatus and against the organs of Soviet power. The texts of their leaflets, the number of which sharply increased after the October plenum, ended with the words: "Down with the Central Committee!"

Acting in compliance with the demands of Party organisations which considered that the time had come for putting an end to the eroding activities of the opposition which had taken the path of anti-Soviet struggle, the Central Committee expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Party and put up the question of the opposition bloc for discussion at the 15th Congress of the CPSU(B) held in December, 1927.

In view of the fact that the opposition still refused to denounce its anti-Leninist platform which had been rejected by the Party and the

Soviet people, the Congress expelled the more active members of the opposition from the CPSU(B). Belonging to the Trotskyist-Zinovievite opposition, and propaganda and defence of its counter-revolutionary views were declared incompatible with membership of the Party.

After the resolution had been carried by a unanimous vote the expelled members of the "New Opposition" submitted a statement requesting that the decision of the Congress be reviewed. This time they acknowledged without reserve the correctness of the views of the Party majority and pledged that they would abide by them in their practical work. This meant the complete ideological disarmament of the opposition and the disintegration of the opposition bloc which was now made up only of Trotskyists who stubbornly refused to concede their defeat.

A mass exodus from the opposition set in soon after the 15th Congress. In 1928 almost all the members of the "New Opposition" joined in the stampede. The remaining factionalists, especially the Trotskyists, kept up their dissident activities by circulating counter-revolutionary leaflets and making use of the country's temporary economic difficulties for their agitation work against the Party and the Soviet Government. But their hostile, subversive activities met with an equally determined response from the communists and from non-Party people.

Since Trotsky continued his efforts to organise an illegal anti-Soviet Party with a view to mounting an armed struggle against Soviet rule, he was expelled from the USSR by special

government decree. This decision was unanimously approved by the Soviet people.

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Soon after his expulsion from the Soviet Union Trotsky set out with feverish activity to unite disjointed opportunist groupings into an "international organisation". In July, 1929, he began publication of "The Bulletin of the Opposition". To camouflage the true character of this journal Trotsky called it an organ of "Bolshevik-Leninists". Nothing, however, could conceal its anti-Leninist direction. Moreover the journal did not represent any Party or international organisation but was merely a private undertaking of Trotsky who wrote and edited all its articles.

Trotsky described the aim of his bulletin in these words: "The opposition is an international faction and as such has a right to existence." Thus, despite their total ideological and political bankruptcy, the Trotskyists persisted in saying that they represented an "international faction" which they tried to paint as the "historical heir-apparent of Bolshevism." The Trotskyists even tried to make a virtue of the fact that they were a tiny minority by saying that "the opposition is the concentrated essence of the revolutionary experience of the proletariat, the leaven of a revolutionary future."

Trotsky sought to make good his lost gamble for power and influence in the CPSU(B) by trying to put himself at the head of the world

communist and working-class movement. To this end he attempted to undermine from within the authority of the most influential international revolutionary organisation created by Lenin—the Comintern and its sections, the Marxist-Leninist communist parties. Helped by his supporters in different countries (many of whom had been expelled from Communist Parties for their factionalist activities) Trotsky sought to bring together under his anti-Leninist standard the politically immature and inexperienced youth and the more backward section of the proletariat.

In 1930 a group of Trotskyists gathered in Paris to proclaim themselves an “international left opposition”.

At a time when the Communist Parties in all countries were striving under the Comintern's leadership to put up a united anti-fascist front in defence of democratic freedoms, Trotsky and his supporters proclaimed a programme which to all intents and purposes played straight into the hands of fascism. They rejected the united front slogan and charged that the Communist Parties and the Comintern were “conspiring to form a coalition with the bourgeoisie” and were “creating pacifist illusions in the masses”.

The struggle of the working people of Spain for the Republic, their struggle under Communist Party leadership against fascism, showed convincingly that Trotskyism had become a “fifth column” of the forces of world reaction. The Spanish Trotskyists who opposed the Popular Front, tried to convince the masses that it was they and only they who were working

to turn the struggle of the people into a “genuine” proletarian revolution.

In an effort to bring about the collapse of the Popular Front, the Trotskyists, throughout the entire period of the civil war in Spain, caused confusion, disorganisation and panic, violated discipline, engaged in provocations, spied for the fascist insurgents and organised armed sorties against the Republic.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War Trotsky proceeded to unite all Trotskyist renegades into an international bloc. For this purpose a conference was held in Paris in 1938, attended by 22 Trotskyists. At this conference the so-called Fourth International was organised, with a journal of the same name. Its policy document, “The Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International” was written by Trotsky. The ideological basis of this new organisation of opportunists was the same old theory of “permanent revolution”.

At the beginning of the Second World War the Trotskyists maintained a stand which objectively served the aims of fascism. For example, a manifesto adopted by the Fourth International stated that this Trotskyist organisation rejected the appeals to help the democratic countries in the struggle against fascism. After the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union the Trotskyists declared that the war continued to be imperialist in its nature and that the concept of “anti-fascist struggle” was nothing but a hoax. They were also opposed to the anti-Hitler coalition, calling it “an act alien to the interests of the Russian and world revolu-

tion" (Manifesto, 1943), and maintained that the opening of the second front would hold up the development of revolutionary struggle in Europe. The Trotskyists called for keeping out of the resistance movement and demanded that an "independent organisation of the fighting proletariat" be set up.

These activities of the Trotskyists during the war discredited them still further. Even some of the leading members of the "Fourth International" admitted that Trotskyism was in a state of crisis. After long disputes and quarrels among its members the Fourth International split up into a number of hostile groups.

Today Trotskyism, like the Trotskyism of the pre-war period, is represented by a motley collection of small, loosely organised groups.

The facts of history show that the Trotskyist prognostications about the future of the international revolutionary movement were without any foundation. The entire course of the world revolutionary process has confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution and his teaching about the possibility of building socialism in one country.

The present-day Trotskyist leaders are still behaving as if they are some sort of oracles who can "give positive answers to all important questions of our time." This is pure fantasy, for the Trotskyists have never had a positive programme, and all their concepts are aimed solely at slandering the socialist community of nations and the strategy and tactics of the international communist movement, and at creating mistrust among the working people of capitalist countries and the peoples fighting for

their liberation for the world socialist system and creative Marxism.

The essence of modern Trotskyism is also reflected in the attempts of the "Fourth International" to discredit the slogan calling for the creation of an anti-monopoly front. The Trotskyists have misinterpreted this slogan as an attempt to dampen the spirit of class struggle and to serve the "aims of class collaboration". In order to disrupt the anti-monopoly front and, consequently, to narrow down the tasks of the proletariat the modern Trotskyists are trying to obstruct the struggle for democracy as part of the struggle for socialism.

The wrecking and splitting activities of the Trotskyists in the world working-class and communist movement is the substance of their very existence. The modern Trotskyists use the same tactics as Trotsky did before them—infiltrating various parties and mass organisations by ostensibly sharing their aims and their views (entrism), and then setting out to wreck them from within.

Their attacks on the Communist and Workers' Parties of the socialist countries, and especially the Soviet Union, are particularly vicious. Contrary to the facts, they allege that socialism has not yet been achieved in these countries, and that the victory of socialism will be possible only as the result of a "world revolution".

Denying the socialist character of the countries where the working class is in power, the Trotskyists allege, as Trotsky did in the past, that these countries are undergoing a process of "deformation" and "bureaucratisation", and

that other nations cannot use their experience of socialist construction.

By exposing the true essence of various kinds of extremist ideas and their pseudo-revolutionary character, the Communist Parties make it quite clear why the Western press gives such prominence to Trotskyism and explain why so much energy and money are being invested in the efforts to revive Trotskyism. In view of the fact that Trotskyist literature is published in mass editions in the West for the benefit of politically immature readers, Communist Parties are taking pains to provide the true information about the struggle against the theory and practice of Trotskyism, and the experience of this struggle which has not lost its significance to this day.

The historical lessons of the struggle against Trotskyism have long since become part and parcel of the rich experience accumulated by the revolutionary proletariat in its fight against all varieties of opportunism. These lessons have enabled genuine revolutionaries to see through demagogic pseudo-revolutionary phraseology and to distinguish it from anti-revolutionary deeds.

These lessons also help them to watch out for any manifestation of "super-revolutionary" leftist extremism which often occupies a position very close to outright opportunism and reflects the same distrust of the revolutionary forces of the proletarian movement, a distrust on which the worst varieties of opportunism draw for their strength.

The historical experience of the struggle against Trotskyism shows that all genuine revo-

lutionaries should look only to Marxism-Leninism for guidance. Any attempt to depart from Marxism-Leninism or belittle its importance, or to revise or distort it, just as the ignoring of objective reality, which necessitates corrections in the revolutionary theory, inevitably leads to the betrayal of the cause of the revolution.

In their struggle against Trotskyism the Marxist-Leninist Parties have always been supported by the working class and the people as a whole.

The lessons of the struggle of the Leninist Party against Trotskyism are helping all genuine revolutionaries today to identify and crush all manifestations of opportunism, to strengthen the unity of revolutionaries in all countries.

## Notes

1. **Martov L.** (Tsederbaum Y. O.) (1873-1923). One of the leaders of Menshevism. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP he opposed Lenin's plan of Party building. During the first Russian revolution he held a conciliatory position hostile to the interests of the working class. After the October Revolution he joined the forces of the counter-revolution. In 1920 emigrated from Russia.
2. **Dan F. I.** (Gurvich) (1871-1947), a prominent figure in the social-democratic movement in 1890's; a member of the "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class" which was founded in St. Petersburg. After being released from prison in 1903 he went abroad where he became one of the leaders of Menshevism. During the First World War of 1914-18 he held social-chauvinistic positions. After the October Revolution he actively supported the enemies of Soviet rule and was ejected from the country in 1922.
3. **Kautsky, Karl** (1854-1938), became internationally known as a Marxist theoretician in the 1880's. Was one of the leaders of social-democracy in Germany and the chief editor of its theoretical journal. At the beginning of the 20th century he leaned towards

social-reformism and then became the chief exponent of centrism, an ideology which recognised some positions of Marxism but which at the same time rejected revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Centrists sought to blur the distinctions that were at the bottom of the differences in the social-democratic movement, i.e. to compel the true Marxists to follow the policy of opportunism.

4. **Plekhanov G. V.** (1856-1918), an outstanding figure in the Russian and international working-class movement, the first propagandist of Marxism in Russia. In 1875 he was connected with the Populists. In 1880 he emigrated to Switzerland, broke with Populism and in 1883 founded the Emancipation of Labour group in Geneva. Together with Lenin he edited the newspaper "Iskra" (Spark) and the journal "Zarya" (Dawn), took part in the drafting of party programme and the preparations for the Second Congress of the RSDLP. At the Congress he sided with the majority. However, Plekhanov's erroneous views on some questions formed the nucleus of his future Menshevik platform. He underestimated the revolutionary role of the peasants, regarded the Liberal bourgeoisie as an ally of the working class, professed support for the idea of the proletariat being the dominant force of the revolution but in his practical action was against this idea. During the 1905-07 revolution he disagreed with the Bolsheviks on fundamental tactical questions. In the years of the First World War stood on the positions of social-chauvinism. Had a negative attitude towards the October Revolution.
5. **The Bund** ("The General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia") was founded in 1897 at Vilno; united predominantly semi-proletarian elements of Jewish artisans in the Western areas of Russia. At the first Congress of the RSDLP (1898) the Bund joined the RSDLP. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP it left the Party after the latter had rejected its demand that it be regarded as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat. In 1906 the Bund rejoined the RSDLP where it sided with the opportunist groups and fought against the Bolsheviks. In March, 1921, the Bund announced its dissolution.

and some of its members were admitted to the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

6. On April 4, 1912, a peaceful workers' demonstration was fired upon as they went to see the authorities of the gold-mining company about their demands.
7. SR's (abbreviated from the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries), as a party first appeared in 1902 by uniting various Populist groups. They enlisted their support mostly from the peasants. In 1917, when the stratification of the rural population of Russia was particularly pronounced in view of the revolutionary situation in the country, a group of more radical members of the SR Party, which largely supported the kulaks (rich peasants), split away from its main body and formed an independent party.
8. **The July days** of 1917—the events that took place in Petrograd on the 3rd (16th) and 4th (17th) of July. Those were the days of a deep political crisis in Russia which culminated in a sweeping peaceful demonstration of workers and peasants who demanded that the Soviets take over all political power in the country, break with the imperialist bourgeoisie and carry out an active policy of peace. The demonstration was fired upon by the Provisional Government's troops. The events marked the end of the peaceful period of the revolution.
9. **Bukharin N. I.** (1888-1938), political writer, economist, member of the RSDLP from 1906. Held an anti-Leninist position on questions of state, proletarian dictatorship, the right of nations to self-determination. After the October Revolution headed the right-wing opposition in the Party. In 1937 was expelled from the Party.
10. **The Peace of Brest.** A peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany signed at Brest Litovsk on March 3, 1918. The terms of peace were very harsh for Soviet Russia. However, the Treaty of Brest gave the Soviet Government a respite from the war, enabled it to demobilise the old army and set up the Red Army, to start building socialism in the country

and gather strength for the struggle against the internal counter-revolution and the foreign military intervention.

11. **The Civil War** and the foreign military intervention are dated in historical literature from 1918 to 1920, although the fighting against the domestic and foreign counter-revolution continued through 1921 and 1922. The establishment of the socialist republic in Russia was fiercely opposed by the forces of the counter-revolution. Besides staging armed revolts the counter-revolutionaries organised armed forces of their own, the backbone of which was the officers' corps of the czarist army. The western regions of Russia were occupied by Germany, and in 1918, Britain, France, Japan, the United States and other imperialist states launched an armed intervention in the north, in the Far East, on coastal areas of the Black and Caspian Seas. The domestic and foreign counter-revolution was routed as the result of the heroic efforts of the working people of the country under the guidance of the Communist Party. An important role in this was played by the support of the Soviet Republic by the working people of the West.
12. **The Workers' Opposition**, an anti-Party anarcho-sindicalist factional group which demanded that the Central Committee of the RCP(B) should not interfere in the work of Soviet trade unions. After the 10th Congress of the RCP(B) in 1921 most of its members broke with the Workers' Opposition and aligned themselves solidly behind the Party. This led to the defeat of the Opposition at the 11th Congress of the RCP(B) in 1922.
13. **Democratic centralists** ("Decists"), a group formed in 1919-20 from the remnants of the "Left communist" faction. They advocated the freedom of factions and groupings within the Bolshevik Party, which would have transformed it into a kind of bourgeois social-reformist party; proposed that the Party's role in the work of the Soviets and trade unions be weakened. Active members of this group were expelled from the Party at its 15th Congress (1927).

14. The mutiny at the naval base in **Kronstadt** (near Petrograd) was stirred up in February-March, 1921, under the slogan "For Soviets but without Communists". Most of the mutineers were young recruits from rich agrarian areas of Russia. The mutiny was headed by the Provisional Revolutionary Committee formed of Mensheviks, SRs and anarchists, and by a group of czarist officers who provided military guidance. After repeated proposals on capitulation which remained unanswered, Soviet troops crossed the frozen Gulf of Finland, took Kronstadt by assault and put down the revolt.
15. **The New Economic Policy (NEP)** was the economic policy of the Soviet state in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. It consisted in permitting capitalism and free trade, with the commanding heights of the national economy in the hands of the state. This policy was directed at building the foundation of a socialist economy by using trade, market and money circulation. Now the peasant could sell the surplus of his farm produce at the market, which increased his incentive in working more and better, in raising agricultural production. This, in turn, provided the urban population of the country with food-stuffs, and the nation's industry with raw materials. Free trade was inevitably to revive the capitalist elements, but at the same time it was necessary for raising agricultural production, for putting state-run trade back on its feet and accumulating strength for building heavy industry, the economic backbone of socialism. On accomplishing this the new policy provided for an all-out offensive against the remnants of capitalism in the country. All these tasks were accomplished through the implementation of the NEP.
16. **War communism** was the economic policy of the Soviet Government during the Civil War (1918-20). Under this policy most of the small and middle-sized factories, besides heavy industry, were nationalised, trade in grain was made state monopoly and all food surplus was taken away from the peasants under special requisition regulations. The Soviet Government also introduced universal labour conscription for all

classes. By putting the bourgeoisie to physical work and thus enabling the workers to contribute unstintingly to the war effort, the Soviet Government carried out its principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." War Communism was a temporary measure induced by the extraordinarily difficult conditions of war, by the requirements of national defence. The policy of War Communism made it possible to muster the meagre food reserves and distribute them correctly among the population and the Red Army personnel. After the end of the Civil War it was decided at the 10th Party Congress in 1921 to abandon the policy of food requisition for that of food surplus taxation, which marked the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy.

17. **The Supreme Council of the National Economy**, the first economic body of the Soviet state, was set up in December, 1917, to organise a system of economic planning and fiscal control.
18. **The principle of democratic centralism** is the guiding principle in the organisational structure of all Marxist-Leninist parties. In his works, "What is to Be Done?", "A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks", "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", and others, Lenin laid down and substantiated the organisational norms for a party of the new type (Party membership based on endorsement of the Party programme and obligatory participation in the work of one of the Party organisations; firm discipline applying in equal measure to all members of the Party; strict implementation of Party decisions; the subordination of the minority to the majority, and of lower organisations to higher organisations; electivity and accountability of Party organs).
19. **Brandler, Heinrich** (b. 1881), member of the German Social-Democratic Party from 1898. Subsequently joined the Communist Party of Germany, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany from 1919 to 1923. Held "leftist" positions in 1921. In 1922-23 was guilty of a number

of Right opportunist mistakes and was expelled from the Central Committee and in 1929 from the Party.

20. **Thalheimer, August** (1884-1948), German Social-Democrat, publicist. Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany, and editor of the Party's central organ, "Rote Fahne" (Red Banner) (1918-23). Leader of the right wing of the Communist Party of Germany; in 1923 helped defeat the October armed uprising of the workers of Hamburg for which he was removed from Party leadership, was later expelled from the Party.
21. **Thälmann, Ernst** (1886-1944), prominent figure in the German and international labour movement. As a dock worker in Hamburg he joined the transport workers' union and the Social-Democratic Party of Germany. In 1917 he went over to the Independent Social-Democratic Party, in 1919 he was elected chairman of the Independent Social-Democratic Party in Hamburg. From 1920, Thälmann was a member of the Communist Party of Germany. In 1921 he was elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany. In 1923 he led the heroic armed uprising of the workers of Hamburg. Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany from 1925. Deputy to the Reichstag from 1924. From 1924 to 1928 alternate member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and from 1928 to 1943 full member of the Comintern Executive Committee. Thälmann was one of the first victims of the Nazi regime of terror in Germany. Arrested in March, 1933, he was in 1944 treacherously put to death in Buchenwald.
22. **The RCP(B) Central Control Commission**, the supreme organ of party control, was set up in 1921 at the Tenth Congress of the RCP(B).
23. **Souvarine, Boris** (b. 1893), French socialist and journalist. During the First World War he was a Centrist, a follower of Trotsky. In 1921 joined the Communist Party of France, from which he was expelled in 1924 for his Trotskyist activities. At the present time he is one of the leaders of the French Trots-

kyists, and writes for the bourgeois press attacking the communist movement and the Soviet State.

24. **Bordiga, Amadeo** (b. 1889), Italian political figure. Advocated Trotskyist views and joined in factional conflict within the Italian Communist Party.
25. **Lore, Ludwig** (b. 1875), German Social-Democrat. Lived in the USA from 1903, was secretary of the German Federation of the Socialist Party. From 1919 publisher of "New York Volkszeitung", organ of the German Federation of the Labour Party. He became one of its leaders in 1922, but was expelled in the mid-30's for Right opportunistic activities.