WRITINGS OF LEON TROTSKY [1930]
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PATHFINDER PRESS, INC.
NEW YORK
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PREFACE

Writings of Leon Trotsky (1929) covered the period from February 1929, when Trotsky arrived in Turkey as an exile from the Soviet Union, through the end of that year. The present volume, the second of five dealing with Trotsky's stay in Turkey, extends from the start of 1930 to October.

As soon as Trotsky had reached Turkey in 1929, he began to make direct contact with various oppositional groups throughout the world that had been expelled from the Communist International and its affiliates on the grounds of sympathy, real or alleged, for the Russian Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists), the faction headed by Trotsky since 1923. Thanks partly to his influence, representatives of several of these groups came together in Paris in April 1930 to establish the International Left Opposition and to elect a provisional secretariat to coordinate their activities and discussion. For the next forty months the ILO was to function as an international faction of the Communist International, striving to "reform" that organization along Leninist lines; it was not until 1933, after the Stalinist capitulation without a struggle to Hitler in Germany, that Trotsky and the ILO decided that the Comintern was finished as a revolutionary force and had to be replaced by a new International (see Writings 1932-33). In 1930, however, everything Trotsky did and wrote was based on his belief that regenerating the Comintern was both possible and necessary.

The year 1930, coming only a few weeks after the Wall Street stock market crash of October 1929, witnessed the spread of the Great Depression to all parts of the capitalist world. The gravest economic and social crisis of capitalist history was to open revolutionary opportunities everywhere during the next decade. But the Comintern and its affiliated parties were prevented from taking full advantage of these opportunities by their recently adopted policy of "the third period." It was a policy marked by ultraleft rhetoric, sectarianism, schematism,
and abstention from the kind of activity that could have built a truly powerful communist movement in the main capitalist countries. In this situation Trotsky found it necessary to turn from his other work to subject Stalinist ultraleftism to detailed analysis. In pamphlets such as "The 'Third Period' of the Comintern's Errors" he showed the Stalinist line to be an empty and harmful substitute for Leninism, and in articles such as "The Five-Year Plan and World Unemployment" he offered the communist movement bold and creative proposals on how to mobilize the workers in the capitalist countries hit by mass unemployment. The logic and lucidity of these proposals, and the poverty and stupidity of the Kremlin's response in rejecting them, remain striking to this day.

But the events at the center of Trotsky's attention in 1930 were those occurring in the Soviet Union, which was in the early stages of Stalin's so-called revolution from above. After having bitterly denounced the Left Opposition's demands for industrial expansion in the mid-twenties, the Stalin faction had reversed its course, adopting an ambitious five-year plan for accelerated industrialization. Meeting with initial successes, it quickly decided to complete the plan in four years. At the end of 1929 it had just launched a campaign to collectivize the land and "liquidate the kulaks as a class." According to Marxist theory and Lenin's practice, the peasants were supposed to be persuaded gradually and through their own experience of the advantages of collectivization, not coerced into it. But Stalin's campaign, bureaucratically conceived and bureaucratically executed, was based almost exclusively on force and carried out at breakneck speed. It resulted in mass resistance from the peasant majority of the population, vast human suffering through the uprooting, deportation, and pauperization of millions, economic disruption and chaos, and political tension and instability. The tempo of the forced collectivization can be judged from a few simple statistics: In October 1929 around one million of the country's twenty-five million farms were collectives. By January 1930 the figure reached five million, and by March 1930 it jumped to over fourteen million. The results were so catastrophic that in March Stalin had to call a halt and retreat; the figure then dropped back to five million in September 1930.

Trotsky's criticisms of Stalin's policy—in such articles as "The New Course in the Soviet Economy," "Open Letter to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," "A Squeak in the Apparatus," and "Toward Capitalism or Socialism?"—make up
the major strand of the present volume. These criticisms, however, were not exclusively or even mainly economic. In 1929 many former leaders of the Left Opposition had capitulated to Stalin with the claim that his "left course" of industrialization had been their major objective all along, and by the end of the same year Stalin had also crushed the Right Opposition led by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. By exposing the political roots of Stalin's policy and the repressive measures it inevitably entailed, Trotsky hoped to hold together the ranks of the Russian Left Opposition and help it win new adherents.

While he was most deeply concerned with internal Soviet developments in 1930, and while he was finishing the first volume of his History of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky's interests remained as broad as ever. In the present volume he also writes about, among other topics, a crisis in the German Leninbund, the nature of internationalism, the machinations of an unscrupulous publisher in Dresden, how leaders were made and unmade in the Comintern, the slogan of a National Assembly in China, the role of democratic demands in fascist Italy, a debate over centrism in French syndicalist circles, revolutionary tasks in India, the American New Masses, and lessons of the defeated Hungarian revolution.

Around half of the selections in this volume are translated into English for the first time, primarily from the Left Opposition journal Biulleten Oppozitsii and material at the Harvard College Library. Acknowledgments about the articles and translations, and explanatory material about the persons and events mentioned in them, will be found in the section entitled "Notes and Acknowledgments." Several of the articles were signed by pen names or were unsigned when first published. The date preceding each selection indicates when it was completed; if that is not known, the date when it was first published is given. All of the selections were written at Prinkipo, Turkey. Translations originally done in the 1930s and 40s have been revised to correct obvious errors and achieve uniformity in style, spelling, punctuation, etc. "Other Writings of 1930" lists the books, pamphlets, and articles from that period which are not included in this volume because they are in print and available elsewhere. The gathering of material for this volume was greatly facilitated by the use of Louis Sinclair's comprehensive Leon Trotsky: A Bibliography (Hoover Institution Press, 1972).

The Editors
December 1973
CHRONOLOGY

—1930—

January 5 — The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopts a declaration for accelerated collectivization.

January 8 — Trotsky completes "The 'Third Period' of the Comintern's Errors."

January 21 — London naval conference starts.

January 28 — Primo de Rivera resigns as premier of Spain, to be succeeded by Berenguer.

February 8 — Trotsky supports a move to establish the International Left Opposition.

March 2 — Stalin publishes article "Dizzy with Success" calling for a slowdown in the collectivization drive.

March 6 — Communist parties hold demonstrations against unemployment in the capitalist countries.

March 11 — Gandhi opens civil disobedience campaign in India.

March 14 — Trotsky develops proposals on how to fight unemployment.

March 27 — The German Social Democratic government of Mueller falls and Hindenburg appoints Bruening chancellor.

March 30 — A unity conference in Germany sets up a Left Opposition group, independent of the Leninbund.

March — La Verdad, the Left Opposition's first Latin American periodical, is published in Buenos Aires.

April 6 — The International Left Opposition is established at a meeting in Paris and a provisional secretariat is elected.

April 14 — Futurist poet Mayakovsky commits suicide in Moscow.

April 22 — The London naval treaty is signed by five powers (Britain, U.S., France, Italy, Japan).
April — The Unitary Opposition is formed as a left-wing caucus in the French CGTU by a bloc of Left Oppositionists and anti-Stalinist syndicalists.

April — Rakovsky and three other Oppositionists make an evaluation of Stalin's "left turn" and warn of approaching dangers in a statement to the CPSU, shortly before its Sixteenth Congress.

May 14 — Trotsky writes leaders of the Italian Communist Party who have broken with Stalinism.

May — Allied Reparations Commission replaces the Dawes Plan with the Young Plan.

June 26-July 13 — The Sixteenth Congress of the CPSU, the first since 1927, meets in Moscow.

July 15 — Trotsky writes "Stalin as a Theoretician."

July 18 — Hindenburg dissolves the Reichstag, elections being scheduled for September 14.

July 25 — Trotsky makes preliminary comments on the Sixteenth Congress.

August 1 — International demonstrations by Communist parties get small response.

August 15 — The Fifth Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions opens in Moscow.

August 21 — Trotsky answers Stalinist criticism of his proposals on unemployment.

September 30 — The second year of the Soviet Union's five-year plan ends.
3. Stalinist centrism is no doubt heading toward a new differentiation. Where Stalin himself will go, I do not know; he has shown that he is capable of going both far to the right and far to the left. Experience serves as evidence that every one of centrism's new zigzags is deeper and more decisive than the one preceding it. However, I will not undertake on the basis of this to forecast whether or not a new swerve to the right will be "the last." And in essence it is not so much a question of prognosis as of active struggle. Centrism's new differentiation very much strengthens the Left Opposition and makes it an important political factor in determining the future course of the revolution.

4. The present right wing of the Communist Party can only play the role of a screen behind which the Bessedovskys and the Ustrialovs in general—patient and impatient—are grouping themselves. If things were to come to a Thermidorean head, the leaders would prove to be very "unique." It is not precluded, of course, that at the first stage, as I have already written before, one of the secondary figures from the right wing can wind up as leader.

5. Guessing the fortunes of the top right-wingers can only be of psychological interest. The more down-to-earth right-wing elements are in the second, third, and fifth ranks, closely linked with the conservative philistines. They are the real Thermidoreans of the party.

6. The Communist Party is not a party in the literal sense of the word, for its composition and life are regulated by methods that are of a purely administrative nature. But it formally encompasses the overwhelming majority of the proletarian vanguard elements whom we are looking for a way to
reach. We are for a united party so long as power has not passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie, i.e., so long as the Opposition can—given the right circumstances—fulfill its tasks by means of reform. A second party would shift the problem to the level of civil war.

7. The emergence of factions was inextricably linked with the course of the class struggle. Bolshevism originated as a faction and developed through the internal struggle carried on by the faction. The resolution of the Tenth Congress of the party banning factions was merely an experiment that could have been successful to one degree or another only if there were a farsighted leadership and a healthy regime. The necessity for the experiment of the formal ban on factions was dictated by the exceptional circumstances facing the ruling party in a peasant country encircled by capitalists.

Extension of this ban to the Comintern was one of the most disastrous measures of the Zinoviev-Stalin policy. Without a bitter ideological and, consequently, factional struggle, young Communist parties, often having a social democratic past, cannot ripen for their historical role. A correct, intelligent, and tactful intervention by the Comintern could alleviate the sharpness of factional struggle and expedite the process of the Communist parties' formation. But no more than this.

The centrist blindness of the all-powerful leadership has, on the contrary, given the factions and their struggle an especially unhealthy character. With political leadership virtually absent, the factions become the sole organs for political orientation and for adaptation of slogans to the changing conditions.

At its inception the right-wing faction aspired to meet the real needs of the working class in the form of so-called transitional demands. This aim in itself was correct. Under a Leninist leadership, with a correct evaluation of the situation and a correct combination of transitional demands with revolutionary tasks, it is possible that we would not have seen the formation of an independent right-wing organization; certain right-wing elements might have been forced out, others absorbed into the party. By not providing leadership while banning factions, bureaucratic centrism gave the development a convulsive character, weakening the Communist parties and slowing down their growth.

8. The Right Opposition cannot play an independent historical role. However, the possibility is not excluded that episodically it can experience rather significant growth as did,
for example, independent social democracy, although in all likelihood not nearly to the same degree. Everything depends on the conditions and tempo of growth of the mass revolutionary movement. In an epoch of demoralization the right-wing factions are channels to social democracy. In an epoch of upsurge they can become throughways for a section of the social democratic elements on their way to the left, towards communism. But, I repeat, it will not play an independent role.

9. Under present conditions, the Left Opposition plays mainly a propagandistic role. Criticism of the Comintern's program and its political practice occupy the foremost place in our arsenal. Such has always been the lot of the left wing when there is an ebb in the revolutionary movement. The Opposition takes part in all of the party's activities that the masses have become involved in and braves the enemies' blows. Otherwise it would be worthless. The Opposition is no place for kibitzers.

In addition, the Opposition must be an organ for reliable and correct information for the workers about the workers' movement, and its genuine successes and failures. This function is very important in the class struggle. In the Comintern press, information has been replaced by the falsification that is inseparably linked with the false political line upheld and implemented by the measures of the state apparatus.

Finally, the Opposition can and must be an organ for correct political orientation. This is its most important and at the same time most difficult function. In the official parties, political analysis and discussion are totally suppressed by bureaucratic command. But how is it possible to maintain a correct orientation in changing circumstances without the freedom to analyze and discuss? The right wing is absolutely incapable of examining the present-day situation in light of a great perspective. The Left Opposition has demonstrated by its entire past that it poses questions in an overall historical context, singles out the fundamental developmental factors, and is capable of making a historical prognosis. This is as much connected with its revolutionary character as myopic empiricism is with the centrist bureaucracy.

But it is not enough to give a correct general evaluation of the situation and the trends of its development and to project the correct prognosis. It is necessary on the basis of this work (with the correct information, the correct orientation, and the correct foresight) to simultaneously advance timely political slogans. This task is realizable only provided there
is close theoretical and political collaboration among the national sections of the Opposition.

The decisive role here falls on our press. The most natural form of publication for the Left Opposition at the present stage of its development is a theoretical and political weekly. The American Opposition is transforming its organ into a weekly publication. The Belgian organization will in the very near future, we hope, be reestablishing its weekly newspaper. In France we are witnessing the initial successes of the weekly *La Verite*. The Russian Opposition, in view of the peculiar circumstances it has been placed in, must still confine itself to a monthly. If the Opposition is able to set up a weekly publication in Germany and Austria in the immediate future, a genuine basis for ideological and political work on an international scale would be established.

10. At this time, I repeat, the Opposition is a propaganda group (not in the narrow technical but in the broader historical sense). But, of course, it strives to and is fully entitled to become a mass movement. The history of revolutionary politics is in a certain sense a history of the transformation of small minorities into decisive majorities, after which from the latter a minority is again singled out—the revolutionary leaven.

11. I will not undertake here to provide a categorical answer to the question of the concrete stages and forms of development the Comintern will experience. There will be more than a few splits and regroupments. The extent to which continuity will be maintained during these processes depends above all on the objective conditions, and to some degree—for the time being not as yet a very large one—on the Communist Opposition. We do not intend to build a fourth international. We stand firmly on the traditions of the Third International which grew out of the October Revolution under Lenin's leadership.

12. Within the official confines of the present Comintern the formation of a "new left wing" is not only likely but inevitable. Within the Soviet Communist Party some of its elements are already present. They cannot play an independent leading ideological role just as the Leningrad Opposition of 1926 could not. But they can, nevertheless, play an objective role of great importance—by acting as channels of access for centrist workers to left-wing positions.

That the left-wing elements are not an unprecedented phenomenon is already being emphasized by the fact that they have
been labeled "Trotskyists" of the new levy, or "semi-Trotskyists." After the Left Opposition was declared liquidated once and for all at the Tenth Plenum of the ECCI, Pravda finds itself again compelled to advance the call for a struggle on two fronts. This shows the ineradicable vitality of the Opposition's ideas (and is, in particular, a confirmation of the tactical correctness of the declaration of Rakovsky and others).

13. The danger of becoming isolated from the communist masses is surely a threat when implementing the tactics of Urbahns, who is permeated with the spirit not of Marxism but of naked "anti-Thaelmannism." But if the Opposition, while completely retaining its independence, participates in all the activities of the communist masses, sharing with them both successes and defeats (while not sharing their mistaken views and analyses), no bureaucracy will be able to cut the Opposition off from the masses. Of course, the task of winning over the masses is still totally ahead of us.

15. The fighting presently going on inside China is undeniable an expression of the inability of the "national" bourgeoisie to resolve China's fundamental national problems. The feuding of the generals provided a stimulus for the Chinese revolution. The victory of the bourgeois counterrevolution has seen the renewal of skirmishes among them. Whether or not these latter events will provide the stimulus for a new revolution, I hesitate to say at this time because essential information is lacking. We are awaiting information from our Chinese co-thinkers. I will say, by the way, that in China the experiences of the gigantic mass movements that ended with the crushing of the revolution have paved the way for the development and, literally, for the burgeoning of Marxist thought. To assist our Chinese co-thinkers in setting up their press is one of the most important duties of the International Opposition.
SOME RESULTS OF THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT

January 3, 1930

1. In its last stage the conflict revealed, as is known, the complete military impotence of the present Chinese government. This in itself clearly demonstrates that there has not been a victorious bourgeois revolution in China, as Louzon, Urbahns, and others think, for a victorious revolution would have consolidated the army and the state. In China there was a victorious counterrevolution, directed against the overwhelming majority of the nation and therefore incapable of creating an army.

2. At the same time it strikingly demonstrates the inconsistency of the Menshevik policy of Stalin-Martinov, based since the beginning of 1924 on the assumption that the "national" Chinese bourgeoisie is capable of leading the revolution. In reality the bourgeoisie, with political support from the Comintern and material aid from the imperialists, was capable only of smashing the revolution and thereby reducing the Chinese state to complete impotence.

3. The Sino-Soviet conflict, in its military stage, revealed the enormous superiority of the [Russian] proletarian revolution, although weakened by the erroneous policy of the leadership in the last years, over the [Chinese] bourgeois counterrevolution, which had at its disposal substantial diplomatic and material support from imperialism.

4. The victory of the October Revolution over the April counterrevolution (the coup by Chiang Kai-shek in April 1927) can in no sense be considered a victory for Stalin's policy. On the contrary, that policy has suffered a series of heavy defeats. The seizure of the railroad was Chiang Kai-shek's payment for the services rendered by Stalin. Stalin's subsequent wager on Feng Yu-hsiang was equally inconsistent.
Some Results of the Sino-Soviet Conflict

The Opposition warned against the adventurist anti-Chiang Kai-shek bloc with Feng Yu-hsiang after April 1927 as energetically as it had protested against Stalin's bloc with Chiang Kai-shek.

5. The unprincipled wager on the Kellogg Pact also resulted in a heavy loss. The Soviet government's adherence to the pact of American imperialism was a capitulation of the Soviet government as shameful as it was useless. By signing the pact, that so-called instrument of peace, Stalin openly assisted the American government in deceiving the working masses of America and Europe. What was the purpose of adherence to the pact? Obviously to gain the goodwill of the United States and thereby hasten diplomatic recognition. As should have been expected, this end was not achieved, for the American government had no reason to pay for what it got for nothing. New York, basing itself on the Kellogg Pact, took the first opportunity to play the role of China's protector against the Soviet republic. Moscow was obliged to reply with a sharp rebuke. That was correct and inevitable. But this necessary demonstration against the American government's attempt to intervene disclosed Stalin's criminal light-mindedness in joining the Kellogg Pact.

6. There still remains the question of the revolutionary Communist detachment under the leadership of Chu Teh. Pravda wrote about this on the eve of the transition of the conflict into a military stage. After that, we heard no more about these Chinese workers and peasants whom someone sent into armed battle under the banner of communism. What were the aims of the struggle? What was the role of the party in it? What was the fate of this detachment? And, finally, in whose back room are all these questions decided?

On this last point, no less important than all the rest, a final balance sheet cannot yet be drawn. But everything points to the fact that bureaucratic adventurism in this instance as in the others bears the responsibility for the weakening and exhaustion of the reserves of the Chinese revolution.
There is no doubt left even for those who did not want to believe it: Blumkin has been shot on the charge that he visited Trotsky in Constantinople and held a conversation with him about the fortunes of the party and the tasks of the Opposition. Blumkin has been shot—by decision of the GPU. That could have happened only because the GPU has become Stalin's personal instrument. During the years of the civil war, the Cheka carried out grim work. But this was done under the control of the party. Hundreds of times from inside the party there came protests, declarations, and demands for explanations about one sentence or another. At the head of the Cheka stood Dzerzhinsky, a man of outstanding moral authority. He was under orders from the Politburo, whose members were aware of his personal opinions on all matters and supported what he stood for. This altogether constituted the guarantee that the Cheka was a weapon of the revolutionary dictatorship. Now the party is strangled. With the shooting of Blumkin, thousands and tens of thousands of party members stand in corners, whispering horrible things. At the head of the GPU is Menzhinsky, not a man but the shadow of one. In the GPU the chief role is played by Yagoda, a despicable careerist who has tied his fortune to Stalin, and who is ready to perform anything he is told to do, without thinking and without questioning. The Politburo does not exist. Bukharin has already stated that Stalin holds the members of the so-called Politburo in his hands, by means of documents collected by the GPU. Under these conditions, the shooting of Blumkin was Stalin's personal business.
This unheard-of crime cannot have passed without a trace even in the present conditions of an all-powerful apparatus. Stalin could not have been insensitive to this beforehand; and the fact, with all the precautions he took, that he had made up his mind to kill Blumkin shows how great is that person's fear of the Left Opposition. There can be no doubt about it: Blumkin was victimized to pay for the fact that only a small minority of the Opposition followed Radek and the other capitulators at the very time when the Opposition abroad is gaining serious ideological and organizational successes in a number of countries.

By shooting Blumkin Stalin wishes to warn the International Opposition of Bolshevik-Leninists that inside the country he is holding hundreds and thousands of hostages who would pay with their heads for the successes of authentic Bolshevism on the world arena. In other words, after expulsions from the party, loss of jobs, condemnation of families to hunger, imprisonment, banishment, and exile, Stalin is trying intimidation of the last of the Opposition still in his hands by the method of—shooting.

It can be said with confidence: the results will prove exactly the reverse of those ends Stalin has set himself. The advance of a historically progressive ideological tendency, operating according to the logic of development, will not be bullied or shot down.

Very soon after the insurrection of the Left SRs—when, a youth of eighteen, he threw a bomb at Mirbach—Blumkin went over to the Bolsheviks and played a hero's part in the civil war. Shortly after, he worked in Trotsky's military secretariat. Thereafter, he worked mainly for the GPU but also for both the military and the party. He carried out very responsible missions. His devotion to the October Revolution and to the party was absolute.

Till his last hours, Blumkin was occupied in responsible Soviet work. How could he stay in it, being an Oppositionist? This is explained by the nature of his work—it had a completely individual character. Blumkin had nothing—or almost nothing—to do with the party cells or participation in discussions on party problems, and so on. But this did not mean that he concealed his views. On the contrary, to both Menzhinsky and Trilisser—former head of the foreign section of the GPU—Blumkin said that his sympathies lay with the Opposition but that it went without saying he was prepared—like
any Oppositionist—to carry out his responsible work for the defense of the October Revolution. Menzhinsky and Trilisser considered Blumkin irreplaceable, and that was no mistake. They kept him in his work which he carried out to the end.

Blumkin really did seek out Comrade Trotsky in Constantinople. As already mentioned above, Blumkin had been closely connected personally with Comrade Trotsky, working in his secretariat. In particular, he prepared one of Comrade Trotsky's military volumes (the preface to that volume speaks about it). Blumkin sought out Comrade Trotsky in Constantinople to find out how he appraised the situation and to verify whether he was acting correctly by remaining in the service of a government that was deporting, exiling, and imprisoning his closest cothinkers. L.D. Trotsky answered him that he was of course acting absolutely correctly in doing his revolutionary duty—not with respect to the Stalinist government, which has usurped the rights of the party, but with respect to the October Revolution.

In one of Yaroslavsky's articles there was a reference to the fact that in the summer Comrade Trotsky had had a conversation with a certain visitor and allegedly predicted to him the speedy and inevitable end of the Soviet power. It goes without saying that the contemptible sycophant is lying. But comparing the facts with what has been said, in our opinion the remark refers to Comrade Trotsky's conversation with Blumkin. To his question concerning the connection between his work and his adherence to the Opposition, Comrade Trotsky told him among other things that his banishment abroad, like the imprisonment of other comrades, did not alter our fundamental line; that at the moment of danger the Oppositionists would be in the foremost positions, that in the hour of Stalin's difficulty, the latter would call on them as Tseretelli had called on the Bolsheviks for aid against Kornilov. In this connection he said, "If only it is not too late to help." Obviously, after his arrest, Blumkin presented this conversation as proof of the genuineness of the feelings and intentions of the Opposition; it mustn't be forgotten, you know, that Comrade Trotsky was exiled on the charge of preparing an armed uprising against the Soviet power. Through Blumkin, a newsletter to cothinkers was transmitted to Moscow wherein they read basically the views expounded in a number of Trotsky's printed articles: Stalinist repression against us still did not mean betrayal of the class nature of the state, but only that it paved the way and facilitated such
betrayal; our road, as before, remains the road of reform but not of revolution; irreconcilable struggle for our views must be expected for a long time.

Later a report was received that Blumkin had been arrested and that the letter sent through him had come into Stalin's hands.

Blumkin was not shot in 1918 for participating in an armed insurrection against the Soviet power, but he was shot in 1929 for selflessly serving the cause of the October Revolution, separating himself, however, on significant questions from the Stalin faction, and for counting it his duty to disseminate the views of the Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition).

It is fully possible that Stalin will try to use some kind of poisonous variant, in the style associated with the "Wrangel officer"\(^{35}\) — preparation for an armed uprising or terrorist acts. We must be prepared for this kind of foulness. Such an explanation, however, will scarcely produce serious effects. In general it smells too much of Bonapartist police methods\(^ {36}\) and, in particular, in his struggle with the Opposition Stalin has as a matter of fact already exhausted all his resources. There is no need for a reminder that the principled stand taken by Blumkin on behalf of all of us excluded any kind of adventurist methods of struggle on his part.
Специальный номер

Пролетария всех стран, соединяйтесь!

Janvier — 1930 — Январь

БУЛЛЕТЕНЬ ОППОЗИЦИИ

(БОЛЬШЕВИКОВ-ЛЕНИНЦЕВ)
Bulletin de l’Opposition (Bolcheviks — leninistes)

№ 8

Adresser la correspondance à :
Meichler, 6, Rue de Milan, Paris.

Цена 3 фр.

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Молотов «вступает обими ногами».
Вызван ли экономические ставки кризисом или падением?
Пода СССР, как фактор «третьего периода».
Логун всехобщей статики.
Завоевание улицы.
"Никах соглашений с реформистами.
Не забывайте о собственном.
Еще раз об опасности войны.
Группировки в коммунист.

От редакции:

Настоящий номер мы выпускаем, как специальный, посвящая его целиком работе Л. Д. Троцкого о так называемом «третьем периоде» в трактате Коминтерна. В публикуемой здесь работе вопрос рассматривается почти исключительно в применении к генеральным условиям Франции. Автор предлагает в ближайшем будущем дать анализы положения в Германии под углом зрения теории и практики "третьего периода". Однако, основные выводы, к которым приходит автор на примере Франции, мысля, как увидит читатель, не национальной, а интернациональной характер.

Вопросы Коминтерна сейчас совершенно не находят серьезного освещения на страницах официальной партийной печати. Многие заставляют думать, что и левая оппозиция (большевики-ленинцы) в СССР сейчас довольно сильно ориентирована фальшивой на сквозь обфизической информацией, отвечающей определенному бюрократического заказу. Тем более необходимым считаем мы появление этого номера, разбору вышенназванного курса Коминтерна в свете фактов и цифр.

Следующий номер, который мы начнём материалом, постараемся выпустить в течение ближайших двух недель, будет посвящен главным образом вопросам СССР и Великобритании.

Мы свою задачу сначала думаем о необходимости вполне правильной и осторожной работы по всем сторонам обобщению основного движения Бюллетеня.
THE "THIRD PERIOD"
OF THE COMINTERN'S ERRORS

January 8, 1930

1. What Is the Radicalization of the Masses?

For the Comintern, the radicalization of the masses has become, at present, an empty catechism, not the characterization of a process. Genuine communists—teaches l'Humanité—should recognize the leading role of the party and the radicalization of the masses. It is meaningless to put the question that way. The leading role of the party is an unshakable principle for every communist. If you do not accept this, you can be an anarchist or a confusionist but not a communist, that is, a proletarian revolutionary. But radicalization in itself is not a principle; it is only a characterization of the temper of the masses. Is this characterization correct or incorrect for the given period? That is a question of fact. In order to correctly gauge the temper of the masses, the right criteria must be used. What is radicalization? How does it express itself? What are its characteristics? With what tempo and in which direction does it develop? The deplorable leadership of the French Communist Party does not even pose these questions. At most, an official article or a speech will refer to an increase in the number of strikes. But even then only the straight figures are given, without a serious analysis or even a simple comparison with the figures of the preceding years.

Such an attitude to the question flows not only from the unfortunate decisions of the Tenth Plenum of the ECCI but, as a matter of fact, from the Comintern program itself. The radicalization of the masses is described as a continuous process: today the masses are more revolutionary than they were yesterday, and tomorrow will be more revolutionary than today. Such a mechanical idea does not correspond to the real process of development of the proletariat or of capitalist society as a whole. But it does correspond almost perfectly to the
mentality of the Cachins, Monmousseaus, and the other frightened opportunists.

The social democratic parties, especially before the war, had imagined the future as a continual increase in the social democratic vote, which would grow systematically until the very moment of the taking of power. For a vulgar or pseudorevolutionary, this perspective still essentially retains its force, only instead of a continual increase in the number of votes, he talks of the continual radicalization of the masses. This mechanical conception is sanctioned also by the Bukharin-Stalin program of the Comintern. It goes without saying that from the point of view of our epoch as a whole the development of the proletariat advances in the direction of the revolution. But this is not a steady progression, any more than the objective process of the deepening of capitalist contradictions. The reformists see only the ups of the capitalist road. The formal "revolutionaries" see only its downs. But a Marxist sees the road as a whole, all of its conjunctural ups and downs, without for a moment losing sight of its main direction—the catastrophe of wars, the explosion of revolutions.

The political mood of the proletariat does not change automatically in one and the same direction. The upturns in the class struggle are followed by downturns, the floodtides by ebbs, depending upon complicated combinations of material and ideological conditions, national and international. An upsurge of the masses, if not utilized at the right moment or misused, reverses itself and ends in a period of decline, from which the masses recover, faster or slower, under the influence of new objective stimuli. Our epoch is characterized by exceptionally sharp periodic fluctuations, by extraordinarily abrupt turns in the situation, and this places on the leadership unusual obligations in the matter of a correct orientation.

The activity of the masses, properly understood, expresses itself in different ways, depending upon different conditions. The masses may, at certain periods, be completely absorbed in economic struggles and show very little interest in political questions. Or, suffering a series of defeats in economic struggles, the masses may abruptly turn their attention to politics. Then—depending upon the concrete circumstances and the past experiences of the masses—their political activity may go in the direction of either purely parliamentary or extraparliamentary struggle.

We give only a very few variants, but they characterize the contradictions of the revolutionary development of the work-
ing class. Those who know how to read the facts and understand their meaning will readily admit that these variants are not some kind of theoretical construction but an expression of the living international experience of the last decade.

In any case, it is clear that in a discussion about the radicalization of the masses a concrete definition is demanded. The Marxist Opposition should, of course, make the same demand of itself. A simple denial of the radicalization is of as little use as its complete affirmation. We should have an estimate of what the situation is and what it is becoming.

**Strike Statistics in France**

The official leaders speak of the radicalization of the French working class almost exclusively in connection with the strike movement. The growth of the latter is an incontestable fact, systematically established. We will take this fact as a starting point.

The official statistics of strikes in France are always extraordinarily dated. The latest report of the Ministry of Labor on strikes ends with the year 1925. I have no data on hand for 1926. For the next three years there is the data of the Communist press. The figures taken from these two sources are not comparable. It is doubtful that the Ministry of Labor completely records all the strikes. On the other hand, the superficial "revolutionaries" of *l'Humanité* have an obvious tendency to give exaggerated figures. But in spite of that, the general tendency of the movement comes through clearly enough.

The strike movement in France reached its highest point in the first two years after the war. In 1919, 2,100 strikes took place in which 1,200,000 workers participated. In 1920, there were 1,900 strikes, in which almost 1,500,000 workers were involved. As to the number of strikers, this year was the high point. With the year 1921 there begins—with one small exception that will be mentioned later—a systematic decline, which reaches its lowest point in the years 1926-27. Here are the figures in round numbers. In 1921, 450,000 strikers, that is, one-third of the number in the preceding year. In 1922, 300,000 strikers. Only in 1923 does the curve not decline but even rises slightly and shows 365,000 strikers. This episodic rise was undoubtedly due to the events connected with the occupation of the Ruhr and the revolutionary movement in Germany. In 1924, the number of strikers goes down to 275,000. For 1926 we have no data. For 1927 we have only the total number of strikes: there were only 230,
while in the years 1919-25 the number of strikes varied between 570 and 2,100. Although the number of strikes is a rather crude index, nevertheless it shows in general that the strike curve continued to decline from 1921 through 1927. In the last quarter of 1927, there were 93 strikes with 70,000 strikers. Assuming that the number of strikers per strike was the same on the average during the entire year (an obviously arbitrary assumption), we will have approximately 170,000 for 1927, a figure which is exaggerated rather than understated.

In 1928 the Communist press counts about 800 strikes, about 600 of which occurred in the second half of the year, with 363,000 participants. Consequently it is possible to adopt, for the whole year of 1928, a hypothesis of 400,000 to 450,000 workers on strike. It reports 1,200 strikes for 1929, with approximately the same number of strikers as in 1928 (that is, 400,000 to 450,000). Thus in comparison to the preceding year there is no increase. The number of strikers in 1928, as in 1929, is about twice as large as in 1925. It is nearly the same as the number of strikers in 1921. It is three to three and a half times less than in 1920.

All these figures, as has been noted, are not absolutely exact, but they are adequate to define the dynamics of the process. After the high point of strikes in 1919-20, the diminishing progression takes place until 1928, with a very small break in 1923. In the years 1928-29 we observe an unmistakable and considerable increase in the strike movement, understandably related—it will be shown further on—to the industrial upturn influenced by the stabilization of the currency.

We can surely say that the period 1919-27 forms a certain independent cycle in the life of the French proletariat, including the abrupt rise of the strike movement immediately after the war as well as its defeats and its decline, especially acute after the German catastrophe in 1923. In its most general aspects, this cycle is characteristic not only of France but of Europe as a whole and, to a considerable degree, the whole world. What is characteristic of France alone is the comparatively moderate fluctuation between the highest and lowest points of the cycle; victorious France did not experience a genuine revolutionary crisis. In the tempo of the French strike movement the gigantic events developing in Russia, Germany, Britain, and other countries found only a weak reflection.

Other statistics establish these same trends of the French workers' strike movement. The number of strikers and the number of days of each strike fell sharply in the beginning
of 1922. In 1921 each strike averaged 800 strikers and altogether totaled more than 14,000 days. By 1925 each strike averaged only 300 strikers and altogether totaled little more than 2,000 days. We can assume that in 1926-27 these averages did not grow larger. In 1929, there were 400 workers per strike.

We note another important index, which we shall need later. In the postwar years, first place among the strikers belonged mainly to the miners; in the last two years, first place is occupied by the textile workers and, in general, by those in so-called light industry.

**What Do the Statistics Show?**

Do the statistics confirm the thesis of the radicalization of the masses or do they refute it? First of all, we answer, they take the discussion out of the realm of abstractions in which Monmousseau says yes and Chambelland says no, without defining what is meant by radicalization. The statistics of the strike struggles are indisputable proof of certain shifts in the working class. At the same time, they give a very important estimate of the number and character of these shifts. They outline the general dynamics of the process and make it possible, to a certain degree, to anticipate the future or, more exactly, possible future variants.

In the first place, we can affirm that the statistics for 1928-29, compared with those of the preceding period, characterize the beginning of a new cycle in the life of the French working class. They give us the right to assume that deep molecular processes have taken and are taking place in the masses, as a result of which the momentum of the decline begins—if only on the economic front now—to be overcome.

Nevertheless, the statistics show that the growth of the strike movement is still very modest, and do not in the least give a picture of a tempestuous upsurge that would allow us to conclude this is a revolutionary or at least a prerevolutionary period. In particular, there is no marked difference between 1928 and 1929. The bulk of the strikes continued to be in light industry.

From this fact Chambelland comes to a general conclusion against radicalization. It would be a different matter, he says, if strikes were spreading to the large enterprises in heavy industry and the machine shops. In other words, he imagines that a radicalization falls ready-made from the sky. As a matter of fact, these figures testify not only that a new cycle of
proletarian struggle has begun, but also that this cycle is only in its first stage. After defeat and decline, a revival, in the absence of any great events, could occur only in the industrial periphery, that is, in the light industries, in the secondary branches, in the smaller plants of heavy industry. The spread of the strike movement into the metal industry, machine shops, and transportation would mean its transition to a higher stage of development and would indicate not only the beginning of a movement but a decisive turn in the mood of the working class. It has not come yet. But it would be absurd to shut our eyes to the first stage of the movement because the second has not yet begun, or the third, or the fourth. Pregnancy even in its second month is pregnancy. Forcing it may lead to a miscarriage, but so can ignoring it. Of course, we must add to this analogy that dates are by no means as certain in the social field as in physiology.

Facts and Phrases

In discussing the radicalization of the masses, it should never be forgotten that the proletariat achieves "unanimity" only in periods of revolutionary apex. In conditions of "every-day" life in capitalist society, the proletariat is far from homogeneous. Moreover, the heterogeneity of its layers manifests itself most precisely at the turning points in the road. The most exploited, the least skilled, or the most politically backward layers of the proletariat are frequently the first to enter the arena of struggle and, in case of defeat, are often the first to leave it. It is exactly in the new period that the workers who did not suffer defeats in the preceding period are more likely to be attracted to the movement, if only because they have not yet taken part in the struggle. In one way or another, these phenomena are bound to appear also in France.

The same fact is shown by the vacillations of the organized French workers, which is pointed to by the official Communist press. Yes, the inhibitions of the organized workers are too well developed. Considering themselves an insignificant part of the proletariat, the organized workers often play a conservative role. This of course is not an argument against organization but an argument against its weaknesses, and an argument against those trade-union leaders of the Monmousseau type who do not understand the nature of trade-union organization and are unable to estimate its importance to the working class. At any rate, the vanguard role of the unorganized at the present time testifies that the question is not
yet one of a revolutionary but of a united economic struggle, and moreover in its elementary stage.

The same thing is demonstrated by the important role of the foreign-born workers in the strike movement, who, by the way, will in the future play a part in France analogous to that of the Negroes in the United States. But that is the music of the future. At present, the part played by the foreign-born workers, who often do not know the language, is further proof of the fact that it is not a question of political but of economic struggle, which has received an impetus from the change in the economic conjuncture.

Even in relation to the purely economic front, one cannot speak of the offensive character of the struggle, as Monmousseau and Company do. They base this definition on the fact that a considerable percentage of the strikes are conducted for higher wages. These thoughtful leaders forget that such demands are forced upon the workers on the one hand by the rise in the cost of living and on the other by the intensified physical exploitation, a result of new industrial methods (rationalization). A worker is compelled to demand an increase in his nominal wages in order to defend his standard of living. These strikes can have an "offensive" character only from the standpoint of capitalist bookkeeping. From the standpoint of trade-union policies, they have a purely defensive character. It is precisely this side of the question that every serious trade unionist should have clearly understood and emphasized in every way possible. But Monmousseau and Company believe that they have a right to be indifferent trade unionists because they are, if you please, "revolutionary leaders." Shouting until they are hoarse about the offensive political and revolutionary character of purely defensive strikes, they do not, of course, change the nature of these strikes and do not increase their significance by a single inch. On the contrary, they do their best to arm the bosses and the government against the workers.

It does not improve matters when our "leaders" point out that the strikes become "political" on account of—the active role of the police. An astonishing argument! The beating up of strikers by the police is called—a revolutionary advance of the workers. French history reveals quite a few massacres of workers in purely economic strikes. In the United States, a bloody settlement with strikers is the rule. Does this mean that the workers in the United States are leading the most revolutionary struggle? The shooting of strikers of course has
in itself a political significance. But only a loudmouth could identify it with the revolutionary political advance of the working masses—thus unconsciously playing into the hands of the bosses and their police.

When the British General Council of the Trades Union Congress called the revolutionary 1926 strike a peaceful demonstration, it knew what it was doing. That was a deliberately planned betrayal. But when Monmousseau and Company call scattered economic strikes a revolutionary attack on the bourgeois state, nobody will think of accusing them of deliberate betrayal. It is doubtful that these people can act with deliberation. But that certainly is no help to the workers.

In the next section we will see how these terribly revolutionary heroes render some other services to the bosses, ignoring the upturn in commerce and industry, underestimating its significance, that is, underestimating the profits of the capitalists and by the same token undermining the foundation of the economic struggles of the workers.

All this is done, of course, to glorify the "third period."

2. Conjunctural Crises and the Crisis of Capitalism

At the Fifth Congress of the Unitary General Confederation of Labor, A.Vassart made a lengthy speech against Chambelland, which was later published as a pamphlet with a foreword by Jean Bricot. In his speech Vassart attempted to defend the revolutionary perspective against the reformist perspective. In this our sympathies are entirely on his side. But unfortunately he defends the revolutionary perspective with arguments that can only help the reformists. His speech contains a number of fatal theoretical and factual errors. One may object, Why pick on this particular faulty speech? Vassart can still learn a great deal. I would be glad to think so. But it has been made difficult by the fact that the speech has been published as a propaganda pamphlet. It is provided with a foreword by Jean Bricot, who is at least a cousin to Monmousseau himself, and this gives the pamphlet a programmatic character. The fact that not only the author but also the editor did not notice its flagrant errors shows the sad state of the theoretical level of the present leaders of French communism. Jean Bricot does not tire of demolishing the Marxist Opposition. What he ought to do, as we shall soon demonstrate, is simply sit down and study his ABCs. Leadership of the workers' movement is incompatible with ignorance, as Marx once said to Weitling.

At the congress, Chambelland expressed the superficial
thought—based exclusively on his own reformist inclinations—that capitalist stabilization will last for about another thirty or forty years, that is, even the new generation of the proletariat now coming forward will not be able to make a revolution. Chambelland had no serious arguments to substantiate his fantastic time period. The historical experience of the past two decades and the theoretical analysis of the present situation completely negate Chambelland's perspective.

But how does Vassart refute him? He proves first of all that even before the war the capitalist system could not exist without convulsions. "From 1850 to 1910, an economic crisis took place approximately every fourteen years bred by the capitalist system" (page 14). Further: "If before the war the crisis took place every fourteen years, we see a contradiction between this fact and the assertions of Chambelland, who does not foresee a serious crisis in the next forty years" (page 15).

It is not difficult to understand that with this sort of argument Vassart, who confuses conjunctural crises with the revolutionary crisis of capitalism as a whole, only strengthens the false position of Chambelland.

First of all, setting the conjunctural cycle at fourteen years is rather surprising. Where did Vassart get this figure? We see it for the first time. And how is it that Jean Bricot, who instructs us so authoritatively (almost as authoritatively as Monmousseau himself), did not notice such a crude error, especially in a question that has such an immediate and vital significance for the labor movement? Before the war, every trade unionist knew that crises or at least depressions recurred every seven or eight years. If we take the period of a century and a half, we find that there were never more than eleven years between crises. The average duration of the cycle was about eight and a half years and, furthermore, as was shown in the prewar period, the conjunctural cycle had a tendency to accelerate, not slacken, which stemmed from the renewal of technical machinery. In the postwar years, the conjunctural fluctuations had a turbulent character, which was expressed by the fact that the crises recurred more frequently than before the war. How does it happen that leading French trade unionists do not know such elementary facts? How can one lead a strike movement without having a realistic picture of conjunctural economic shifts? Every serious communist can and must pointedly put this question to the leaders of the CGTU, primarily to Monmousseau.

This is how the matter stands on the factual side. It is no
better from the point of view of methodology. What does Vassart actually prove? That capitalist development is generally inconceivable without conjunctural contradictions; they existed before the war and will exist in the future. It is doubtful that even Chambelland would deny this commonplace. But this does not yet open up any revolutionary perspective. On the contrary, from the fact that for the past century and a half the capitalist world experienced eighteen crises, there is no reason to conclude that capitalism must fall with the nineteenth or twentieth. In actuality, conjunctural cycles in the life of capitalism play the same role as, for example, cycles of blood circulation in the life of an organism. The inevitability of revolution flows just as little from the periodicity of crises as the inevitability of death from a rhythmic pulse.

At the Third Congress of the Comintern (1921), the ultra-lefts of that time (Bukharin, Zinoviev, Radek, Thaelmann, Thaelheimer, Pepper, Bela Kun, and others) claimed that capitalism would never again know an industrial revival because it had entered the final ("third"). period, which would develop on the basis of a permanent crisis until the revolution itself. A big ideological struggle took place at the congress around this question. A considerable part of my report was devoted to proving that in the epoch of imperialism the laws determining industrial cycles remain in effect and that conjunctural fluctuations will be characteristic of capitalism as long as it exists: the pulse stops only with death. But from the state of the pulse, in connection with other symptoms, a doctor can determine whether he is dealing with a strong or weak organism, a healthy or a sick one (of course, I do not speak of doctors of the Monmousseau school). Vassart, however, attempts to prove the inevitability and proximity of the revolution on the basis of the fact that crises and booms take place every fourteen years.

Vassart could easily have avoided these obvious errors if he had at least made a study of the report and discussion that took place at the Third Congress of the Comintern. But, unfortunately, the most important documents of the first four congresses, when genuine Marxist ideology was the rule in the Comintern, are now prohibited reading. For the new generation of leaders, the history of Marxist thought begins with the Fifth Congress, particularly with the unfortunate Tenth Plenum of the ECCI. The principal crime of the dense and blind bureaucratic apparatus consists in the mechanical interpretation of our theoretical tradition.
Economic Conjuncture and Radicalization

If Vassart does not know the dynamics of business cycles and does not understand the relationship between conjunctural crises and revolutionary crises of the capitalist system as a whole, then the dialectical interdependence of the economic conjuncture and the struggle of the working class is just as unclear to him. Vassart conceives of this interdependence as mechanically as his opponent Chambelland does; although their conclusions are directly opposite, they are equally erroneous.

Chambelland says: "The radicalization of the masses is in a certain sense the barometer which makes it possible to evaluate the condition of capitalism in a given country. If capitalism is in a state of decline the masses are necessarily radicalized" (page 23). From this Chambelland concludes that because in France strikes embrace only the peripheral workers, because the metal and chemical industries are only slightly affected, capitalism is not as yet in decline. Before him there is still a forty-year period of development.

How does Vassart answer this? Chambelland, according to him, "does not see the radicalization because he does not see the new methods of exploitation" (page 30). Vassart repeats the idea that if one recognizes the intensified exploitation and understands that it will develop further "that in itself compels you to reply affirmatively to the question of the radicalization of the masses" (page 31).

Reading these polemics, one gets the impression of two blindfolded men trying to catch each other. It is not true that a crisis always and under all circumstances radicalizes the masses. Example: Italy, Spain, the Balkans, etc. It is not true that the radicalism of the working class necessarily corresponds to the period of capitalism's decline. Example: Chartism in Britain, etc. Like Chambelland, Vassart substitutes dead forms for the living history of the labor movement. And Chambelland's conclusion is also wrong. You cannot deny a beginning of radicalization because strikes have not yet embraced the main sections of the workers; what can and must be made is a concrete evaluation of the extent, depth, and intensity of this radicalization. Chambelland, evidently, agrees to believe in a radicalization only after the whole working class is engaged in an offensive. But leaders who wish to begin only when everything is ready are not needed by the working class. One must be able to see the first, even though
weak, symptoms of revival, while only in the economic sphere, adapt one's tactics to it, and attentively follow the development of the process. Meantime one must not even for a moment lose sight of the general nature of our epoch, which has proved more than once and will prove again that, between the first symptoms of revival and the stormy upsurge that creates a revolutionary situation, not forty years but perhaps only a fifth or a tenth of that are required.

Vassart fares no better. He simply establishes an automatic parallel between exploitation and radicalization. How can the radicalization of the masses be denied, Vassart asks irritably, if exploitation grows from day to day? This is childish metaphysics, quite in the spirit of Bukharin. Radicalization must be proved not by deductions but by facts. Vassart's conclusion can be turned into its opposite without difficulty. The question can be put this way: How could the capitalists increase exploitation from day to day if they were confronted by the radicalization of the masses? It is precisely the absence of a fighting spirit that permits an intensification of exploitation. True, such arguments without qualification are also one-sided, but they are a lot closer to life than Vassart's constructions.

The trouble is that increasing exploitation does not always raise the fighting spirit of the proletariat. Thus, in a conjunctural decline accompanied by growing unemployment, particularly after defeats, increased exploitation does not breed a radicalization of the masses but, quite the contrary, demoralization, atomization, and disintegration. We saw that, for example, in the British coal mines right after the 1926 strike. We saw it on a still larger scale in Russia, when the 1907 industrial crisis coincided with the wrecking of the 1905 revolution. If in the past two years intensified exploitation brought about the evident growth of the strike movement, the basis for it was created by a conjunctural rise in the economy, not a decline.

**Fear of Economic Processes**

But the ultraleft opportunists leading the Comintern fear an industrial upturn as an economic "counterrevolution." Their radicalism leans on a weak reed. For a further rise in the industrial-business conjuncture would first of all deliver a mortal blow to their stupid theories of the "third and last period." These people deduce revolutionary perspectives not from real contradictory processes but from false schemata. And from this flow their fatal errors in tactics.
It may seem quite improbable that the official orators at the CGTU congress tried above all to depict the state of French capitalism in the most piteous light. Loudly exaggerating the present swing of the strike movement, the French Stalinists' description of French industry makes future strike struggles seem absolutely hopeless. Among them was Vassart. Precisely because he, together with Monmousseau, does not distinguish between the fundamental crisis of capitalism and the crisis of conjuncture, and this time thinks along the same lines as Chambellant that a conjunctural rise might put off the revolution for a period of decades, Vassart is apprehensive about an industrial upturn. On pages 21-24 of his pamphlet, he proves that the present industrial revival in France is "artificial" and "momentary" (page 24). At the December national committee meeting, Richetta diligently painted the French textile industry into a state of crisis. If this is the case it means that the strike wave, which so far has served as the only indication of radicalization, has no economic foundation or is losing it rapidly. To say the least, Vassart and Richetta give the representatives of capital a priceless argument against economic concessions to the workers and, what is more important, they give decisive arguments to the reformists against economic strikes, for it must be understood that from a perspective of chronic crisis one cannot develop a perspective of growing economic struggles.

Do not these sorry trade unionists follow the economic press? But, they may say, the capitalist press deliberately displays optimism. However, it is not a question of the editorials. From day to day, from month to month, the newspapers publish the market reports, the balances of the banks, the commercial and industrial businesses, and the railroads. Some of the totals involved have already been reprinted in *La Verite.* The more recent figures are further proof of the upward trend of French

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*We can only welcome the fact that *La Verite* has introduced monthly economic reviews. The first article (number 12) gives an excellent outline on the need of economic orientation for every communist in the party as well as in trade-union work. The Oppositionists particularly must rely on this side of the matter: developing a correct revolutionary perspective, based on a Marxist analysis of facts and figures, not only in opposition to the empty babblings of Cachin and Monmousseau, but also to the political fiction of some gentlemen who have wandered into the ranks of the Opposition by mistake.
industry. The last weekly economic supplement to reach me, *Le Temps* 49 (December 9, 1929), for example, carries a report of a general meeting of the stockholders of the metal industry of northern and eastern France. We do not know M. Cuvelette's attitude to the philosophy of the "third period" and we admit that we are not very much interested. But nevertheless he can very well add up profits and collect dividends. Cuvelette sums up the total of the past year as follows: "The condition of the domestic market has been exceptionally favorable." This estimate, I hope, has nothing in common with platonic optimism, because it is strengthened by forty-franc dividends instead of the twenty-five-franc dividends of the year before. Has or has not this fact an importance for the economic struggles in the metal industry? It would seem that it has. But, unfortunately, behind the back of Cuvelette we see the figures of Vassart and Bricot or that of Monmousseau himself, and we hear their voices: "Don't believe the words of this capitalist optimist who does not know that he is up to his ears in the third period!" Isn't it clear that if a worker makes the mistake of believing Monmousseau and not Cuvelette, he must come to the conclusion that he has no basis for a successful economic struggle, to say nothing of an offensive?

The Monmousseau school—if one may give such a title to an institution where people are taught to unlearn thinking, reading, and writing—is afraid of an economic upturn. It must be said plainly that for the French working class—which has renewed its composition at least twice, during the years of the war and after the war, drawing into its ranks tremendous numbers of youth, women, and foreign-born and still far from having assimilated these new elements—for this French working class the further development of an industrial upturn would create an incomparable school, would allow it to gather its strength, would prove to the most backward sections their meaning and role in the capitalist structure, and would thereby raise the general class consciousness as a whole to new heights. Two or three years, even one year, of a broad, successful economic struggle would rejuvenate the proletariat. After a properly utilized economic upturn, a conjunctural crisis might give a serious impetus to a genuine political radicalization of the masses.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that wars and revolutions in our epoch result not from conjunctural crises but from the contradictions between the development of the productive forces on the one hand and the national boundaries
of the bourgeois state on the other, carried to their ultimate conclusion. The imperialist war and the October Revolution have demonstrated the depth of these contradictions. The new role of America has further accentuated them. The more serious the development of the productive forces in one country or another, or in a number of countries, the sooner a new upturn in industry will find itself confronted with the basic contradictions of world industry and the sharper will be the reaction—economic and political, domestic and international. A serious industrial revival would be, in any case, not a minus but a tremendous plus for French communism, creating a mighty strike movement as a forerunner to a political offensive. There will be no lack of revolutionary situations. It is quite likely, however, that there will be a lack of ability to utilize them.

But is a continuing upward trend in the French industrial conjuncture guaranteed? This we cannot dare to assume. All sorts of possibilities remain open. At any rate, it does not depend on us. What does depend on us, and what we are obliged to do, is not to close our eyes to facts in the name of pitiful schemata, but to see the course of economic development as it really is and to work out trade-union tactics on the basis of facts. We speak now of tactics in distinction to strategy, which is determined, of course, not by conjunctural changes but by basic tendencies of development. But if tactics are subordinate to strategy, strategy is realized only through tactics.

For the Comintern as well as the Profintern, tactics consist of periodic zigzags, and strategy is the arithmetical sum of these zigzags. That is why the proletarian vanguard suffers defeat after defeat.

3. What Are the Signs of Political Radicalization?

The question of the radicalization of the masses is not exhausted, however, by an analysis of the strike movement. What is the level of the political struggle? And, above all, what is the size and influence of the Communist Party?

It is remarkable that in speaking of the radicalization the official leaders pointedly ignore the question of their own party. Yet the facts are that beginning with 1925 the membership of the party has been falling from year to year: 1925, 83,000 members; 1926, 65,000; 1927, 56,000; 1928, 52,000; 1929, 35,000. For the previous years we use the official figures of the Comintern secretary Platinitsky; for 1929 the figures of Semard. No matter how these figures are regarded, they undoubtedly are greatly exaggerated; nevertheless, as a whole,
they very vividly show a curve of the party's decline: in five years, the membership fell by more than half.

It may be said that quality is more important than quantity, and that there now remain in the party only the fully reliable communists. Let us assume that is so. But this is not the real question. The process of the radicalization of the masses can in no way mean the isolation of the cadres, but, on the contrary, the influx into the party of reliable and partially reliable members and the conversion of the latter into "reliables." The political radicalization of the masses can be reconciled with the regular decline in party membership only if one sees the role of the party in the life of the working class as a fifth wheel to a wagon. Facts speak louder than words. We observe a steady decline of the party not only during the years 1925-27, when the strike wave was ebbing, but also during the last two years, when the number of strikes was beginning to grow.

At this point the honorable Panglosses of official communism will interrupt, pointing to the "disproportion" between the size of the party and its influence. This is now the general Comintern formula, invented by the shrewd for the simple. However, the canonized formula not only fails to explain anything but in some respects even makes matters worse. The experience of the workers' movement testifies that the more a revolutionary party assumes a "parliamentary" character—all other conditions being equal—the more the extent of its influence exceeds its size. Opportunism is a lot easier than Marxism, for it bases itself on the masses in general. This is obvious from a simple comparison between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party.* The systematic growth of the "disproportion," with the decline in the number of organized communists, consequently can only mean that the French Communist Party is being transformed from a revolutionary into a parliamentary

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*On the eve of the 1924 legislative elections, the bureau of the ECCI in a special appeal to the French Communist Party pronounced the Socialist Party of France "nonexistent." The call emanated from the frivolous Lozovsky. I protested in vain in a letter to the bureau against this light-minded evaluation, explaining that a reformist parliamentary party may retain very wide influence with a weak organization and even a limited press. This was looked upon as "pessimism." Naturally, the results of the 1924 elections, and the entire further course of development as well, have not been slow in subverting the flippancy of Zinoviev and Lozovsky.
and municipalist party. The recent "municipal" scandals revealed that this process did develop to a certain degree in the last years, and it may be feared that "parliamentary" scandals will follow. Nevertheless, the difference between the Communist Party as it is today and the social democratic agents of the bourgeoisie remains enormous. The Panglosses in the leadership merely slander the French Communist Party when they discourse on some gigantic disproportion between its size and its influence. It is not difficult to show that the political influence of communism, unfortunately, has grown very little in the last five years.

For Marxists, it is no secret that parliamentary and municipal elections distort and even falsify the underlying moods of the masses. Nevertheless, the dynamics of political development find a reflection in parliamentary elections; this is one reason why Marxists take an active part in electoral struggles. But what do the election results show? In the 1924 legislative elections the Communist Party polled 875,000 votes, a little less than 10 percent of the total electorate. In the 1928 elections, the party polled a little more than a million votes (1,064,000), which represented 11 1/3 percent of the votes cast. Thus the specific weight of the party in the electorate increased by 1 1/3 percent. If this process were to continue at the same rate, then Chambelland's perspective of thirty to forty years of "social peace" would appear too—revolutionary.

The Socialist Party, already "nonexistent" in 1924 (according to Zinoviev and Lozovsky), polled almost 1,700,000 votes in 1928, more than 18 percent of the total, or more than one and a half times the Communist vote.

The results of the municipal elections change the total picture very little. In some industrial centers (Paris, the North) the Communists undoubtedly won votes away from the Socialists. Thus in Paris, the specific weight of the Communist vote increased in four years (1925-29) from 18.9 percent to 21.8 percent, that is, by 3 percent, at a time when the Socialist vote fell from 22.4 percent to 18.1, that is, by 4 percent. The symptomatic significance of such facts is undeniable; but so far they have only a local character and are greatly discredited by the antirevolutionary "municipalism" personified by Louis Sellier and other petty bourgeois like him. As a result of the Selliers, the municipal elections that took place a year after the legislative elections did not bring about any real changes.

Other indications of political life also, to say the least, speak
against the premature parrottings on the so-called political radicalization of the masses that is supposed to have taken place in the last two years. The circulation of l'Humanite, to our knowledge, has not grown. The collections of money for l'Humanite are certainly gratifying. But such collections would have been large, in view of the demonstrative reactionary attack on the paper, a year, two, and three years ago as well.

On the first of August— it must not be forgotten for a minute—the party was incapable of mobilizing either all the workers who had voted for it or even all the unionized workers. In Paris, according to the probably exaggerated reports of l'Humanite, about fifty thousand workers participated in the first of August demonstrations, that is, less than half of the unionized workers. In the provinces, things were infinitely worse. This proves, by the way, that the "leading role" of the political bureau among the CGTU apparatus people does not guarantee a leading role of the party among the unionized workers. But the latter make up only a tiny fraction of the class. If the revolutionary upsurge is such an irrefutable fact, what good is a party leadership that, at the critical moment of the Sino-Soviet conflict, could not mobilize an anti-imperialist demonstration even a quarter— rather, even a tenth— the size of the country's electorate? No one demands the impossible of the party leadership. A class cannot be manipulated. But what stamped the August 1 demonstration a failure was the monstrous "disproportion" between the victorious shouts of the leadership and the real response of the masses.

As far as the trade-union organizations are concerned, they paralleled the party's decline— judging by the official figures—one year later. In 1926, the CGTU numbered 475,000 members; in 1927, 452,000; in 1928, 375,000. The loss of 100,000 members by the trade unions at a time when the strike struggles in the country were increasing is incontestable proof that the CGTU does not reflect the basic processes at work in the economic struggles of the masses. As an enlarged reflection of the party, it merely experiences the decline of the latter, after some delay.

The data given here doubly confirm the preliminary conclusions we came to on the basis of our analysis of the strike movement. Let us recapitulate. The years 1919-20 were the culminating point of the proletarian struggle in France. After that, an ebb set in, which in the economic field began slowly to change. In the political field, however, the ebb or stagna-
tion continues even now, at least among the majority of the workers. The awakening of activity of certain sections of the proletariat in economic struggle is irrefutable. But this process too is only in its first stage. It is primarily light industry that is drawn into the struggle, with an evident preponderance of the unorganized workers over the organized, involving a large number of foreign-born workers.

The impetus to the strike wave was the upturn in the economic conjuncture, with a simultaneous rise in the cost of living. In its first stages, the strengthening of economic struggles is not ordinarily accompanied by a revolutionary upswing. It is not evident now either. On the contrary, the economic struggles for a certain time may even weaken the political interests of the working class, at least some of its sections.

If we further take into consideration the fact that French industry has been on the upturn for two years now, that there is no talk of unemployment in the basic branches of industry, and that in some branches there is even an acute shortage of workers, then it is not difficult to conclude that under these exceptionally favorable conditions for trade-union struggle the present strike wave is extremely modest. The main indications of its moderate character are the quiescence of the masses that carries over from the preceding period and the slowness of the industrial upturn itself.

What Are the Immediate Perspectives?

Regardless of the tempo of the conjunctural changes, it is only possible to approximate the change in the phases of the cycle. This was true also of prewar capitalism. But in the present epoch the difficulties of conjunctural prediction have multiplied. After the disruption of the war, the world market has not attained a uniform conjuncture, even though it has now approached it appreciably compared to the first five years after the war. This is why one must be extremely careful in attempting to determine beforehand the alternating changes in the world conjuncture.

At the present moment the following basic variants appear likely:

1. The New York stock market crisis proves to be the forerunner of a commercial-industrial crisis in the United States, which reaches great depths in the very next months. United States capitalism is compelled to make a decisive turn toward the foreign market. An epoch of frenzied competition opens up. European goods retreat before this unrestrained attack.
Europe enters a crisis later than the United States but as a result the European crisis assumes extraordinary acuteness.

2. The stock market crash does not immediately call forth a commercial-industrial crisis, but results only in a temporary depression. The blow at stock market speculation brings about better correlation between paper values and commercial-industrial realities, and between the latter and the real buying power of the market. After the depression and period of adjustment, the commercial-industrial conjuncture turns upward again, even though not as sharply as in the previous period. This variant is not excluded. The resources of American capitalism are great, in which not the last place is held by the government budget (orders, subsidies, etc.).

3. The withdrawal of funds from American speculation generates commercial and industrial activity. Its fate will in turn depend just as much on purely European factors as on world-wide factors. Even in the event of a sharp economic crisis in the United States, an upturn may be maintained in Europe for a certain time, because it is unthinkable that capitalism in the United States will be able to reassert itself in a few short months for a decisive attack on the world market.

4. Finally, the actual course of development may be somewhere between the above-outlined variants in a wavering curve, with slight fluctuations up or down.

The development of the working class, especially as expressed in the strike movement, from the very beginning of capitalism has been closely bound up with the development of the conjunctural cycle. But this must not be considered mechanically. Under certain conditions that go beyond the commercial-industrial cycle (sharp changes in the world economy or politics, social crises, wars, revolutions), the strike wave may express fundamental historical revolutionary tasks of the working class, not their immediate demands evoked by the given conjuncture. Thus, for example, the postwar strikes in France did not have a conjunctural character but expressed the profound crisis of capitalist society as a whole. If we use this criterion, we see that the strike movement in France today has a primarily conjunctural character; its course and tempo will depend in the most immediate sense on further fluctuations of the market, alternating conjunctural phases, and their scope and intensity. The instability of this current period makes it all the more impermissible to proclaim the "third period" without any regard for the real development of economic events.

There is no need to explain that even if there should be a
favorable conjuncture in America and a commercial-industrial upturn in Europe, a new crisis is entirely unavoidable. There is no doubt that when a crisis does develop, the current leaders will declare that their "prognosis" was fully justified, that the stabilization of capitalism did not occur, and that the class struggle took on sharper form. Clearly, such a "prognosis" costs very little. One who predicted daily the eclipse of the sun would finally live to see this prediction fulfilled. But we are unlikely to consider such a prophet a serious astronomer. The tasks of communists is not to predict crises, revolutions, and wars every single day, but to prepare for wars and revolutions by soberly evaluating the circumstances and conditions that arise between wars and revolutions. It is necessary to foresee the inevitability of a crisis after an upturn. It is necessary to warn the masses of a coming crisis. But the masses will be the better prepared for the crisis the more that they, with correct leadership, utilize the period of the upturn. At the recent plenum of the CGTU national committee, quite healthy ideas were expressed. Claveri and Dorelle, for example, complained that the previous CGTU congress (September 1929) evaded the question of the economic demands of the working masses. The speakers, however, did not stop to think how it could happen that a trade-union congress overlooked what should be its first and most urgent task. In accord with so-called "self-criticism," the main speakers this time condemned the CGTU leadership more thoroughly than the Opposition ever did.

However, Dorelle himself introduced not a little confusion in the name of the "third period" concerning the political character of the strikes. Dorelle demanded that the revolutionary Communist trade unionists—there are no other revolutionary trade unionists at the present time—show the workers in every strike the relation of isolated examples of exploitation to the contemporary regime as a whole, and consequently the connection between the immediate demands of the workers and the proletarian revolution. This is ABC for Marxists. But this in itself does not determine the character of a strike. A political strike is not a strike in which Communists carry on political agitation, but a strike in which the workers of all occupations and plants conduct a struggle for definite political aims. Revolutionary agitation on the basis of strikes is a task under all circumstances; but the participation of workers in political, that is, revolutionary strikes is one of the most advanced forms of struggle and occurs only under exceptional
circumstances, which neither the party nor the trade unions can manufacture artificially according to their own desires. The identification of economic strikes with political strikes creates confusion that prevents the trade-union leaders from correctly approaching economic strikes, from organizing them and working out a practical program of workers' demands.

Matters are worse still in respect to general economic orientation. The philosophy of the "third period" demands an economic crisis immediately and at all costs. Our wise trade unionists, therefore, close their eyes to the systematic improvement of the economic conjuncture in France in the last two years, although without a concrete estimate of the conjuncture it is impossible to work out correct demands and to struggle for them successfully. Claveri and Dorelle would do well to think the question through to the end. If the economic upturn in France continues for another year (which is not out of the question), then primarily the development and deepening of the economic struggles will soon be on the agenda. To be able to adapt to such circumstances is a task not only of the trade unions but also of the party. It is not enough to proclaim the abstract right of communism to have a leading role; it is necessary to gain this by deeds, not only within the narrow framework of the trade-union apparatus but in the arena of the class struggle. To the anarchist and syndicalist formula of trade-union autonomy, the party must counterpose serious theoretical and political aid to the trade unions, making it easier for them to orient correctly in economic and political developments and to elaborate correct demands and methods of struggle.

The unavoidable shift in the upturn caused by a crisis will change the tasks, putting economic struggles into the background. It has already been said that the onset of a crisis will in all probability serve as an impetus to the political activity of the masses. The force of this impetus will depend on two factors: the duration and extent of the upturn and the depth of the crisis succeeding it. The more abrupt and decisive the change, the more explosive will be the action of the masses. This is natural. Because of inertia, strikes generally acquire their greatest sweep at the moment when the economic upturn begins to collapse. It is as if, in the heat of running, the workers encounter a solid wall. Economic strikes can then accomplish very little. The capitalists, with a depression under way, easily make use of the lockout. It is then that the deepened class consciousness of the workers begins to seek other
means of expression. But which? This depends not only upon the conjunctural conditions but on the total situation in the country.

There is no basis to declare in advance that the next conjunctural crisis will create an immediate revolutionary situation in France. On the basis of the convergence of a number of conditions that go beyond the conjunctural crisis this is quite possible. But at this point only theoretical conjectures can be made. To put forward today the slogan of a general political strike on the basis of a future crisis that will push the masses onto the road of revolutionary struggle is to try to appease the hunger of today with the dinner of tomorrow. When Molotov stated at the Tenth Plenum that the general strike has in effect been put on the order of the day in France, he only showed once too often that he does not know France, nor the order, nor the day. The anarchists and syndicalists compromise the very idea of a general strike in France. Official communism goes along with them, attempting to substitute adventurist goat-leaps for systematic revolutionary work.

The political activity of the masses, before it assumes a more decisive form, for a shorter or longer period may express itself in more frequent attendance at meetings, in broader distribution of Communist literature, in additional electoral votes, in increased membership in the party. Can the leadership adopt in advance a worked-out orientation based on a stormy tempo of development, come what may? No. It must be prepared for one or another tempo. Only in this way can the party, not altering its revolutionary direction, march in step with the class.

In reply to these considerations, I can already hear a tender voice, like grating tin, accusing me of "economism" on the one hand and capitalist optimism on the other, and of course social democratic deviations as well. For the Molотовs, everything they cannot grasp—that is, a great deal—falls under the heading of social democratic deviations, just as for primitives 99 percent of the universe is explained by the activity of evil spirits. Following Molotov, Semard and Monmousseau will teach us that the question is not exhausted by conjunctural shifts, that there are many other factors, for example, rationalization of industry and approaching war. These people talk about "many" factors all the more that they are incapable of explaining a single one of them. Yes, we will reply to them, war would overthrow the whole perspective and would open up, so to speak, a new chronology. But first, we do not know today when war will come, nor what gates it will come
through. Second, in order to confront the war with open eyes, we must carefully study all the curves in the road that leads to it. War does not fall from the sky. The question of war and its date is intimately connected with the question of the world market.

4. The Art of Orientation

The art of revolutionary leadership is primarily the art of correct political orientation. Under all conditions, communism prepares the political vanguard and through it the working class as a whole for the revolutionary seizure of power. But it does it differently in different fields of the labor movement and in different periods.

One of the most important elements in orientation is the determination of the temper of the masses, their activity and readiness for struggle. The mood of the masses, however, is not predetermined. It changes under the influence of certain laws of mass psychology that are set into motion by objective social conditions. The political state of the class is subject, within certain limits, to a quantitative determination—press circulation, attendance at meetings, elections, demonstrations, strikes, etc., etc. In order to understand the dynamics of the process it is necessary to determine in what direction and why the mood of the working class is changing. Combining subjective and objective data, it is possible to establish a tentative perspective of the movement, that is, a scientifically based prediction, without which a serious revolutionary struggle is in general inconceivable. But a prediction in politics does not have the character of a perfect blueprint; it is a working hypothesis. While leading the struggle in one direction or another, it is necessary to attentively follow the changes in the objective and subjective elements of the movement, in order to opportune intervention corresponding corrections in tactics. Even though the actual development of the struggle never fully corresponds to the prognosis, that does not absolve us from making political predictions. One must not, however, get intoxicated with finished schemata, but continually refer to the course of the historic process and adjust to its indications.

Centrism, which now rules the Comintern as an intermediate tendency living on the ideas of others, is by its very nature incapable of historical prognosis. In the Soviet republic, centrism became dominant under the conditions of reaction against October, at the ebb of the revolution, when empiricism and eclecticism allowed it to swim with the stream. And since it had
already been announced that the course of development led automatically toward socialism in one country, this was enough to free centrism from the need of a world orientation.\textsuperscript{59}

But the Communist parties in the capitalist countries, which still have to struggle for power or to prepare for such a struggle, cannot live without prognosis. A correct, everyday orientation is a question of life or death for them. But they fail to learn this most important art because they are compelled to leap about at the command of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Bureaucratic centrism, which is able to live for a time off the capital of already captured proletarian power, is completely incapable of preparing the young parties for the conquest of power. In this lies the principal and most formidable contradiction of the Comintern today.

The history of the centrist leadership is the history of fatal mistakes in orientation. After the epigones\textsuperscript{60} missed the 1923 revolutionary situation in Germany, which profoundly changed the whole situation in Europe, the Comintern went through three stages of fatal errors.

The years 1924-25 were the period of ultraleft mistakes: the leadership saw an immediate revolutionary situation ahead of them when it was already past. In that period they called the Marxist-Leninists "right-wingers" and "liquidators."

The years 1925-27 were the period of open opportunism, which coincided with a stormy rise of the labor movement in Britain and the revolution in China. In this period they called us nothing else than "ultralefts."

Finally, in 1928, the "third period" is announced, which repeats the Zinovievist errors of 1924-25 on a higher historical plane. The "third period" has not yet come to a close; on the contrary, it continues to rage, devastating organizations and people.

All three periods are characterized, not accidentally, by a steady decline at the leadership level. In the first period: Zinoviev, Bukharin, Stalin. In the second period: Stalin, Bukharin. In the third period: Stalin and—Molotov. There is a pattern in this.

Let us look more closely at the leadership and the theory of the "third period."

\textbf{Molotov "Enters with Both Feet"}

The plenum of the ECCI that met a year after the Sixth Congress could not simply repeat what the Sixth Congress had already said, but had to try a higher note. On the eve of
the plenum, the theoretical organ of the Soviet Communist Party wrote:

"In the whole capitalist world the strike wave is rising. This wave is occurring in the highly developed imperialist countries as well as in the backward colonies at times and in places that interlink with elements of a stubborn revolutionary struggle and civil war. The masses of the unorganized are drawn into and actively participate in the struggle. . . . The growing dissatisfaction and leftward swing of the masses also includes the millions of agricultural workers and oppressed peasantry" (Bolshevik, number 12, June 1929, p. 9).

The picture leaves no room for doubt. If the strike wave is actually occurring all over the world, drawing in even "the millions of agricultural workers and oppressed peasantry," and interlinking with "revolutionary struggle and civil war," then clearly the revolutionary situation is at hand and the task of an outright struggle is on the agenda. We would agree not to quarrel over whether to call such conditions the "third period" or to leave them without a number.

The tuning fork at the Tenth Plenum appeared, as is known, in the hands of the maestro Molotov. In his programmatic speech to the leaders of the Comintern Molotov said: "One must be a dull opportunist [!], one must be a sorry liberal [!], in view of the facts of the world proletarian movement, not to see that we have entered with both feet into the realm of most tremendous revolutionary events of international significance" (Pravda, number 177). "With both feet"—what power of argumentation!

Harmonizing with Molotov's tuning fork, Bolshevik wrote in August 1929:

"On the basis of the analysis of the working-class struggle in the principal capitalist countries, the Tenth Plenum established the development and deepening of the processes of the leftward turn and radicalization of the masses, which presently is growing into the beginning of a revolutionary upsurge (at least in such countries as Germany, France, Poland)" (number 15, p. 4).

There can be no doubt. If not with his head, then with his feet, Molotov has decisively established the revolutionary character of this period. Since nobody wants to be called a "dull opportunist" or a "sorry liberal," Molotov's argumentation appears to be protected against any criticism at the plenum. Not burdening himself with an economic or political analysis, for reasons that we must admit are very valid, Molotov limited
himself to a short catalog of the strikes in various countries (Ruhr, Lodz, northern France, Bombay, etc.) as the sole proof of the fact that "we have entered into the realm of most tremendous revolutionary events." This is how historic periods are created!

It only remained for the Central Committee and the publications of the national sections to see to it that their own feet, getting ahead if possible of their heads, should be immersed as quickly as possible in the "most tremendous revolutionary events." But is it not a suspicious circumstance that the revolutionary situation emerges simultaneously in the whole world, in the advanced countries and the colonies, circumventing in this period the "law of uneven development," that is, that single historic law which, at least by name, is known to Stalin? Actually, there can be no talk of such simultaneity. The analysis of world conditions is replaced, as we see, by the summing up of isolated conflicts occurring in different countries and under different conditions. Of the European countries, Austria alone, perhaps, has gone through a crisis in the last year that, with the presence of an influential communist party, might have assumed an immediately revolutionary development. But it is Austria that is not even mentioned. Instead, France, Germany, and Poland are "those countries which [according to Molotov] find themselves at present in the front ranks of the revolutionary upsurge." We have already examined the strike wave in France in order to determine its place in the development of the working class and the country. We hope to analyze in detail very soon the basic indicators that characterize the struggle of the German working class. But the conclusions we arrived at with respect to France, which is included by the Tenth Plenum among at least the three most revolutionary European countries, demonstrate that Molotov's analysis is a combination of three elements: theoretical ignorance, political irresponsibility, and bureaucratic adventurism. It is not the "third period" that these elements exemplify, but the centrist bureaucracy—in all periods.

**Economic Strikes and Crises**

"Wherein lies the basis of this revolutionary upsurge?" Molotov makes an attempt at analysis and immediately comes up with the fruits of his deliberations: "At the basis of the upsurge can only lie the growth of the general crisis of capitalism and the sharpening of the basic contradictions of the capitalist system."
Whoever does not agree is a "sorry liberal." But where is it written that at the basis of economic strikes "can only lie" a crisis? Instead of analyzing actual economic conditions and relating them to the present strike movement, Molotov proceeds in reverse order; enumerating half a dozen strikes, he comes to the conclusion about "the growth" of the capitalist crisis and — lands in the clouds.

The rise of the strike movement in a number of countries was caused, as we know, by the improvement of the economic conjuncture in the last two years. This occurred primarily in France. True, the industrial upturn, which is far from general for all of Europe, remained limited until now even in France, and its future is far from certain. But in the life of the proletariat even a small conjunctural turn in one direction or another does not take place without having an effect. If workers are laid off daily, those who remain on the job do not have the same morale as they do when workers are being hired, even though in small numbers. The conjuncture has no less an influence on the ruling classes. In a period of an industrial revival, which always arouses workers' expectations for a still greater upturn in the future, the capitalists are inclined toward easing international contradictions, precisely in order to safeguard the development of the favorable conjuncture. And this is the "spirit of Locarno and Geneva." 62

In the past we have had a good illustration of the relation between conjunctural and fundamental factors.

From 1896 to 1913 there was, with few exceptions, a powerful industrial expansion. In 1913 this changed to a depression, which, for all informed people, clearly began the long drawn-out crisis. The threat of a turn in the conjuncture, after the period of unprecedented boom, created an extremely nervous mood in the ruling classes and served as a direct impetus to the war. Of course, the imperialist war grew out of basic contradictions of capitalism. This generalization is known even to Molotov. But on the road to war there were a series of stages when the contradictions either sharpened or softened. The same applies to the class struggle of the workers.

In the prewar period, the basic and the conjunctural processes developed much more evenly than in the present period of abrupt changes and sharp downturns, when comparatively minor shifts in the economy breed tremendous leaps in politics. But from this it does not follow that it is possible to close one's eyes to the actual development and to repeat three incantations: "contradictions are sharpening," "the working
masses are turning to the left," "war is imminent"—every day, every day, every day. If our strategic line is determined in the final analysis by the inevitability of the growth of contradictions and the revolutionary radicalization of the masses, then our tactics, which serve this strategy, proceed from the realistic evaluation of each period, each stage, each moment, which may be characterized by a temporary softening of contradictions, a rightward turn of the masses, a change in the relation of forces in favor of the bourgeoisie, etc. If the masses were to turn leftward uninterruptedly, any fool could lead them. Fortunately or unfortunately, matters are more complicated, particularly under the present inconstant, fluctuating, "capricious" conditions.

The so-called general line is only a phrase unless we relate it to each alternating change in national and international conditions. How does the Comintern leadership act? Instead of evaluating conditions in all their concreteness, it smashes its head at every new stage and then consoles the masses for its subsequent defeat by a change or even expulsion of those on guard duty in the central committees of the national parties. We strongly advise Cachin, Monmousseau, Thaelmann, and all the Remmeles to prepare themselves for the role of scapegoats for the theory and practice of the third period. This will happen when Stalin has to correct Molotov — naturally after the fact.

The Advance of the USSR and the "Third Period"

As the first reason for the "revolutionary upsurge" in the last two years Molotov sees the economic crisis which, by the way, he discovered by deduction. The second reason he sees is the economic advance of the USSR, and he even accuses the plenum of the ECCI of not having sufficiently appreciated the radicalizing effect of the five-year plan. That the economic successes of the Soviet republic have a gigantic importance for the world working class does not require any proof. But from this it does not follow at all that the five-year plan is capable, a priori, of causing a revolutionary upsurge in Europe and the whole world. The working masses do not live by the projected figures of the five-year plan. But even if we leave aside the five-year plan and take the figures of the actual industrial successes, we still cannot find in them the reason for the strike of the dock workers in France or the textile workers in India. Millions of workers are led into action by their immediate conditions of life. Moreover, the great majority of workers learn
about the successes or failures of the Soviet economy from the lying articles in the bourgeois and social democratic press. Finally, and this is more important than all the rest, what would most impress large numbers of workers all over the world are not abstract statistical figures but an actual and substantial improvement in the conditions of the workers in the USSR. It is certain that severe food shortages in Moscow and Leningrad cannot inspire tens of millions of workers in the capitalist world with revolutionary enthusiasm. It is a fact, unfortunately, that only about a hundred workers came to hear the triumphant report of the latest French delegation to return from the USSR. A hundred workers—from the whole of Paris! This is a menacing warning; but the boastful bureaucrats do not consider it necessary even to think about it.

**The Slogan of the General Strike**

Entering with gusto into the "most tremendous revolutionary events," Molotov five minutes later returns to these strikes with the unexpected comment: "However, these mobilizations against capital and the reformism that serves it still have an isolated and episodic character."

It would seem that isolated and episodic strikes occur in different countries for quite different reasons but, in general, arising as they do out of a conjunctural upturn in the world market, are not yet—precisely because they are isolated and episodic—"tremendous revolutionary events." But Molotov wants to unite the isolated strikes; a praiseworthy task. In the meantime, however, this is still the task, not an accomplished fact. To unite isolated strikes—Molotov teaches—is possible by means of mass political strikes. Yes, *under the necessary conditions*, the working class may be united in revolutionary mass strikes. According to Molotov, then, the mass strike is "that new, that basic and most characteristic problem which stands in the center of the tactical tasks of the Communist parties at the given moment. And this means"—continues our strategist—"that we have approached [this time only 'approached'!] new and higher forms of class struggle." And in order to affirm definitively the Tenth Plenum religion of the third period, Molotov adds: "*We could not have advanced the slogan of a mass political strike if we had not found ourselves in a period of ascent.*" His logic is truly unexampled! At first both feet entered the most tremendous revolutionary events. Later it appeared that facing the theoretical head stood only the task of the general strike—rather, not the general strike itself, but only the slogan. And from this, by inverse method, the con-
clusion is drawn that we "have approached the highest forms of class struggle." Because, don't you see, if we had not approached them, how could Molotov advance the slogan of the general strike? The whole construction is based on the word of honor of the newly made strategist. And the powerful representatives of the parties respectfully listened to the self-confident blockhead and on roll call replied: "Right you are!"

At any rate, we learn that all countries, from Britain to China— with France, Germany, and Poland at the head—are now ready for the slogan of the general strike. We are finally convinced that not a trace is left of the unhappy law of uneven development. We might manage to be reconciled to this, if they would only tell us for what political aims the slogan of the general strike is advanced in every country. It should at least be mentioned that the workers are not at all inclined toward general strikes just for the sake of general strikes. Anarcho-syndicalism broke its head on the failure to understand this. A general strike may sometimes have the character of a protest demonstration. Such a strike may occur when some clear, sometimes unexpected, event stirs the imagination of the masses and produces the necessity for unanimous resistance. But a protest strike demonstration is not yet, in the real sense of the word, a revolutionary political strike: it is only one of the preparatory rehearsals for it. As far as the revolutionary political strike is concerned, in the real sense of the word, it constitutes, so to speak, the final act in the struggle of the proletariat for power. Paralyzing the normal functions of the capitalist state, the general strike poses the question: Who is master in the house? This question is decided only by armed force. That is why a revolutionary strike which does not lead to an armed uprising ends finally with the defeat of the proletariat. If Molotov's words regarding revolutionary political strikes and "highest forms of struggle" have any sense at all, it is that simultaneously, or almost simultaneously, throughout the world, the revolutionary situation has reached maturity and faces the Communist parties of the West, East, North, and South with the general strike as the immediate prologue to armed uprising.

It is sufficient to review Molotov's strategy of the "third period" to reveal its absurdity.

"The Conquest of the Streets"

Along with the general strike is set the task of "the conquest of the streets." The question—at least in words—is not that
of the defense of one of the "democratic" rights, trampled upon by the bourgeoisie and the social democracy, but the defense of the "right" of the proletariat to the barricades. That is precisely how "the conquest of the streets" has been interpreted in the numerous articles of the official Communist press immediately following the July plenum. It is not for us to deny the right of the proletariat to "the conquest of the streets" by way of the barricades. But it is necessary to clearly understand what this means. Above all, it must be understood that the working class does not go onto the barricades for the sake of the barricades, just as it does not participate in strikes for the sake of strikes. Immediate political ends are required, which weld together millions and give firm support to the vanguard. That is how revolutionaries pose the question. The opportunists gone berserk approach the question quite differently.

For the revolutionary "conquest of the streets"—like art for art's sake—special days are set aside. The latest exhibition of this sort appeared, as is known, on the first of August. Ordinary mortals wondered, why August 1, whose failure was forecast by the failure of May 1?64 What do you mean, Why?, the official strategists answered excitedly: "for the conquest of the streets!" Just what is to be understood by this, the conquest of the sidewalk or the pavement? Up to now we thought that the task of the revolutionary party is the conquest of the masses, and that the policy which can mobilize the masses in the greatest numbers and activity inevitably opens up the street, regardless how the police guard and block it. The struggle for the street cannot be an independent task, separated from mass political struggle and subordinated to Molotov's office schedule.

And what is most important, you cannot fool history. The task is not to appear stronger, but to get stronger. A noisy masquerade will not help. When there is no "third period," it is possible to invent it. It is possible to pass dozens of resolutions. But to make the third period on the streets, according to the calendar, is impossible. On this road the Communist parties will find only defeats, in some cases tragic ones, in most simply stupid and humiliating ones.

"No Alliances with the Reformists"

But there is another important tactical deduction from the "third period" that Molotov expresses in these words: "Now more than at any other time the tactic of alliances between the revolutionary organizations and the organizations of the
reformists is inadmissible and harmful" (Pravda, number 177, August 4, 1929).

Alliances with the reformists are inadmissible now "more than at any other time." Does this mean that they were inadmissible before too? How then shall we explain the policy of the years 1926-28? And why have alliances with the reformists, inadmissible in general, become particularly inadmissible now? Because, they explain, we have entered a period of revolutionary ascent. Yet we cannot help remembering that the conclusion of a bloc with the General Council of the British trade unions was motivated precisely by the fact that Britain had entered a period of revolutionary ascent, and that the radicalization of the British working class pushed the reformists to the left. By what incident is yesterday’s tactical superwisdom of Stalinism turned upside down? One could look in vain for a solution to this riddle. Yet the problem is quite simple. The empiricists of centrism burned their hands on the experiment of the Anglo-Russian Committee and with a strong oath they want to guard against scandals in the future. But an oath will not help, for our strategists still have not understood the lessons of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

The mistake was not in making an episodic agreement with the General Council, which was actually moving to the "left" in that period under the pressure of the masses. The first mistake was that the bloc was concluded, not on concrete practical goals clear to the working class, but on general pacifist phrases and false diplomatic formulas. The chief mistake, however, which grew into a gigantic historical crime, lay in the fact that our strategists could not immediately and openly break with the General Council when it turned its weapons against the general strike, that is, when it turned from an unreliable partial ally into an open enemy.

The influence of the radicalization of the masses on the reformists is quite similar to the influence that the development of a bourgeois revolution has on the liberals. In the first stages of the mass movement, the reformists move leftward, hoping in this way to retain the leadership in their hands. But when the movement surpasses the limits of reform and demands from the leaders a clean break with the bourgeoisie, the majority of the reformists quickly change their tune. From cowardly fellow travelers of the masses, they turn into strikebreakers, enemies, open betrayers. At the same time, however, some of them, not necessarily their better elements, jump over into the camp of the revolution. An episodic alliance with the re-
formists, at the moment they happen to be compelled by circumstances to make a step or half-step forward, may be unavoidable. But it must be understood beforehand that the communists are ready to break mercilessly with the reformists the moment they jump back. The reformists are betrayers not because they carry out, at every given moment and in every one of their acts, the instructions of the bourgeoisie. If that were the case, the reformists would have no influence on the workers and consequently would not be needed by the bourgeoisie. Precisely in order to have the necessary authority for betrayal of the workers at the decisive moment, the opportunists are compelled during the preparatory period to assume the leadership of the workers' struggles, particularly at the beginning of the radicalization of the masses. From this follows the necessity of the united-front tactic, wherein we are compelled for the sake of a broader unification of the masses to enter into practical alliances with their reformist leaders.

It is necessary to understand the historic function of the social democrats as a whole in order to force them step by step out of all their positions. The present leadership has not even a trace of such an understanding. It knows only two methods: either, in the spirit of the Brandlerites, to tail-end the social democracy (1926-28), or, by identifying social democracy with fascism, to substitute ineffective abuse for revolutionary policy. As a result of the last six years of zigzags, the social democracy is stronger and communism weaker. The mechanical directives of the Tenth Plenum can only serve to worsen the already poor situation.

Only a hopeless ignoramus can imagine that with the miraculous power of the "third period" the working class as a whole will turn away from the social democracy, driving the whole reformist bureaucracy into the fascist camp. No, the process will develop in a more complicated and contradictory fashion. A growing dissatisfaction with the Social Democratic government in Germany and with the Labourites in Britain, the transformation of partial and isolated strikes into mass movements, etc. (when all these developments actually do take place), will have as their unavoidable consequence—all the Molotovs had better mark it well—a leftward turn of broad layers of the reformist camp, just as the internal processes in the USSR necessitated the leftward turn of the centrist camp, to which Molotov himself belongs.
The social democrats and those of the Amsterdam International, with the exception of the more conscious right-wing elements (Thomas, Herman Mueller, Renaudel types, etc.), 68 will be compelled under corresponding conditions to assume the leadership of the advance of the masses, in order to confine these advances within narrow limits, or in order to attack the workers from the rear when they overstep these limits. Although we know that in advance and openly warn the vanguard about it, nevertheless, in the future there will still be tens, hundreds, and thousands of cases when the communists will not only be unable to refuse practical alliances with the reformists, but will have to take the initiative in such alliances so that, without letting the leadership out of their hands, they can break with the reformists the moment they turn from shaky allies into open betrayers. This policy will be unavoidable, especially in regard to the left social democracy, which during a genuine radicalization of the masses will be compelled to oppose the right wing more decisively, even to the point of a split. This perspective in no way contradicts the fact that those in the leadership of the left social democracy are often the most pernicious and dangerous allies, collaborators of the bourgeoisie.

How is it possible to refuse practical alliances with the reformists in those cases where, for example, they are leading strikes? If there are very few of such cases now, it is because the strike movement itself is very weak as yet and the reformists can ignore and sabotage it. But with mass participation in the struggle, alliances will become unavoidable for both sides. It will be just as impossible to block the road to practical alliances with the reformists—not only with the social democratic masses, but in many instances also with their leaders or more likely with a section of the leaders—in the struggle against fascism. This perspective may soon be at hand, not only in Austria but also in Germany. The directives of the Tenth Plenum are simply a result of the psychology of opportunists scared to death.

The Stalins, the Molотовs, and the other former allies of Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Ching-wei, Purcell, Cook, Fimmen, La Follette, and Radich will undoubtedly raise the cry that the Left Opposition stands for a bloc with the Second International. 69 These cries, as soon as the real leftward swing of the working class takes the bureaucrats unawares, will not prevent the announcement of a fourth period, or a second stage of the third, and all the Molотовs will enter at least with
"both feet" into a period of opportunist experiments like the Anglo-Russian Committee and the workers' and peasants' Kuomintang.\(^70\)

**Do Not Forget Your Own Past**

Let the present leaders of the French Communist Party and in addition all the other parties in the International remember their own recent past. All of them, with the exception of the youth, came from the ranks of the reformists under the influence of the leftward-moving workers. That did not prevent the Bolsheviks from entering into agreements with the leftward-moving reformists, putting very precise conditions to them, of which the Zimmerwald agreement\(^71\) was one of many. How can these social-patriots of yesterday be so smugly confident that the masses, when they do approach the "advanced positions of the revolutionary upsurge," will not bring forward a new class of Cachins, Monmousseaus, Thaelmanns, and others (the second edition, let us hope, will be better than the first), and that we shall not be compelled once more to pull these gentlemen by the ears into revolutionary positions, entering with them into episodic alliances, putting before them, in later stages, twenty-one conditions\(^72\) or perhaps forty-two, or, on the contrary, throwing them headfirst into the muck of opportunism when they start to retreat?

The official theoreticians quite falsely explain the present strengthening of the right wing in communism by the fact that the "subconscious" reformists were frightened by the radicalization of the masses. This is a complete misunderstanding of political psychology! Opportunism presupposes a great elasticity and ability for adaptation. If mass pressure were felt, the Brandlers, Jileks, and Lovestones\(^73\) would move to the left, not to the right, particularly such worn-out careerists as Sellier, Carchery, and others who are concerned mainly with the retention of their legislative mandates. It is true, the capacity of opportunists to move leftward is not unlimited. When the Rubicon—the decision, the uprising—is reached, the majority of them jump back to the right. This was proved by the experience of even so tempered a party as the Bolshevik party (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Kalinin, Tomsky, Lunacharsky,\(^74\) and others). After the victory, the opportunists once more moved "left," or more correctly to the side of power (Lozovskiy, Martinov, Kuusinen, and others, and following them such heroes as Pepper, Cachin, and Frossard).\(^75\) But in France matters are far from the point of decision. And if the French
opportunists do not move to the left now but jump to the right, this in itself is a true sign that the revolutionary pressure of the masses is not felt, that the party is growing weaker, and the municipal and other careerists hope to retain their mandates by coming out against communism.* The desertion of such rotten elements is a gain for the party. But the sad part of the situation is that the simultaneously false, irresponsible, adventurist, smug, and cowardly policy of the official leadership creates a very favorable cover for the deserters and pushes toward them proletarian elements whose place belongs in the ranks of communism.

**Once More on the War Danger**

In order to further entangle matters, the imminent revolutionary situation is combined with an immediate war danger. In defense of this thesis, Molotov unexpectedly directed the full power of his knowledge against Varga, the well-known theoretician-courtier, the Shakespearean Polonius, who is inclined to say something agreeable to every "prince," right or left, depending upon the way the wind blows. This time, however, Polonius did not hit the mark. His acquaintance with the foreign press, with facts and figures, prevented his timely adjustment of the Comintern meridian to the place where Molotov stepped with his left foot. Varga introduced the following political correction to the resolution:

"The sharpening of imperialist contradictions, which not one of the major imperialist countries now wishes to resolve by way of war, compels them to attempt temporary conciliation of these contradictions in the sphere of the reparations question."

It would seem that this very cautious statement is absolutely irrefutable. But as it nevertheless demanded some additional thought, Molotov was completely exasperated. How can one think—he shouted—that not one of the main imperialist powers does not at the present time wish to resolve the imperialist contradictions by way of war? "It is known to everyone [!]"—listen, listen, Molotov is talking!—"that the danger of a new imperialist war is growing every day." Nevertheless, Varga "sees the contrary." Isn't it monstrous? How does Varga dare

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*By the way, in creating a "workers' and peasants'" party instead of a proletarian party Louis Sellier and Company have given life in the West to the precious formula of Stalin invented for the East.
"deny that precisely as a result of the execution of the Young reparations plan,77 the sharpening of contradictions is unavoidable?"

All this is so absurd, so obviously stupid, that it even disarms irony. "It is known to everyone that the danger of a new imperialist war is growing every day." What power of thought. Known to everyone? Unfortunately, this is known only to a small percentage of humanity, just as the newly appointed leader of the Comintern does not know at all how the growth of the war danger proceeds in reality. It is absurd that it increases "every day" just as it is absurd that the masses move to the left daily. We have before us a dialectical process, with temporary alleviation and exacerbation of imperialist rivalry. Molotov may have heard that even the development of the productive forces of capitalism, the most basic of all its processes, does not quite take place "every day" but through crises and booms, through periods of the reduction of the productive forces and even their mass destruction (during war). The political processes also develop along these lines, but with still sharper convulsions.

In 1923 the reparations problem led to the occupation of the Ruhr. This was outright staging of war on a small scale. But even this appeared sufficient to create a revolutionary situation in Germany. The Comintern, directed by Zinoviev and Stalin, and the German Communist Party, led by Brandler, wrecked this exceptional opportunity. The year 1924, which brought the Dawes Plan, was a year of weakening of the revolutionary struggle in Germany and began the softening of contradictions between France and Germany. This is how the political prerequisites for economic stabilization were created. When we expressed this, or more correctly, when we predicted this development at the end of 1923, Molotov and the other wise ones, accusing us of liquidationism, immediately entered confidently into a period of revolutionary ascent.

The years of stabilization brought forth new contradictions and sharpened a number of old ones. The question of the revision of the Dawes Plan became imperative. Had France or Germany refused to accept the Young Plan, Europe would be confronted today with a repetition of the Ruhr occupation but on a far wider scale, with similar consequences. But this did not happen. All the participants in the game considered it wiser at this moment to come to an agreement, and instead of a second Ruhr occupation we see a cleaning up of the Ruhr district. Ignorance is characterized by the confusion of things
knowledge begins with their differentiation. Marxism is never indulgent of ignorance.

But must there not, exclaims our strategist, "as a result of the Young reparations plan necessarily come a sharpening of contradictions"? Necessarily come! But—as a result. It is necessary to understand the succession of events and the dialectics of their alternation. As a result of a booming capitalist conjuncture, there inevitably follows a depression and sometimes a crisis. But this does not mean that a high conjuncture is the same as a depressed one, and that a crisis grows "every day." "As a result" of his life, a human being follows his ancestors, but this does not mean that a person does not go through the periods of infancy, growth, illness, maturity, and old age before he reaches the gates of death. Ignorance is characterized by confusion of different stages of development. The apple of wisdom teaches us to distinguish them. But Molotov never had a bite of that fruit.

The sorry schematism of the current leaders is not altogether harmless; on the contrary, it affects the revolution at every step. The Sino-Soviet conflict created an urgent necessity for the mobilization of the masses against the war danger and for the defense of the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that in this situation the Communist parties, even under the present conditions, could have successfully accomplished this. To do so, it was necessary that Communist propaganda allow the tremendous facts to speak for themselves. But as luck would have it, the Far Eastern conflict broke out in the middle of the preparations for the first of August. The official agitators and journalists carried on about war in general and danger in general so furiously and continuously that the real international conflict was lost sight of, hardly reaching the consciousness of the masses. Just so in the current policy of the Comintern, the small fish of bureaucratic schematism consume the whale of living reality.

In connection with the question of the struggle against the war danger it is necessary to review the strategy of the "second period": the importance of a common struggle against the war danger was one of the main reasons advanced for the bloc with the British General Council. At the July 1927 plenum of the Central Committee Stalin swore that a bloc with the General Council was fully justified by the fact that the British trade unions were helping us conduct a struggle against British imperialism, and therefore a demand to break with the strikebreakers could come only from those people who
did not have the defense of the Soviet Union at heart. So it was not only the leftward swing of the British workers but also the war danger in 1926-27 that became the main arguments in favor of a bloc with the reformists. Now it appears that both the radicalization of the masses and the approaching war danger are reasons for a rejection of any alliances with them. All the questions are posed so as to confuse the vanguard workers as much as possible.

There is no doubt that in case of war, or even the serious possibility of war, the reformists will be entirely on the side of the bourgeoisie. An alliance with them for a struggle against war is just as futile as a bloc to carry out the proletarian revolution. Precisely for this reason, Stalin's justification of the Anglo-Russian Committee as an instrument of struggle against imperialism was a criminal deception of the workers.

But history knows not only wars and revolutions but also periods between wars and revolutions, that is, periods when the bourgeoisie makes preparations for war and the proletariat for revolution. This is the period we are living in today. We must win the masses away from the reformists, who, far from declining, have grown in recent years. By this growth, however, they have become dependent on their proletarian base. It is this dependence that the tactic of the united front is directed toward. But this tactic must be carried out, not according to Zinoviev and Brandler, not according to Stalin and Bukharin; in this question we must return to Lenin.

**Three Currents in Communism**

The Left Opposition, which has not subscribed to the ritual of the "third period," will once more be accused of a right deviation by skirmishers like Monmousseau. After the events of the last six years, we can look calmly at this accusation. As early as the Third Congress of the Comintern, many of the gentlemen who later went over to the social democracy or temporarily remained at the Brandler stage accused us along with Lenin of a right deviation. It is sufficient to recall that at the Fifth Congress Louis Sellier was one of the main opponents of "Trotskyism."

It is certain, however, that right-wing elements will actually try to make use of some of our points of criticism. This is absolutely unavoidable. Not all the arguments of the right-wingers are wrong. Quite often they have a basis for their criticism in the goat-leaps of left opportunism. Within these
limits they are inclined to raise Marxist criteria, which they use as a cover to counterpose opportunism to adventurism. It must be added, however, that in the ranks of the Opposition, which correctly calls itself the Left Opposition, there were until recently some of those elements who joined us in 1924 not because we defended an international revolutionary position but because we opposed Zinoviev's adventurism. Many potential opportunists at that time in France adopted the protective coloration of the Russian Opposition. Some of them until very recently even made a show of agreeing with us without any reservations ("sans reserves"). But when the struggle for the views of the Opposition became the issue, an abyss opened between us and these armchair Oppositionists. They deny the existence of a revolutionary situation only because they have no desire for one.

Many good people were sincerely worried by the fact that we persistently drove a wedge between the Left Opposition and the Right. Our classification of the three basic currents in contemporary communism was called arbitrary and inapplicable to France because of the absence of a right wing there. In recent months, however, the international "schema" has been verified in life, in France as elsewhere. The Syndicalist League demonstratively raised the banner of struggle against communism, finding therein common ground with the trade-union opposition of second rank. Simultaneously, the reformist types split from the party. Utilizing the struggle against bureaucratic adventurism, they are attempting to preserve their mandates under the guise of forming a new party. Immediately, because of their actual political kinship, the right trade-union opposition appeared to be connected with the new parliamentary municipal "party." Thus everything gradually falls into place. And in this we think La Verite was of great service.

A straight line is determined by two points. For the determination of a curve, not less than three are necessary. The lines of politics are very complicated and curved. In order to evaluate correctly the different groupings, their activities must be examined during different stages: at the moments of revolutionary upsurge and at the moments of revolutionary ebb. To draw a correct revolutionary orbit of the Communist Left Opposition is possible only if we put down on paper a number of critical turning points: the German events in 1923; the question of stabilization in 1924; the policy toward industrialization and the kulak in the USSR in 1923-28; the
question of the Kuomintang and the Anglo-Russian Com-
mittee; the Canton uprising;\(^7\)\(^9\) the evaluation of the theory
and practice of the "third period," etc. Each of these questions
includes a whole series of tactical tasks. Out of this whole
complex of ideas and slogans the apparatus marauders tear
isolated phrases and with them construct the idea of a rap-
prochement between the Left and the Right. Marxists view the
problem as a whole, carrying out their basic strategy con-
sistently despite changes in circumstances. This method does
not give instantaneous results, but it is the only reliable meth-
od. Let the spoilers despoil. We will prepare for tomorrow.
A NECESSARY SUPPLEMENT

January 9, 1930

L’Humanite of January 7 published statistics of strikes in France from 1919 to 1928, based on official data more recent than we had. We reproduce the table in full:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Strikes</th>
<th>Number on Strike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>1,211,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1,911</td>
<td>1,462,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>451,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>300,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>365,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>1,083</td>
<td>274,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>249,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>349,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>120,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>943</td>
<td>222,606</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table introduces some changes into our study of the strikes of the last three years. But it is not difficult to show that these changes don't weaken but strengthen our conclusions. The year 1927 is the lowest point for the whole decade in the strike movement in France. In 1928 there is a certain rise. From the data in the Communist press we had estimated the approximate number on strike in 1928 to be between 400 and 450 thousand. For 1929, l’Humanite gives a figure of half a million on strike, a figure not justified by its own data, and from that it draws the conclusion of a rapid growth in strikes for 1929 compared with the preceding year. That doesn't prevent the paper saying that the official figures for 1928 are an underestimate. So from the same figures, two diametrically opposite conclusions are drawn. Meantime, if we take l’Humanite’s own figures for the last two years, we
find not a rise but rather a certain decline in the strike movement for 1929. This unexpected result is to be explained apparently by the simple fact that _l'Humanite_ 's exaggerations for 1928 were more generous than for 1929. We don't have the government's or worldwide figures for 1929. Therefore, the conclusion that the number on strike in the year that has passed has doubled in comparison with the preceding year is reached on the inadmissible comparison of the figures overestimated by _l'Humanite_ with the figures underestimated by the government.

From the official table given above, it clearly emerges that 1928, which has been proclaimed the first year of the revolutionary upsurge, has had — 1927 apart — the lowest number on strike in the decade. Yet the diagnosis of the "third period" which had put France in what was claimed to be the "leading position in the revolutionary upsurge" was based, above all if not exclusively, on the facts of the strike movement.

The conclusion remains the same: with such weapons and with such a way of going about things, one marches only to meet defeats!
"TO PATIENTLY EXPLAIN"\textsuperscript{81}

January 10, 1930

Dear Comrades,

You ask for advice on what line of conduct revolutionary elements in the Austrian social democracy should follow. Unfortunately, I know too little about the composition, aims, and methods of your group to do this (having only the first issue of your paper Revolutionäerer Sozialdemokrat, Comrade Frey's\textsuperscript{82} letter, and your letter to judge by). Therefore, instead of giving tactical "advice" in the strict sense, I feel obliged to dwell on several questions of principle; for without a preliminary clarification of these, an exchange of opinions on practical matters would prove to be built on sand.

The phrase I used to characterize the basic tasks of Austrian communists, "to patiently explain," seems dubious to you. You say that some two years ago it might have been appropriate to patiently explain but that in view of the tempestuous way events are now developing, there is no time for that. "Now it is too late," you repeat further on.

I see a certain misunderstanding here. In my short work on the Austrian crisis\textsuperscript{83} I deliberately noted in parentheses that the formula "to patiently explain" was introduced by Lenin in April 1917. Six months after that we held power. This means that patient explaining by the revolutionary party has nothing in common with delaying tactics, gradualism, or sectarian aloofness. To "patiently explain" does not by any means imply explaining things in a desultory fashion, lazily, one tablespoonful a day. By this formula in April 1917 Lenin was saying to his own party: "Understand that you are a small minority and acknowledge it openly; don't set yourself tasks you don't have the strength for, such as the immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government; don't be afraid to place
yourself in opposition to the defensists, whom the overwhelming majority of the masses are following today; try to understand the psychology of the honest defensists—the worker and peasant—and patiently explain to them how to break out of the war." Lenin's advice meant, in other words, "Don't think that there are any fancy recipes or gimmicks by which you can suddenly grow stronger without having won over the consciousness of the masses; devote all your time, all your revolutionary impatience, to 'patiently explaining.'" Such is the true meaning of Lenin's words.

One must not of course go to the opposite extreme and interpret my words to mean that I basically assume the Austrian communists will come to power in seven months. That is, to say the least, not very likely. But if one assumes that events really will develop at a tempestuous speed in the coming period (which cannot be excluded), this only means that the gains to be made from "patient explaining" will rapidly become greater.

Therefore the phrase "now it is too late" seems to me a total misunderstanding. What other methods can there be for proletarian revolutionaries? Sheer political impatience, which wishes to reap before it has sown, leads either to opportunism or adventurism or to a combination of both. In the past five or six years we have seen, in every country, dozens of examples of both opportunist and adventurist attempts to artificially strengthen the proletariat's position without the conscious participation of the proletariat itself. All these attempts have ended in failure and only weakened the revolutionary wing.

You write that the social democratic masses in Austria are in a revolutionary mood but that their readiness for revolution is paralyzed by the powerful apparatus of the Austrian social democracy. The masses, you say, lack "only (nur) the appropriate leadership." "Only"! But this tiny word "only" encompasses nothing less than the entire activity of the revolutionary party, from the first propaganda efforts to the seizure of power. Without winning the confidence of the masses in the experience of struggle there can be no revolutionary leadership. In some periods it takes decades to win this confidence. In revolutionary periods, months can produce more (with correct policies) than years of peaceful events. But the party can never leap over this basic task. It confronts the proletarian revolutionaries of Austria in its entirety. The phrase "to patiently explain" refers above all to this task: "Win the
confidence of the workers!" And it warns against bureaucratic self-deception, which of necessity leads to adventurism, and against masquerading methods, against behind-the-scenes machinations, whose aim is to cheat history and force one's will upon the class.

You may say that all this is correct in principle for communists but does not contain any pertinent instructions for "revolutionary social democrats."

I will not now dwell on the fact that in our epoch the concept "revolutionary social democrat" is self-contradictory. If this does not mean communist, then apparently it means leftward-moving centrist. Neither the social base nor the political contours of your group is clear to me from your letter or from your newspaper.

In contrast to what the social democracy says about you, your paper declares that your Provisional Committee is far removed from the communists (see the article on Leuthner 84 in number 1). In that case, what are your differences with the communists? There is no indication of any. Do you have differences of principle separating you from communism, or is it only the mistakes of official communism? In my opinion the theoretically bankrupt and politically sterile formula of social fascism 85 represents one of the main obstacles to the task of "patiently explaining." Does your group agree with that formula or not? A clear answer to this question is absolutely necessary: one's entire perspective and all of one's tactics are shaped, especially in Austria, by how one answers. But while declaring that you are far removed from the communists, you nevertheless do not divest yourselves of responsibility for the political formula that has paralyzed official Austrian communism.

In another article in the same issue you say that the basic democratic orientation of Austro-Marxism 86 is wrong and that this is the root of all evil. Far be it from me to deny this. But surely the treachery of the social democracy in the given situation consisted in the fact that it refused to fight for democracy and surrendered democracy to fascism by purely parliamentary methods. It is precisely along this line, as I see it, that the anger of the social democratic workers is now likely to be expressed. And all the while, your paper answers this feeling of indignation with general formulas about the bankruptcy of democracy in general.

In your paper there is no clarity of principles. But it is well known that such clarity is a great advantage in politics. On
the other hand, I do not see the paper's half-heartedness as a reflection of the indecisiveness of opposition-minded social democratic masses. An oppositional social democratic organ that truly expressed the mood of honest worker social democrats, infuriated at their leaders, would have enormous symptomatic importance (which of course would not mean for us that a relentless struggle against its indecisiveness would be excluded; on the contrary it would presuppose that). Unfortunately the first issue of your paper does not have such symptomatic qualities. Its indecisiveness and ambiguity have the characteristics of a clique.

Added to this is the fact that in the newspaper itself I only encountered one name, that of Dr. Reich, who is unknown to me, I am sorry to say. The Provisional Committee acts anonymously. If this is done on account of the police, it can't be helped. Nevertheless one must clearly recognize how much the anonymity of a new group can hinder it in its struggle for the confidence of the masses.

You express apprehension that the Austro-Marxist bureaucracy might deliberately flood your Provisional Committee with its agents. Yes, provocation is inseparably linked with bureaucracy. One can combat it only, however, by forging closer ties with the ranks. If your group represents a tendency in the ranks of the social democratic workers, it is through their intervention that you will drive out the leaders, not through chasing after ambiguous bureaucrats. The workers know very well who in their ranks believes blindly in the leaders, who criticizes them, and who is angry at them. Selection from below in such cases is a thousand times more reliable than selection from above. But for that, of course, one must enjoy support from below. Do you?

Naturally I do not entertain the slightest suspicion that there is simply camouflage involved here, i.e., an attempt by communists to appear as "revolutionary social democrats" and thus artificially create an independent social democratic party as a bridge to communism. Methods of masquerade never led to any good results in revolutionary proletarian politics. Recent years have provided ample illustration of that.

Comradely greetings,
L. Trotsky
FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

January 20, 1930

This issue comes out as a special number devoted almost entirely to a work by L.D. Trotsky on what is called the "third period" and the tactics of the Comintern. The work published here considers the problem almost exclusively in relation to present-day conditions in France. The author proposes to give in the near future an analysis of the situation in Germany from the point of view of the theory and practice of the "third period." However, the basic conclusions the author reaches in the example of France have, as the reader sees, not a national but an international character.

The problems of the Comintern receive no light whatsoever from the pages of the party press at the moment. There is much cause to think that in the USSR today the Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) also has been fairly seriously disoriented by the completely false official news which serves a definite bureaucratic purpose. All the more do we consider it necessary then to devote this number to an analysis of the present course of the Comintern in the light of facts and figures.

The next number, which in view of the abundant material we will try to put on sale in the next two weeks, will be devoted mainly to problems of the USSR and the Communist Party.

Once more we remind our friends of the need for very correct and energetic work for the comprehensive maintenance of the Biulleten.
A NEW STEP FORWARD

January 21, 1930

La Verite has enlarged its format. The "cell" at Prinkipo hailed this expansion. At the same time, La Lutte was converted into a monthly theoretical journal. Complementing one another, both publications serve one and the same end. This is a serious step forward!

In France right now there is an abundance of quasi-communist and ex-communist publications. One of them was frank enough to remove the label "communist" from its name. We can only welcome this. Labels must correspond to content not only in a pharmacy but also in organizations. There is absolutely no reason to refer to those who retreat to passive trade unionism in the spirit of Loriot as communists. It is true that R.P. calls its syndicalism "revolutionary." But it is well enough known that the word "revolutionary"—without basic principles, without a program—is easy to come by, especially in France.

Le Cri du peuple falls into a second category. If we needed a mirror that would reflect all the theoretical and political confusion produced by a regime of epigones, this organ of the syndicalist opposition would be it. This publication has the significance of a passing phase. Not one of its participants will remain at this stage for long. Some of them will return to a revolutionary course; then we will see them again. Others will go all the way to "pure" syndicalism, i.e., to bourgeois trade unionism.

It is hardly worth mentioning the name of yet another almost-"communist" and almost-"Oppositionist" organ which expresses nothing and serves no one—except certain individuals with pretensions that are also based on nothing.
Even before La Verite appeared there was no shortage of prophets who forecast its demise. Some masterminds, trying to make something "profound" out of their own acts of desertion, declared that generally speaking the conditions for a communist party do not exist at the present time. Nevertheless, La Verite is not only growing and gaining strength, but it has also acquired such a valuable ally in the struggle as La Lutte de classes. La Verite itself is acquiring a clearer and more distinct appearance. One cannot but agree with our Chinese Comrade N.93 who wrote not long ago from Shanghai that the Paris La Verite and the New York Militant are the best publications of the International Left Opposition at the present time.

Loriot, in whom, alas, there remains nothing that is either revolutionary or Marxist, believes that communism has no future at all. The proof? The Opposition has made no progress in France in the last five years. Such is the philosophy of history of a man who has lost his grip!

More than once the proletarian vanguard, and Marxism along with it, has gone through periods of marked decline. To many Loriots of the period 1907-10 it seemed that Bolshevism was doomed to failure. The last half decade has been a time of atrocious mistakes by the Comintern and defeats for the international revolution. The results affected the left wing most severely.

We are weak today, yes; but why? Because the German proletariat suffered a terrible defeat in 1923; because the adventures in Bulgaria and Estonia ended in defeat; because in 1926 the British trade unionists, Stalin's allies, wrecked a mighty revolutionary movement of the masses; because that same year in Poland the Communist Party played a deplorable role;94 because in 1927 Chiang Kai-shek, with the help of Stalin and Bukharin, crushed the Chinese revolution; because in a number of other countries the proletariat suffered defeats, less dramatic but no less profound; and because in the USSR the bureaucracy has stifled the party. That is why the left wing is weak today! But no matter how large the events just enumerated may loom now, they have a transitory character. We must have the politics of the long view.

There has been, however, a more specific but very important reason for the weakness of the Opposition. In a number of countries, and most of all in France, side by side with the genuine revolutionaries, accidental elements have joined the party, i.e., those who are tired and disillusioned, or still worse,
pretentious armchair communists who are unfit for any kind of serious revolutionary struggle and who by their entire conduct can only compromise the banner of the Opposition in the eyes of the workers.

The Russian Opposition has been represented abroad most often by these haphazard elements who not infrequently concluded haphazard alliances, supported haphazard publications, and helped to create haphazard reputations. All this gave rise to a state of confusion, which the workers had no opportunity to analyze. The individual concoctions of one or another malcontent who had joined the Opposition out of chance motives have been published by the official Stalinist party press as if they were the views of the Opposition as a whole. The official press thus consciously sustains and fosters ideological chaos, which is the only way the present bureaucracy can hold on.

*La Verite* has introduced, or to put it more modestly, has begun to introduce, order into this chaos. During the short period of this publication's existence, it has been fully confirmed that the *Verite* grouping is not accidental, that it is now the basic nucleus of the Communist Left in France, and that the consolidation of the vanguard communist elements will take place around this grouping.

After the strenuous efforts of the first period, the gathering of forces will be accomplished ever more quickly. The revolutionary workers, searching for the correct revolutionary leadership, must be convinced through their own experience that—contrary to the lies and slanders of the Stalinists—the Opposition will not pull them back to syndicalism or to the right toward reformism, and that it in no way seeks to begin history from the beginning, i.e., to build a new party in a new place as if the war, the October Revolution, and the rise of the Third International had never happened.

Not only within the party, with all its numerical weakness, but also around the party, among its sympathizers, and among the million or so who vote for the party, there are thousands and tens of thousands of workers who have learned a great deal, who have serious experience behind them, and who are deeply troubled by the disastrous policies of the Comintern leadership. They lack only the theoretical illumination of their experience to be convinced that they hold the same views as the Opposition. *La Verite* hand in hand with *La Lutte de classes* will bring political clarity into their midst.
LESSONS OF THE CAPITULATIONS

(Obituary Reflections)

Published February 1930

There have been many conjectures about the capitulation of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. Is it a shrewd maneuver on the part of the Right, or does it mean a renewal of the right-center bloc? These guesses in themselves are without much content. Maybe the troika of the Right secretly dreams about the approach of favorable conditions when it will once more raise its head; maybe, in view of the alarming economic symptoms, it is sorry for having recanted too hastily. It is quite possible, however, that the Stalinists consider it useful to keep the Right on hand, in case of a new turn. But these considerations are of no significance. What is important politically is that at the peak of the "ultraleft" course the bloc between the centrists and the Right was renewed, while repression against the Left was not relaxed, but intensified. Rykov, despite everything, is still the president of the Council of People's Commissars, but Rakovskiy cures his ailing heart in below-freezing weather at Barnaul. Tomsky and Rykov are on the Politburo, Bukharin is on the Central Committee, but Sosnovsky, B. Mdivani, Kavtaradze are in jail; Uglanov is the commissar of labor, but Blumkin is shot—yes, Blumkin is shot! These are the politically decisive facts in appraising the course of the Left as a whole.

However, the capitulation of all of the leaders of the Right after the capitulation of some of the Left is a fact of no little importance in itself. The significance of these ritualist capitulations for the fate of the party will become clear if we look at them not from the viewpoint of subjective intrigues but of objective symptoms. One lesson, one conclusion, emerges above all others from the twists and turns of the last six years: the relentless, systematic, continuous stifling of the party.
The party represents ideological selection. It remains a party only as long as the voluntary tie of ideas is its basis. But what meaning can ideas and principles have if the leaders of the party alternately repudiate themselves, and the impersonal apparatus, devoid of ideas, not only asserts its infallibility now and forever, but even declares openly to the party: "You can remove us only through civil war!" (Stalin in 1927).

We recall once again: Zinoviev is the formal "leader" of the Communist Party and the Comintern, 1923-25; in the Opposition 1926-27, repents his incorrect struggle against Trotskyism; in 1928-29, renounces the Opposition and once more declares war against "counterrevolutionary" Trotskyism. Bukharin in 1922 is a "Trotskyist"; works hand in hand with Zinoviev, 1923-26; in 1926-28, becomes the theoretical leader of the Communist Party and the Comintern, the inspirer of the right-center course; in 1928-29 is the theoretician of the Right Opposition; in 1929 confesses his errors and repudiates the very views that inspired him during the whole period of struggle against "Trotskyism."

If we look at Stalin from the point of view of his ideas, we see that in different periods he picked up the ideas of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin, and at present he picks up fragments of the Opposition's ideas, not having any of his own. But just as "truth is the result of a court verdict" (Saltykov-Shchedrin), a reputation is the result of the apparatus manipulations — only for a certain time.

The automatism of party life has reached its limits. The apparatus does not demand affirmation of any kind of principles; it demands only affirmation of its infallibility. The extortion of penitent documents is not aimed at developing the party's consciousness of a particular set of ideas (what kind of ideas would they be?). The purpose of the extortion is to impress upon the party that any kind of counter-action or resistance, any kind of complaint, even a whisper against the apparatus, even a note in a diary (Kamenev!), brings only repression or compulsion to renounce one's ideas. "Self-criticism" serves the same purpose in another way, for it means that party members are obliged to criticize the same things that the apparatus "criticizes."

The party represents ideological selection. It is the revolutionary tempering of character. The party is the armor of the class with its staunchest, most hardened, and most steadfast elements. The cohesion of these elements is achieved gradually, under the ceaseless test of events. The living tissue of the party
is therefore very complex and delicate. The party can no more be held under a press than can a human hand: the circulation of blood is cut off and the tissue dies.

The process by which the party's tissues are dying is engendered, in our view, by the increasing physical pressure from the party's bureaucracy. The capitulations of all the "leaders" of the party in turn, by groups and one at a time, before an apparatus that is totally devoid of principles and ideals, indicate the absolutely unprecedented strength of the pressure, as does its present stage of development during which the circulation of ideas in the party is virtually ceasing.

The circumstances around the confessions of the right-wing elements are particularly striking because of the apparatus's transparent cynicism.

Unexpectedly and without warning the world learns that three of the most eminent leaders of the party and the Soviet republic—the leader of the Comintern, the head of the government, and the leader of the trade unions—have been sharply opposed to the Central Committee for nearly two years, and that they consider the official policy detrimental. How can it be that this did not come to the surface? The fate of the revolution was concerned! Where were the disputed questions discussed and decided?

The minutes of the Central Committee are printed for the information of the party. But it so happens that the apparatus leads a double life. Questions are decided behind the scenes, while on the official scene pretended argument and voting are conducted according to a previously arranged procedure. This is what the party is fed. And moreover, during the sharp opposition of the three members of the Politburo, it was officially declared, and primarily by the general secretary, Stalin, that the rumors and talk about disagreements in the Central Committee and about a Right deviation in the Politburo were nothing but vile "Trotskyist" calumnies. Afterward, in a belated fashion, it is ascertained that under "calumny" one must understand that accurate and exceptionally important facts were hidden from the party.

The open campaign against Bukharin started about a month or two before his capitulation. But the name of Rykov, as one of the leaders of the Right deviation, was mentioned aloud only on the eve of the November [1929] plenum of the Central Committee. With particular mercilessness, however, *Pravda* started to campaign against Rykov only after his capitulation, insinuating that the confession of the Right leaders was
"insincere." In other words, the central organ of the party considers it quite possible that a person placed by the party in the most responsible position in the government is capable of deceiving the party and the masses in questions involving the fate of the party and the country. The insinuation is made in such a tone as if this were quite a simple and ordinary occurrence. Nonetheless, it is a question of political deceit, cynical unprincipledness, and betrayal of ideas on the part of Central Committee members who even today, as these lines are written, stand at the head of the Soviet government or are on the staff of its most important institutions.

Only at the conclusion, in passing, the party learns that for a year and a half the head of the government and the head of the trade unions "have been playing with the fate of the party and the revolution" (literally) and "gambled on a catastrophe" (literally!)—all this somewhere in the bureaucratic underground. The help of the party, it seems, was not required to expose their criminal "game." How else could the press be silent? But the press was silent. The party was lulled and deceived. The Right deviation appeared to be personified in the figure of—Frumkin.97 Publicly, Rykov and Stalin both fought against Frumkin and Shatunsky, and this hypocritical show was called the struggle against the Right deviation. Whether Frumkin fought against himself, we do not know. At one time we even thought that, according to a decision of the Central Control Commission, Frumkin was sentenced beyond redemption, so that there could always be a ready object on hand for the needs of a struggle against the Right deviation. But this hypothesis was not verified.

Only after Rykov had gone through the ritual of capitulation—which made it appear that any further struggle was unnecessary—only from that moment were Rykov and with him the rest of the troika subjected to particularly unrestrained public abuse, before the party, the country, and the world. The party was not needed for the struggle against the "conspiracy" of Rykov, Bukharin, and Tomsky. The party was assured that there was no struggle. But after the behind-the-scenes victory over the right-wing elements, the party was shown three political scalps: Look at them; this is how the general secretary deals with and will continue to deal with all those who stand in his way.

The methods for dealing with the right-wing leaders represent a new stage in the process of the Bonapartist degeneration of the party regime: on stage they indulge in militant
Lessons of the Capitulations

exercises against Frumkin, and afterward unexpectedly they show the party Rykov's scalp. The automatism of the struggle and the contempt for the party have been expressed here in ways we have never before known.

The picture of the party regime becomes clearer in view of the circumstances that Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin capitulated a day after the Radeks and Smirnovs98 thought it necessary to capitulate "in the interests of a struggle against the Right." While returning to Moscow from exile, Radek wailed all along the way that two parts of the Central Committee would soon be arresting each other and that it was, therefore, necessary to rush to the aid of the center, that is, Stalin, in the struggle against the Right, that is, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. As soon as Radek had finished writing the third or fourth clause of repentance, the stern leaders of the right wing of the Central Committee hastily declared that they, too, burn with the desire to help the center in the struggle against all deviations, particularly against the Right. Thus the encirclement of Frumkin was 100 percent guaranteed. By the time Smirnov and Boguslavsky99 arrived, all the places in the hunting party had been filled. But then—as luck would have it—Frumkin himself confessed. The right wing finally became a transcendental phenomenon.

Despite the tragedy of the whole situation, it cannot be denied that the Left capitulators introduce an element of buffoonery. Rushing to join the apparatus in a struggle against the Right danger, the capitulators of the Left conduct a struggle exclusively on the left, that is, against—Trotskyism. And it is for this reason that Yaroslavsky called them "the best elements" of the Opposition. Yaroslavsky should know who are better, who worse!

Clearly Zinoviev had to take advantage of this explosion in the bureaucratic tangle in order to remind everyone that he, thank God, is alive and, as a capitulator of the first rank, so to speak, an aristocrat in the family of deserters, should have all the privileges in the struggle against deviations and, above all, it is understood, against "counterrevolutionary Trotskyism."

Strictly speaking, the need for a new confession from Zinoviev, and one so ardent ("I have finally merged with the party"), can appear incomprehensible at first glance; it would seem that the fellow, having already recanted once, could let others have a turn. But in reality it is not so. The first confession lacked the necessary enthusiasm. The lack of this elusive senti-
ment became obvious to Yaroslavsky when the Opposition published the minutes of the negotiations for a struggle against Stalin, carried on between Kamenev and Bukharin, with Sokolnikov as intermediary. Kamenev kept these minutes for the sake of Zinoviev, who remained at Kaluga for a time after his first recantation. At any rate, while carrying on negotiations with Bukharin, Kamenev and Zinoviev—during meetings with Oppositionists—would sigh deeply about the split in the Opposition, complain of the sharp attacks by Trotsky, and express the hope for common work in the future. When all this happened to be revealed, these elders of the capitulationist clan became gloomily withdrawn. Kamenev declared that he would write a book about Lenin, for he saw that he could not bake a cake with Stalin. Then the moment the general secretariat showed the scalp of the penitent Rykov to the party, Zinoviev very opportunely thought of his own scalp and recanted for a second time, this time with such overwhelming enthusiasm that it should have touched even the tempered heart of Molotov himself.

But in vain. In Stalin's report to the conference of Marxist agronomists, the "Trotsky-Zinoviev" and even "Zinoviev-Trotsky" Opposition figured more than once. A careful reader could not fail to notice this. The fact is that within the bureaucracy the Opposition was always called "Trotskyist," so as to underline Zinoviev's lack of independent ideas. Why now, after Zinoviev's successive capitulations, when he has succeeded in "finally merging with the party"—why and for what purpose is the point about Zinoviev and the Opposition now raised? Accidentally? Oh, no, there may be accidents in the five-year plan, but not in the apparatus maneuvers. The design became clearer yet in the utterances of the obliging Kaganovich. The latter, in one of his recent ceremonial speeches, spoke about the Zinoviev-Kamenev Opposition as if we were living in 1926. The general political sense of this reference to the long-silenced struggle was clear, even without special comment. The Stalinist apparatus "hinted" to Zinoviev and Kamenev: do not think, please, that we will let you raise your heads. The leaders of the apparatus "hinted" to their underlings: under no circumstances must you let these equivocal repenters raise their heads! No more, no less.

The equilibrium of the leadership—of the current personal apparatus—rests on an artificial and extremely strained system of theoretical fiction, historical legend, and real violence against the party. This system demands a further tightening of the
screws, and in no way can the screws be loosened. For this system even Zinoviev is dangerous. Every one of his inflated articles in Pravda puts the international upstart Molotov alarmingly on guard.

Now we learn the reason that prompted the apparatus marshals to remind Zinoviev and Kamenev that they must forever give up their "senseless dreams." It seems that Zinoviev tried to imply, during his oral confession, that the Opposition was not wrong in everything, as the struggle of the Right proves. And Kamenev admitted (in the diary) that Trotsky was right when he warned him and Zinoviev that capitulation is the road, not to the party, but to political death. Kamenev always showed more inclination and ability to draw conclusions than Zinoviev. But as Lenin said in his testament, "it is no accident" that Kamenev was an ally of Zinoviev. "It is no accident" that he went with him through all the stages of degradation of ideas in order to reach the simple conclusion that had been pointed out to him: such a road leads only to political death. And so both had to recant anew, this time with enthusiasm, which, by the way, did not protect them from the public slap in the face by Kaganovich—the Amsterdamer.*

More than once we have had occasion to explain that the party regime does not take shape independently, but is a function of policy, which in its turn carries through the interests and reflects the pressures of classes. The bureaucratization of the Communist Party, beginning in 1922, has paralleled the growth of the economic strength and political influence

*It is understood that Kaganovich in his time went through the whole policy of Stalin to the right. In 1926 the Stalinists condemned the Profintern to liquidation, through unification with the Amsterdam International. Every reference to the Profintern was eliminated from the constitution of the Soviet trade unions. Becoming frightened of the Opposition, Stalin retreated at the very last moment. Kaganovich succeeded, however, in reading a report in Kharkov, in which he defended the entry into Amsterdam with arguments that would do honor to any social democrat. But no sooner did the book with the speeches see the light of day than retreat was sounded from Moscow. Kaganovich then declared in the press that—the stenographer misunderstood him and that he did not have any intention of entering Amsterdam, but burdened with work he had no chance to edit his speech. Since then Kaganovich got the additional name: the Amsterdamer.
of the petty bourgeoisie, basing itself on NEP, and the stabilization of the bourgeois regimes in Europe and the whole world, resulting from the successive defeats of the proletariat. But the party regime is not merely a passive reflection of these deep-going processes. The party is a living force of history, particularly the ruling party in a revolutionary dictatorship. Bureaucratism is not without a material base. Its vehicle is the large solidified bureaucracy with a whole world of self-serving interests. In this way, like any other secondary and superstructural factor, the party regime—in certain very broad limits—acquires an independent role. Moreover, it is becoming the focal point where all the deviations, errors, dangers, contradictions, and blunders are concentrated. At the present time it is that link in the common chain which alone allows access to the other links. It might be even more accurate to say that the party regime has become the Gordian knot which the party must untangle in whatever way it can so as not to give Bonapartism a chance to cut the knot with a sword.
Esteemed Comrades:

From the circular letter issued by the Leninbund leadership on January 29, 1930, it is clear that the Leninbund conference scheduled for February 23 has as its aim to sanction the split, by the expulsion of the Marxist Opposition. The leadership of the Leninbund itself has defined the purpose of the conference in this way.

I leave completely aside personal and organizational recriminations and charges. Naturally, they have a certain importance in the life of an organization but the question of unity or split is not decided by them but by principled differences, theoretical and political. The unity of an organization does not remain inviolate always and under all circumstances. In cases where differences have become very deep-going, a split may prove to be the only way out of the situation. But care must be taken that this be an honest split, that is, that the split occur along the line of actual principled differences, and that this line be clear to all the members of the organization.

From this point of view, I am compelled to say that the circular letters of the Leninbund leadership dated January 20 and January 29 not only prepare for a split, but do so in a most dangerous and pernicious manner, by placing in the forefront various squabbles and distorting the principled differences by means of false information. I shall try to prove this.

Has the Urbahns Faction Any Cothinkers?

The basic difference occurs over the class character of the Soviet Union. This question is not national but international. No revolutionary organization exists or can exist without arriving at a decision on this question and without drawing all the necessary "internal" conclusions from it. It is impossible
to have a correct national policy without solving this international question.

The Leninbund leadership asserts in its circular letter that Urbahns's standpoint on the "class character of Soviet Russia" is supposedly shared by the following organizations: "the majority of the Belgian Opposition, the Treint group and the Contre le Courant group in France, the Czech group, and a large section of the American group."

This false assertion is calculated to take advantage of the lack of information among the Leninbund membership and is designed to grossly mislead them. Every local body of the Leninbund can verify this point by merely writing to all the above-named groups.

The leadership of the Belgian Opposition has published several erroneous articles on the question of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad. But it has emphatically differentiated itself from the Leninbund leadership on the question of the class character of the Soviet Union. This justifies us in regarding the mistake of the Brussels comrades as partial and episodic. Such mistakes are unavoidable in practice. To split over partial mistakes would be criminal. A split becomes unavoidable when partial deviations take shape as a false principled position. On the question of the class character of the Soviet Union there exists an irreconcilable difference between the Leninbund leadership and the leadership of the Belgian Opposition. Communicate with Brussels, comrades, and verify it for yourselves!

Two small French groups—Treint and Contre le Courant—have hitherto held, at least formally, the viewpoint of the Russian Opposition on the fundamental questions. I am unacquainted with a single document in which they solidarize themselves with Urbahns on the question of the class character of the Soviet Union. Have they perhaps changed their views recently? I do not know. In any case you would render a great service not only to yourselves but also to the Treint and Paz groups by requesting their views on the class character of the Soviet Union as of February 1930.

The designation "Czech group" in the circular apparently refers to a small group of Prague students who, so far as I know, have no connection whatsoever with the working-class movement. This group issues no publication. Judging from its physiognomy I would grant that this group does actually share the point of view of Urbahns.

But the assertion in the circular concerning the American Opposition is a sheer invention. As is clear from its weekly
An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund

The Militant, which is one of the best communist publications, the Communist League of America has nothing in common with the point of view of Urbahns.

Therefore so far as the basic question in the dispute is concerned, the Leninbund leadership, if we leave aside the small group of Prague students, is completely isolated. Nor is this surprising! Developing and deepening his mistake, Urbahns in his latest articles has put forward a new theory of the state which in general has nothing in common with Marxist theory and which differs only verbally from an idealistic and democratic theory of the state.

Do Not Forget the International Opposition!

Both circular letters try to picture the situation inside the Opposition in the following manner: "Those who do not share the opinions of Comrade Trotsky do not belong to the Leninist Opposition." This unworthy subterfuge is employed in order to cover up the isolation of the Leninbund leadership. And, indeed, why does Urbahns speak of "Comrade Trotsky's opinions"? The Russian Opposition has a platform in the elaboration of which hundreds of comrades participated directly and in the struggle for which thousands of comrades were subjected to expulsions, arrests, deportations—and even execution squads. In view of this, to speak of the personal opinions of Comrade Trotsky is to evince a revolting disregard and disrespect toward the struggle of the Russian Opposition.

The Leninbund leadership in addition stubbornly ignores the Verite group in France which publishes a political weekly and a monthly theoretical journal, La Lutte de classes. Only a blind man could fail to understand that this group has become the axis around which the genuine Communist Left Opposition in France is becoming united.

The Communist League of America represents one of the best sections of the Opposition and it is growing. The Leninbund leadership ignores it. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Belgian Opposition as a whole, despite the differences that have arisen in its midst, will not hesitate for a moment in choosing between the International Opposition and the Urbahns group. The Leninbund leadership shuts its eyes to facts and consoles itself and others with vain hopes.

All the three groups of the Austrian Opposition have a sharp negative attitude toward the platform of the Leninbund and especially toward its views on the class character of the Soviet state.
The Czech Left Opposition (Comrade Lenorovich's group), which carries on activity among workers and is about to start issuing a newspaper, shares the viewpoint of the International Opposition on all fundamental questions.

The Chinese Opposition is no less irreconcilably opposed to the views of Urbahns.

Finally, the Leninbund leadership has no grounds whatever for expecting support from the Opposition in Italy, Spain, Hungary, and elsewhere.

This is the actual state of affairs: on the one side there stands the International Opposition and on the other—the purely national group of Urbahns.

If the Leninbund leadership is nevertheless able to lean for support on some foreign groups, it is only—and only up to a certain point—on the groups of Treint and Paz. But have they reached a principled agreement on any single question? Let them tell us openly.

Urbahns is in favor of an independent party. This is his principal idea. Up till now Treint and Paz have been against this. Have they arrived at an agreement? And on precisely what points?

Urbahns's Bloc with Treint and Paz

Urbahns has once again put up his "independent" candidates in the municipal elections against the candidates of the Communist Party. With what results? The Leninbund has been further weakened. This suicidal policy flows from Urbahns's idea of creating a second party. Are Treint and Paz in agreement with him? Let them declare themselves. Or perhaps these internationalists are not concerned with German affairs.

And how do matters stand with the trade-union question? Paz is for the "autonomy" of the trade unions but, in contrast to Monatte, he does not deny the need for a communist party. This is an old Jauresist position—diplomatic and opportunist to the core—a position which Marxists have always attacked and will continue to attack mercilessly. Does Urbahns adhere to the principle of trade-union "autonomy," in this Jauresist sense? Or does Urbahns perhaps think that French affairs are none of his business?

On the other hand, do Treint and Paz associate themselves with the bloc between Urbahns and the Branderites inside the trade unions against the Communist Party? Or do Treint and Paz consider that Hamburg is none of their business?

What is Urbahns's attitude toward the touching romance
between Paz and the national "communists" in Alsace? Or has Urbahns lost interest in Alsace after its cession to France?

But on what point did these three groups nevertheless succeed in arriving at an agreement? They are agreed only on the struggle against the Russian Opposition. They have all condemned Rakovsky’s declaration. They are far too revolutionary for such a "compromise." How could it be otherwise! They recognize the policy of the united front with the social democracy, with the reformist trade unions, with the Brandlerites, with the Alsatian nationalists. But when it comes to the official Communist parties they consider the policy of the united front impermissible. And yet the fact is that if we examine Rakovsky’s declaration not demagogically but politically, we see that it represents nothing else than the application by the Opposition of a united-front policy toward the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Urbahns’s position on this question is explained by his orientation toward a second party. But how are we to explain the position of Treint and Paz? There is no explanation, except muddleheadedness and lack of principles.

In a word, everywhere and throughout, we have only reticences, diplomacy, ambiguities, and equivocations. The new allies do not dare to approach a single question seriously lest they overthrow their fresh alliance, built on sand. This is intellectual adventurism. It has never been successful, and never will be.

**International Unification Is Indispensable**

Several months ago the Leninbund leadership expelled from its ranks Comrades Grylewicz and Joko, who defended the views of the International Opposition. Thereby the Urbahns group had already in essence demonstrated that it refuses to work side by side with the International Opposition. For it is clear that we cannot permit two sets of opinions—one set for our own personal use and the other for public consumption. Such two-facedness has always characterized opportunists, in particular the Brandlerites. Their "internationalism" represents, as everybody knows, an arithmetical sum of national opportunist policies. With this we have nothing in common. Our international orientation and our national policy are indissolubly bound together.

From its very first steps the Opposition must therefore act as an international faction—as did the communists in the days of the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, or in
the days of the First International\textsuperscript{109} or of the Zimmerwald Left at the beginning of the war. In all these cases the groups were for the most part small numerically or it was a matter of isolated individuals; but they nevertheless acted as an international organization. In the epoch of imperialism such a position is a hundred times more imperative than in the days of Marx.

Those who believe that the International Left will someday take shape as a simple sum of national groups, and that therefore the international unification can be postponed indefinitely until the national groups "grow strong," attribute only a secondary importance to the international factor and by this very reason take the path of national opportunism.

It is undeniable that each country has greatest peculiarities of its own; but in our epoch these peculiarities can be assayed and exploited in a revolutionary way only from an internationalist point of view. On the other hand, only an international organization can be the bearer of an international ideology.

Can anyone seriously believe that isolated Oppositional national groups, divided among themselves and left to their own resources, are capable of finding the correct road by themselves? No, this is a certain path to national degeneration, sectarianism, and ruin. The tasks facing the International Opposition are enormously difficult. Only by being indissolubly tied together, only by working out answers jointly to all current problems, only by creating their international platform, only by mutually verifying each one of their steps, that is, only by uniting in a single international body, will the national groups of the Opposition be able to carry out their historic task.

This applies to all groups without exception, and above all to the Russian Opposition. Large circles of the Russian Opposition were scourged last year by an epidemic of capitulations precisely and exclusively because they were cut off from the Opposition in other countries, were unable to follow the life of the Communist International as a whole, were unable to think about its tasks, and for this reason permitted themselves to be easily deceived by the left zigzag of the Stalinists on the internal questions of the USSR.

The Left Opposition has already lost enough time. The disastrous evolution of the Leninbund, the mistakes of some national groups, the inability to make headway, and the stagnation of other national groups are due in a large and, it may
be said, decisive degree to national isolation and to handi-
craft methods of political activity. If the Communist Left Op-
position does not wish to come to an inglorious end, it must
reject all dilatory moods and firmly consolidate its interna-
tional ranks.

**True and False Internationalism**

The Brandlerites boast that they are not in agreement with
a single one of the Russian groups. What does this mean?
A revolutionary organization which is not in agreement with
any of the existing Russian groups is thereby obligated to
create a new Russian group which would carry out a correct
line in the Soviet Union. Otherwise, it would simply have to
proclaim itself "neutral" toward the October Revolution. The
same thing applies to every other country. Communism can
only be international, or it ceases to be communism.

But what is the stand of the Leninbund leadership on this
question? Is it in agreement with any of the Russian factions?
We are not discussing, of course, any mechanical monolith-
ism, but agreement on the fundamental questions. On this
point we have no information whatever. For Urbahns this is
obviously a secondary question, as are all questions relating
to the international movement.

The Urbahns faction, which expels from its own ranks ad-
herents of the International Opposition, is at the same time
ready to ally itself on the international arena with any kind
of "left" groups, on the condition, naturally, that they do not
hinder it from pursuing its own national policy.

Sensing their "national" bankruptcy in their unprincipled
struggle against *La Verite*, the allies of Urbahns—Treint and
Paz—are dreaming about an international association that
would include everybody: those who are for Chiang Kai-shek as
well as those who are for the Soviet republic; those who are
trying to save the "autonomy" of the trade unions from the en-
croachments of communism as well as those who are fight-
ing for the influence of communism on the trade unions; those
who are for the united front with the Rights against the official
party as well as those who demand the united front with the
official party against the Rights. This program of a "Greek
salad" is put forward under the slogan of "party democracy."
Could one conceive of a more malicious mockery of party
democracy?

We must say openly that under the guise of fighting against
the bureaucratism of the Third International attempts are be-
ing made to smuggle in tendencies and practices of the Second International. The bureaucratism of the Third International did not fall from the sky: it has specific class causes. The Comintern is conditioned by the internal class struggle. Theoretically this finds its expression in the contradiction that exists between the theory of socialism in one country and the very bases for the existence of the Comintern.

There are some national communists who imagine that they are left communists and who attribute to the Russian Opposition those traits which characterize ruling centrism—"We want nothing to do with either of them." In other words, they replace the class and ideological criterion with a national criterion. In most cases this serves as a cover for the petty ambitions of a small circle of intellectuals who defend their precious "autonomy" against the dangers that threaten it from the side of—the Russian Opposition. Not infrequently this is coupled with ordinary chauvinist cowardice. In this way the ideas and moods of the Second International are introduced into our ranks. It is clear that nothing remains for us except to wage an irreconcilable struggle against this contraband.

**It Is Necessary to Choose**

We stand not for democracy in general but for centralist democracy. It is precisely for this reason that we place national leadership above local leadership and international leadership above national leadership. The revolutionary party has nothing in common with a discussion club, where everybody comes as to a cafe (this is Souvarine's great idea). The party is an organization for action. The unity of party ideas is assured through democratic channels, but the ideological framework of the party must be rigidly delimited. This holds all the more for a faction. It must not be forgotten here, too, that we are not a party but a faction, that is to say, the closest possible selection and consolidation of cothinkers for the purpose of influencing the party and other organizations of the working class. It would be fantastic and absurd to demand of the Left Opposition that it become a combination of all sorts of national groups and grouplets, who are dissatisfied, offended, and full of protests and who do not know what they want.

No, we represent a definite ideological tendency and we build on the soil of definite principles and traditions. If under these conditions the adherents of the International Opposition cannot find a place in the Leninbund, then thereby the Leninbund
declares that it does not desire a place in the ranks of the International Opposition. We must take this clearly into account.

You see, comrades, that these questions are far more important than the petty squabbles on which Urbahns bases his prosecutor's indictment. The fate of your organization is at stake. Every member of the Leninbund should understand that following the split in the Leninbund it will become completely transformed into an Urbahnsbund, that is, a tiny national sect, without any importance, without a future, without perspectives.

This means that a choice must be made. And for a genuine revolutionist it is not so very difficult to choose!

With communist greetings,
Leon Trotsky
Dear Friend:

You write that it is impossible to change the present hazardous course of the Stalinist leadership by means of criticism and pressure, that it can be changed only to an ultraright course, and that, therefore, it is impossible to polemicize against the present ultraleft course "from the right." If we take this thought to its conclusion, it would mean that the whole of world communism is being changed into a gamble on complete collectivization and the liquidation of the kulaks in the space of two years. Is that conceivable? Can it be accepted? No! I do not know if we are faced with the last or next-to-last gamble of centrism, just as I do not know how many zigzags there will be, how many turns, splits, and upheavals on the road to building socialism (or, in the case of a reversal, to the collapse of the dictatorship). But never, at any stage, directly or indirectly, can we solidarize ourselves with an illusory policy flowing from a false theoretical premise. The gamble on industrialization and complete collectivization flows entirely from the theory of socialism in one country. Naturally, in the event of success, they will have proved it in practice. But, unfortunately, success along this line is totally excluded. Complete collectivization means introducing all the contradictions of the countryside into the collective farms. The "liquidation" of the kulaks still outside the collective farms means camouflaging the kulaks who reappear automatically inside the collectives. Industrialization on the basis of subjective factors ("not to dare to cite objective causes") means preparing a very severe crisis. All this will be revealed long before the end of the five-year plan. How can we not tell the party the truth? "The right wing wants to join us," you say.
Temporarily, some of the right wing might join us. But that danger is absolutely nothing in comparison with the danger of compromising communism completely and definitively on a world scale.

Don't forget there is an International. Mad opportunism now spreads equally along the line, on an international scale: for us it's "complete collectivization"; for Germany they say it's to be "1923" all over again; for the whole world it's the "third period." The fate of communism is being staked on the card of bureaucratic adventurism. Even if I thought that in an isolated USSR no other policy was left but Stalinist adventurism, I would not hide this sad truth, because it is necessary to protect the heritage of Marxist thought and its future. But I think that it is impossible to measure the internal resources of the October Revolution; there is no reason to draw the conclusion that they are exhausted and that we should not try to prevent Stalin from doing what he is doing.

Nobody appointed us inspectors of historical development. We are representatives of a definite current, Bolshevism, and we remain so in the face of all changes and under all conditions. There is no other answer on my part, nor can there be.
The French Left Opposition grouped around *La Verite* has, at the insistence of a number of organizations in other countries, taken the first step toward the international unification of the Communist Left Opposition.

The proposals stated in issue number 24 can be summarized as follows:

*It is necessary to begin seriously preparing for an international conference of the Left Opposition.*

*With that end in view, it is primarily necessary to create an international information bulletin.*

*The editorship of this bulletin must rest in a secretariat especially created for this purpose.*

Such a program may appear too modest and cautious. We can certainly start by creating an international liaison bureau, with which the secretariat that edits the bulletin would be connected. We do not believe this question to be decisive. Of primary importance is—to start.

We can start with the secretariat and the bulletin for the purpose of creating, in accordance with the response from the different national organizations, a regular bureau to prepare for the conference. For this reason we support the proposal of *La Verite*, inasmuch as there can be no difference of opinion on the first step.

The editorial board of the *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, which maintains contact with the comrades in struggle in the USSR, does not doubt for an instant that the more energetic and decisive the initiative of the French comrades is, the warmer the support of the Russian Opposition will be.

Preparation for the conference is not purely an organizational step; it is primarily a political and theoretical task that may require several months.
It is not a question of a mechanical gathering of groups, especially of small divergent groups, but of the unification of the international faction whose essential homogeneity is verified in theory and practice.

*La Verite* is right in stating that the pages of the bulletin must, within the bounds of material and technical possibilities, be open to all groups who adhere to the Communist Left Opposition. The bulletin is an instrument (one of the instruments) for preparing the conference. In its unification, the Opposition must proceed on a democratic course. This means that, with the aid of the bulletin, every Oppositionist must have the opportunity to be informed and to learn about the ideas and activity of all the Left Opposition groups in order to conscientiously and firmly decide whom to support. In other words, the bulletin must serve as an instrument for unification on a clearcut principled basis.

The German experiences of the last year are of exceptional importance to us in determining the course and perspective for the international unification of the Opposition. The policies of the Urbahns faction have led to a split with the comrades who solidarize with the views of the Russian Opposition, *La Verite, The Militant*, etc. This split took place before the eyes of the International Opposition as an outgrowth of an intense ideological struggle which assumed, to a certain extent, an international character. The magnitude of the differences was confirmed by experience, and the two parties have drawn the necessary conclusions. It is clear that an international conference that wishes to minimize similar questions in the name of "unity" will fail from the start.

Marxist policies "in one country" are as impossible as the construction of a socialist society "in one country." Any group that attempts to develop a political line confined to national questions is inevitably doomed to sectarian degeneration. That is why we know that none of the truly revolutionary groups will remain aloof, but will adopt a clearcut position on all the controversial questions and will sustain the initiative of *La Verite* in the preparation of an international conference.

It is extremely desirable that the first issue of the bulletin, whose publication can perhaps be assigned to *La Verite* until the secretariat is formed, appear as soon as possible and that it contain the opinions of all the European Opposition groups, at least on the question of the conference. The replies from America, Asia, etc., can be published in the next issue of the international bulletin. This would be an important beginning.
STALIN HAS FORMED AN ALLIANCE WITH SCHUMANN AND KERENSKY AGAINST LENIN AND TROTSKY

February 9, 1930

In March 1929, the Dresden publisher Schumann came to Constantinople on his own initiative with a proposal to L. D. Trotsky to publish a number of his books. By way of an introduction for his publishing house, Schumann brought his old book about Karl Liebknecht, written in a spirit of honoring a great revolutionary. Before signing the agreement, Trotsky asked his friends in Berlin by telegraph if they had any information against Schumann. By an unfortunate chance, which is not worth talking about here, the reply telegram arrived very late (more than a week). The absence of a telegram was, by agreement, understood to mean the absence of objections. The agreement was signed.

After this, L. D. Trotsky received a report from Berlin that Schumann had some months previously published Kerensky's memoirs, containing blown-up detailed slanders about the Bolsheviks' links with the Hohenzollerns, about Lenin's trips to Berlin during the war for talks with Ludendorff, about how the Bolsheviks received money for corrupting the Russian army, and so forth.

Since Schumann had completely concealed this book from Trotsky during the talks and also concealed from him his brochure in which this book was advertised, with special raptures of the publisher about the "unmasked" Bolsheviks, L.D. Trotsky, in view of the obvious deceit to which the publisher had had recourse during the talks, demanded the dissolution of the contract. Since the publisher did not agree, the matter was taken to court. Authoritative German jurists did not doubt that the court would dissolve the contract in view of the fact that the publisher had deliberately concealed a circumstance
Stalin Has Formed an Alliance

which could not help having for the author, from the whole character of his activity, decisive political and moral significance.

In view of the hopelessness of his position, Schumann began to postpone the hearing by continually bringing up new circumstances. Thus he declared in a document of December 18 to the Berlin court that Trotsky's rejection of the contract was the result of an ultimatum from Moscow, threatening him if he did not comply to stop payment of his fees from the State Publishing House [Gosizdat]. To prove this ridiculous assertion Schumann cited the head of the press department at the Berlin embassy and demanded that he be called as a witness.

L. D. Trotsky answered that he was not receiving any fees from Gosizdat, that Moscow had not and could not have sent him any ultimatum, and that Schumann's assertion to this effect was a pure invention, but that he, Trotsky, nevertheless did not object to the calling of the head of the Berlin press section, even though he had no knowledge of this person or his relation to the affair.

Even then it might have seemed strange that Schumann, who had just published an arch-slanderous book against Lenin, should have been able to cite as a witness against Trotsky an official of the Soviet embassy, who in his job could not but be a member of the Communist Party founded by Lenin. The affair seemed the stranger since the official named was in Berlin, and consequently Schumann or his lawyer could contact him by telephone at any moment. On the other hand, it remained unshakable that the assertion this witness was to be called to prove was 100 percent lies.

The riddle was, however, solved by a fresh document submitted to the Berlin court by the publisher Schumann on February 1.

The publisher states in this new document that he has concluded with the Soviet government in Moscow, in the person of the State Publishing House, an extensive agreement to publish a five-volume collection of Russian state documents. As always in such cases, this is certainly a publication heavily subsidized by the government. With understandable triumph, Schumann declares in his document that the Soviet government, which in his estimation is the "moral and political successor of Lenin" (Schumann's competence in this matter is obvious), does not, in contrast to Trotsky, encounter the least difficulty in collaborating with him, Schumann, publisher of Kerensky's book that characterizes Lenin as a hired agent of Ludendorff.
In Schumann's document of December 18 there was no mention as yet of the agreement with Moscow. There was only the bare mention about the head of the Berlin press section and of some testimony or other which might be obtained from him. It is clear that around that time Schumann was making some kind of link with an official of the Soviet embassy in Berlin, and it is just as clear that the agreement on the five-volume publication was concluded by Schumann after December 18, through the mediation of the Berlin embassy. Indubitable evidence of this is Schumann's first mention of Yakubovich, the secretary of the Russian embassy in Berlin. This point must be especially emphasized. Though on December 18 Schumann was only able barely to mention the press head, without even naming him, on February 1 he could already call as a witness such a responsible diplomatic official as the secretary of the Soviet embassy in Berlin, the communist Yakubovich.

What must the Soviet officials in essence testify to? They must testify in favor of the publisher of Kerensky's book. They must rehabilitate the political honor of Schumann. They must prove to the German court that Schumann is fully worthy of the trust of the people whom Schumann in his turn calls the "moral and political successors of Lenin."

There cannot, of course, be any talk of the state order having been awarded to Schumann by chance. In the past, Schumann never published anything for the Soviet government. If he could have hoped for such an order he would never have published Kerensky's book, still less have decided to approach Trotsky. Only the break between Trotsky and Schumann created the new reason and possibility for Schumann to feel out the ground in the Soviet embassy. On the other hand, only the fact of the lawsuit between Trotsky and Schumann could have interested Moscow in this publication; but Stalin's interest took the form, not of discrediting Schumann, the distributor of a rotten book against Lenin and the Bolsheviks in general, but, on the contrary, in supporting Schumann against Trotsky. This is completely in Stalin's line, corresponding to his physiognomy and his methods, "rude and disloyal," as Lenin characterized them.

It may be asked what political goal apart from personal revenge Stalin is pursuing in this. The goal is completely clear, for it follows from all the circumstances. Schumann has the right to nine books from Trotsky. If he wins the lawsuit, the books will be at Schumann's disposal, and Schumann himself—at the disposal of Stalin.
It is fairly well known what efforts Stalin made not to let Trotsky into Germany. What did he wish to gain by this? He could not but understand that if Trotsky had got the right of political asylum in Germany he could not have taken part in active political work (going to meetings, taking part in organizations, etc.). The only possibility left to Trotsky would be open literary activity. Stalin tried to block or at least encumber this only path by all possible diplomatic means. He considered quite correctly that literary activity by Trotsky from Constantinople would be very much more difficult. Nevertheless, Trotsky's works began to appear in various countries. We have very reliable evidence about the fury produced in Stalin's immediate circle by the appearance of Trotsky's autobiography [My Life] in Germany. At a series of meetings they discussed the most varied means to effect Trotsky's further isolation, and above all to hinder his literary activity. The autobiography appeared in Germany in the middle of November. In December there came the first responses in the press, then questions from Moscow to Berlin, replies from Berlin to Moscow. This period coincides with Schumann's first reconnaissance of the embassy, preparing for his obscure reference to the head of the press section. That the acquaintance grew, and not platonically, is proved, as we already know, by Schumann's receipt of an order for his firm, which, like all state orders of this kind, is of course accompanied by a suitable subsidy. By covering Schumann before the court with the authority of the Soviet state, Stalin hopes to make it easier for him to win the suit, after which the person entitled to dispose of Trotsky's books in Germany will be Stalin — through the mediation of Schumann.

What this means is not hard to understand if we bear in mind that in the Soviet republic all of Trotsky's books without exception are banned from circulation, removed from bookshops and libraries, and almost all destroyed.

How Schumann himself understands a publisher's obligations was shown sufficiently clearly in his letter to L. D. Trotsky on the subject of Kerensky's book. He unceremoniously boasts that as a result of steps taken by him, Kerensky's book has not had and will not have the distribution it might perhaps have been able to expect. Dr. Frankfurter, the legal representative of Trotsky's interests, stigmatized with all possible force Schumann's cynical arbitrariness in respect to an author published by him (even though this author was Kerensky). Schumann can, of course, have no other moral rules in rela-
tion to Trotsky, especially in view of the new and completely specific orientation of Schumann toward Moscow.

The nature of the agreement between Schumann and Trotsky makes all this intrigue very much easier. According to the agreement, Schumann is obliged to commence publication of the succeeding volume only after selling 3,500 of the preceding volume. In complete contradiction to all this, said by Schumann at the time of the conclusion of the contract, he now insists that there is not and cannot be any hope of a wide sale for Trotsky’s books in Germany. He says that these books could scarcely sell more than 3,000 copies. His interest in the books is purely "idealistic" (!!!). The same thought was developed by his lawyer in court. In other words, Schumann is preparing conditions for "idealistic" sabotage of Trotsky’s books. It needs no proof that a publisher can always or almost always hinder the distribution of a book published by him. In this case, Schumann in no way risks suffering loss from such operations. On the contrary, the five-volume edition of documents may, with appropriate maneuvering by Schumann, easily turn into an eight-volume or ten-volume one. Such is the state of affairs now. There is no doubt: Stalin has entered into a bloc with Schumann—against Trotsky and against the historic memory of Lenin.

In the same document of February 1 in which Schumann informs the court of Stalin's so timely order, he introduces into the testimony the fact that Kerensky is fully prepared to appear before the court to prove the correctness of his assertions that Lenin was a hired agent of Ludendorff. Kerensky’s "proof" is analyzed in chapter 25 of Trotsky’s autobiography; it simply blows up after thirteen years what the old czarist counter-espionage circulated through the petty rogue and drunkard, the corporal Yermolenko. There is no need to come back to this stupid tale here. In any case, in the lawsuit now going on, Schumann comes out against Lenin and Trotsky, with Kerensky on his right flank, on the left—Stalin, and, in reserve, the corporal Yermolenko of the czarist intelligence. Such is the political course of the trial.
THE NEW COURSE
IN THE SOVIET ECONOMY

An Adventure in Economics and Its Dangers

February 13, 1930

The success of the industrial development in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is of universal significance. The social democrats, who are not even making an attempt to evaluate the growth rates the Soviet economy has proven capable of achieving, deserve nothing but contempt. These rates are neither stable nor assured. We will discuss that later. But they provide empirical evidence of the infinite potentialities inherent in socialist methods.

If in 1918 the social democracy in Germany had used the power given to it by the revolution to introduce socialism (and it had every opportunity to do so), it would not be difficult to understand, in view of the experience of Soviet Russia, what economic power the socialist masses in Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and considerable portions of Asia would now have. The whole world would be different. But now humanity will pay for the betrayal of the German social democracy by wars and revolutions. Never was there a greater crime in all history. This question, however, is not the subject of our discussion.

A preliminary estimate of the possibilities of socialist industrialization was briefly analyzed by us in the book *Toward Capitalism or Socialism?* in the early part of 1925, before the end of the reconstruction period. We proved that even after all the means of production inherited from the bourgeoisie were exhausted, i.e., after the transition to independent reproduction on a large scale based on socialist accumulation, Soviet industry would be able to provide a growth factor absolutely unattainable by capitalism. While exercising the utmost caution, we projected an annual growth rate of 15-20 percent. Philistines like Stalin and Molotov derided these hypotheti-
cal figures as a fantasy of "superindustrialization." Reality left our calculations far behind. But then there occurred what has often happened before. These empirical philistines, overwhelmed by the first results, decided that from now on everything was possible, everything was realizble. The shortsighted became the visionaries.

In recent months it has finally become clear that the Stalinist faction has transformed its left zigzag into an ultraleft course both in domestic economic problems within the USSR and in Comintern policy.* This course is the negation and adventuristic complement of the opportunistic course that prevailed in 1923 and which was especially pronounced from 1926-28. Today's course is in no way less dangerous, and in certain respects is a more serious danger, than yesterday's.

Ultraleftism in the economic policy of the Soviet Union is now developing along two lines: industrialization and collectivization.

Since the beginning of 1923 the Opposition has demanded a faster rate of industrialization. It based its demands not only upon necessity but upon actual economic possibilities.

The dominant faction (Zinoviev, Stalin, Bukharin, and later Stalin and Bukharin minus Zinoviev) charged that the Opposition, in the name of superindustrialization, sought to "rob the peasants" and thus to break the economic and political link between the city and the countryside.

Experience has shown that the Opposition was right. The opportunistic leadership systematically underestimated the resources of nationalized industry. The actual development of industry, impelled by the market and the pressure of the Opposition, from year to year left the official plans far behind.

The struggle between the central leadership and the Opposition came to a head just at that moment when the correctness of the Opposition's position was being confirmed all along.

*We are establishing to our complete satisfaction that our cothinkers in the USSR in no way let themselves be taken in by Stalin's "ultraleftism," which the right wing, the Mensheviks, and the liberals are passing off as "Trotskyism" put into practice by Stalin. We have managed in recent months to exchange several dozen letters with our friends in different corners of the USSR and have established incontestable agreement in our evaluations of the new course. Excerpts from some of the letters we have received are being printed in the current issue of the Biulleten.
the line. The leadership was compelled within a few months to scrap their old minimum five-year plan, which had been criticized in the [1927] platform of the Opposition, and to replace it with a new and incomparably bolder plan. When the possibility of achieving the projected tempo was demonstrated in the first year, evidently to the surprise of the leadership itself, the latter at once abandoned their petty doubts and rushed to the opposite extreme. Now the slogan is "forward without delay, forward!" The plan is being constantly revised upward.

The opportunists have moved from a passive possibilist position to one of unrestrained subjectivism. A reference by an economist or a worker to actual obstacles—for example, bad equipment, lack of raw material or its poor quality—is considered a betrayal of the revolution. From the top down comes the demand for full speed, action, offensive. Everything else is the voice of evil.

The first quarter of the current fiscal year (October-February), the second year of the five-year plan, despite the tremendous progress—a growth rate approximately 26 percent greater than during the first quarter of the preceding year—fell far short of its mark. For the first time since the epigones took over the leadership, industry has lagged behind the projected plan. The lag was particularly serious in heavy industry. The production-cost system is in trouble. In order to decrease or conceal the arrears, factories are resorting to inferior quality. There has been a menacing rise in the number of defective goods. The Central Committee has responded with the categorical demand not only to fulfill the program but to "surpass" (i.e., to exceed) it.

The objective data is beginning to show ever more convincingly, as could have been foreseen theoretically, that the take-off lacked the forces to sustain it. The industrialization is more and more kept going by administrative whip. Equipment and labor power are being strained. Disproportions in production are accumulating in different fields of industry. Delays in the coming quarters of the year may prove more threatening that in the first. The government, for its part, feels compelled to fill the newly opened industrial gaps by making greater budget or credit allocations. This leads to inflation, which, in its turn, causes an artificial increase in the demand for goods, and consequently makes individual branches of industry go beyond the targets of the plan, adding new disproportions.
The Soviet economy depends upon the world economy. The dependence is expressed through exports and imports. Foreign trade is the biggest bottleneck in the entire Soviet economic system. The difficulties of our world trade are fundamentally the difficulties of our backwardness. At present there is an additional important conjunctural factor. The onset of the world economic crisis already affects Soviet exports through a lessening of demand and a lowering of prices of the exported products. If the world industrial and commercial crisis continues and deepens, the further decline in our even-now insufficient exports will affect imports, i.e., the importing of machinery and of the most important kinds of raw materials basic to industry. This danger does not, of course, stem from the Soviet leadership. But the leadership can and must take it into consideration. Through world trade, the reckless acceleration of industrialization, without coordination between its different branches, runs the obvious risk of becoming entangled in the world crisis: imports of the necessary means of production may be cut off and a new disruptive factor entered as a wedge into the five-year plan.

It is true that the industrial crisis in America and Europe could open up commercial and industrial credit possibilities for the Soviet Union. But this knife has a double edge. When economic development has a correct tempo, foreign credits can ease and speed the progress of industrialization. In the face of the accumulated contradictions, they can only postpone the blowup, making it doubly explosive later.

However, we mention these dangers flowing from the world economy only in passing and hypothetically. The central question today does not lie there, of course. The greatest and most immediate dangers are concentrated around the most important line of Soviet policy: the relation between the city and the countryside.

For several years the Opposition had asked for increased taxation of the rich layer of the peasantry in the interest of industrial development. The official leadership denied that the kulaks were growing rich and accused the Opposition of wanting to "rob the peasant." Meanwhile, the kulaks had developed into a considerable force and, drawing behind them the middle peasants, subjected the cities and industry to a siege of famine. The height of the demonstration of the kulaks' strength coincided with the police dispersal of the Opposition (the beginning of 1928). The bureaucracy had to change its policy abruptly. A crusade was launched against the kulaks.
The measures for the limitation of the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks that the Opposition had proposed the day before were found insufficient as soon as the struggle with the kulaks over grain began.

The kulaks, however, are not separated from the middle peasants by an impenetrable partition. In a commodity market economy the middle peasants automatically give rise to kulaks. The hail of administrative blows, inconsistent and panicky, directed against the kulaks (and not only against them) cut short the further development of the top layer of the middle peasants. So-called disagreements with the peasantry were manifested. The peasantry, after the experience of the revolution, does not easily resort to the method of civil war. It rushes around agitatedly, looking for another way out. Thus "total collectivization" was born.

The Soviet government, in full accord with its main purpose, favors cooperative methods in both trade and production. Up to very recent times, however, production cooperatives in the countryside (collective farms) occupied a very insignificant place in the agricultural economy. Only two years ago, the present commissar of agriculture, Yakovlev, wrote that collective farming, in view of the technical and cultural backwardness of our peasantry and its dispersed character, will remain for a long time "islets in the sea of private peasant farms." Meanwhile, to the total surprise of the leadership, in the most recent period collectivization has taken on grandiose proportions. Suffice it to say that according to the plan, the collectives should have included by the end of the five-year plan around 20 percent of the peasantry. However, collectivization has already at the present time, i.e., at the beginning of the second year, taken in more than 40 percent. If this tempo is maintained, in the coming year or two collective farms will encompass the entire peasantry. This would appear to be a tremendous success. In fact, it is a great danger.

The collectivization of agriculture presupposes a certain technical base. A collective farm is above all large. The rational size for the farm is determined, however, by the character of the means and methods of production being applied. With the aid of peasant plows and peasant nags, even all of them put together, it is not possible to create large agricultural collectives, even as it is not possible to build a ship out of a flock of fishing boats. The collectivization of agriculture can be achieved only through its mechanization. From this it fol-
lows that the general level of industrialization of a country determines the possible speed of the collectivization of its agriculture.

But in reality these two processes have been treated as separate and distinct. In spite of its rapid development, Soviet industry still is and will for a long time remain extremely backward. The high coefficients of its growth must be considered in relation to the general low level. We must not forget for a moment that, even if the projected plan were fully carried out, Soviet industry would be able to supply tractors and other kinds of machinery to only 20-25 percent of the peasant farms. And that only at the end of the five-year period. This is the real scale of the collectivization. As long as the Soviet Union remains isolated, industrialization (i.e., mechanization, electrification, etc.) of agriculture can be seen only as an end goal of a number of consecutive five-year plans. The present leadership itself looked at the matter in this way until yesterday. But now it appears that the collectivization has already been 40 percent fulfilled, and that during the next year it will be completed 100 percent in a number of the most important agricultural regions.

It is perfectly clear that the present tempo of collectivization is determined not by productive but by administrative factors. The sharp and in fact panicky change of policy toward the kulak, and toward the middle peasant as well, resulted during the last year in an almost complete liquidation of NEP. A peasant represents a small productive unit and as such cannot exist without a market. The liquidation of NEP presented the middle peasant with the following alternatives: either to revert to the natural consumers' economy, i.e., to become extinct, or to become involved in a civil war for the market, or to try his hand at the new way in the collective economy.

The course of collectivization holds out to the peasant not persecution but advantages: lower taxes, supply of agricultural machinery on easy terms, loans, etc. If at present the peasantry is crowding into the collective, it is not because the collectivization has already shown its advantages; it is not because the state has already proved to the peasant (or at least to itself) that it can reconstruct the peasant economy on a collective basis in the near future. It is because the peasantry, and first of all its top layer, which during the years of the "liberal" Stalin-Ustrialov policy had become accustomed to the ways of the capitalist farmer, suddenly found itself in an impasse.
The gate of the market was padlocked. The peasants stood frightened in front of it awhile, and then rushed through the only open door, that of collectivization.

The leadership itself was no less surprised by the sudden rush of the peasants into the collectives than the peasants were surprised by the liquidation of NEP. After getting over its astonishment, the leadership created a new theory: the building of socialism has entered into its "third" stage: there is no longer any need for a market; in the near future the kulak as a class will be liquidated.

In essence, this is not a new theory. It is the old theory of socialism in one country, but shifted into "third gear." Earlier, we had been taught that socialism would be built in backward Russia "at a snail's pace," with the kulak growing into socialism. Now the snail's pace has been replaced by a speed almost that of an aircraft. The kulak is no longer growing into socialism—at such speeds it is not possible!—but is simply being liquidated by administrative order.

The liquidation of the kulak, taken seriously, is unquestionably the liquidation of the last capitalist class. Without the kulak a jobber, a speculator, a city Nepman cannot exist economically. Even more so since the official policy for the liquidation of the kulaks as a class includes the petty-bourgeois elements of the city. To encompass the entire peasantry in the socialized economy means to transform the Soviet Union into a society without classes in two or three years. A society that has no classes has no need for a government, especially such a concentrated form of government as a dictatorship. No wonder that some of the young "theoreticians" of the new course expressed the idea that it would be advisable to disband the soviets, at least in the countryside, and to replace them with the merely productive organizations, namely, with the administration of the local collectives. These "theoreticians," however, were brought to their senses by a declaration from the top that the dictatorship will be necessary for a long time to come. But why and for what it will be necessary to have a dictatorship after the coming year or two of complete liquidation of the kulaks, the leaders have not explained. And it is not an accident either. For they themselves would have to admit that the program of the speedy liquidation of the kulaks, with the aid of peasant plows and old nags and wagons, is a bureaucratic adventure, spiced with theoretical charlatanism.

In practice, the liquidation of the kulaks led to merely administrative methods of the confiscation of the kulak's property,
his house, his lot; and to his deportation. This policy has been carried out in a way that regards the kulak as an entirely foreign body among the peasants, some kind of invader, like a Pecheneg or Polovtsian nomad. As a matter of fact, the kulak represents only one of the stages of the development of the middle peasant. It is possible, of course, to liquidate every individual kulak. It can be achieved with the aid of two policemen (well armed). But to prevent the reappearance of kulaks, at least in the collective farms, is much more difficult. For that, an industrial and cultural revolution is necessary.

There are three types of collective farms in the USSR, depending mainly on the degree to which the means of production have been collectivized: associations, artels, and communes. In an association, the work in the fields is done collectively with privately owned implements: the labor has been collectivized but not the means of production. In the artels, some of the most expensive machinery has been collectivized. And, finally, in the communes all the means of production are collectivized. The ways of dividing income among the members of these types of farms differ according to the forms of ownership: from the capitalist to the near-communist method. These three types of collective farms represent the three stages in the progress of collectivization. The highest type mirrors the future of the lowest.

The transition from one stage to another—its volume and its tempo—is fundamentally determined by the technical conditions of production. Therefore it is perfectly clear that the wider the scale of the present collectivization, the more primitive the form it will have to take, thus opening the way to capitalist tendencies. But the last decree of the Central Committee demands as far as possible full collective ownership of the means of production from the start. In other words total collectivization resting mainly on peasant equipment must occur in a form somewhere between an artel and a commune. An obvious contradiction: the wider the scale of forced collectivization, and consequently the lower its technical base, the higher is the type of social relations that the utopian-bureaucratic leadership wants to impose.

At the same time the question of the internal relations of the collective farms is not discussed in the press. To avoid the decisive social question concerning the distribution of income, the leaders and the executors replace Marxist analysis with unbearable propagandistic noise.
Of course if state industry could supply the collective farms with the means of production, it would soon remove the difference between these collective farms and the state farms. It would transform the peasants into normal socialist workers for state wheat factories, and would once and forever take the ground from under the feet of the kulaks. But from such a regime we are as yet separated by many years. The majority of collective farms will be compelled, for several years, to fall back upon the livestock and other equipment of the peasants themselves.

Let us grant, however, that even under these conditions collectivization brings real and immediate advantages, capable of overcoming the individualistic tendencies of the peasants. At once a new difficulty arises; not one of an administrative but of a social nature, i.e., a difficulty inherent not in the methods of collectivization but in the class character of small producers. Namely: How will the incomes of the collective farms be distributed? Would a peasant who gave the collective farm two horses have a right to more income than a farmhand who brought with him only his two arms? If the percentage on the "capital" were not credited, nobody would want to supply his own property as a gift. Then the state would confront an insurmountable task: to equip anew all the collective farms with necessary machinery. Should the percentage on the "capital" be allowed, an economic differentiation of individuals within the collectives would inevitably follow. And if the collectives prove to have considerable advantages over individual farming, differentiation within them will develop faster than it did before.

The problem is not exhausted, however, by the matter of equipment alone. A family that has three workers would want to receive more than a family with only one adult worker. If a collective should want to take the unexpended part of the earnings of its members as a loan to buy new machinery, or for a turnover of capital, again it would have to pay a percentage. This in turn opens the way to more differentiation within the cooperative farm and thus to its possible transformation into a petty-bourgeois cooperative, with the leadership concentrated in the hands of the well-off and the majority of its members little more than farmhands.

Such phenomena have already been widely observed in the past, when collective farms were the rare exceptions and wholly voluntary. They are even more inevitable in light of total collectivization which, by retaining the technological base of a small farm, means the inclusion within the confines of the collective farms of all the contradictions inherent in the small
petty commodity economy, and thus the inevitable reappearance of the kulaks within the collective farms.

It means that the day after the official "liquidation of the kulaks as a class," i.e., after the confiscation of the property of "named kulaks" and their deportation, the Stalinist bureaucracy will declare the kulaks within the collective farms to be progressive or "civilized cooperators," incorrectly quoting, of course, Lenin's formula ("On Cooperation"). The collectives may become, in this case, only a new form of social and political disguise for the kulaks. As director of such a masquerade, the present commissar of agriculture Yakovlev is perfect. Not in vain did he occupy himself for several years with statistical juggling to prove that the kulak was an invention of the Opposition. Not in vain did he, until yesterday, along with other officials, declare that the platform of the Opposition was a counterrevolutionary document—the platform which demanded the speeding up of collectivization on the basis of planned industrialization.

In the meantime the peasants react to the contradictions between the collectivization and its insufficient technical base in advance, by selling their livestock right and left before joining the collective farms. The official press is full of alarming reports of the mass destruction of work animals and their sale to slaughterhouses. The leadership reacts to this with decrees, telegrams, and threats. But it is obviously insufficient. A peasant does not know whether he will get credit for his horse or his cow, or in what way. He hopes that a collective farm will get a tractor from the state. In any case he does not see any reason why he should give his cow to the collective for nothing. A peasant is still a narrow realist. Seeing himself compelled to join the collective, he hurries to get the advantages from the sale of his individual property. The number of work animals decreases. Meanwhile the state cannot replace them with machinery or even livestock of better quality. This prepares exceptionally acute difficulties for the collective farms from the beginning.

We can predict that after the present precarious offensive a panicky retreat will follow, elemental down below, and allegedly "maneuvered" from above. The collective farms, hastily organized, will either simply fall apart or begin to degenerate. In a cruel internal struggle the individual means of production will be liberated, thus opening the way to capitalist tendencies. The infallible leadership will, of course, accuse the executors of being "Trotskyists," and will bring out from under the pillow
Stalin's capitalist-farmer's formulas of 1924-25, if the party will give the bureaucratic connecting rods the necessary time.

It is not difficult to foresee the reaction our analysis will arouse in official circles. The government officials will say that we are betting on a crisis. Scoundrels will add that we desire the fall of the Soviet government. People of Yaroslavsky's type will explain that we write in the interest of Chamberlain. It is possible that the Mensheviks and liberals will lift out a dozen sentences to prove that it is indispensable for Russia to return to capitalism. The Communist officials will again establish the "solidarity between the Opposition and the Mensheviks." So it has happened before, so it will happen again. But that will not stop us. Intrigues pass, but facts remain.

The Stalinist bureaucracy, after its years of opportunist policy, is going through a period of brief but thorough ultraleft lunacy. The theory and practice of the "third period" bear equally destructive consequences for the Soviet Union both inside and outside its borders.

Some people will say that the Opposition has changed places with the apparatus: the Opposition accuses the apparatus of superindustrialization while it itself swerves to the right. Other thoughtful souls will add that the right wing, which formerly accused the Stalinists of superindustrialization and of "Trotskyism," has capitulated to Stalin, while the Left Opposition appears to be adopting the point of view of the right wing.

All such generalizations, comparisons, and approximations can be foreseen. And it is possible to write in advance all the articles and speeches that will be written and given on the subject. It is not difficult to disclose the superficiality of these arguments.

The Opposition never undertook "in the shortest possible time to overtake and outstrip" the capitalist world. We demanded acceleration of industrialization because it is the only way to secure a leading position for the cities in relation to the countryside, and thus in the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our estimate of the possibilities of industrialization was immeasurably broader and bolder than that of the bureaucrats up until 1928. But we never regarded the resources for industrialization as inexhaustible. We never thought that its tempo could be regulated by the administrative whip alone. We have always advanced, as a basic condition for industrialization, the necessity for systematic improvement in the conditions of the working class. We have always considered collec-
tivization dependent upon industrialization. We saw the socialist reconstruction of peasant economy only as a prospect of many years. We never closed our eyes to the inevitability of internal conflicts during the socialist reconstruction of a single nation. To remove contradictions in rural life is possible only by removing contradictions between the city and the countryside. This can be realized only through the world revolution. We never demanded, therefore, the liquidation of classes within the scope of the five-year plan of Stalin and Krzhyzhanovsky. 123 We demanded limitation of the exploiting tendencies of the kulak and systematic limitation of his accumulation of wealth in the interest of industrialization. For that we were exiled on the basis of Article 58 of the penal code.124

The Marxist Opposition was denounced by the bloc of the right and center. They broke for a while, but now are united again. They have a common basis: national socialism. Together they made a curve of 180 degrees over our heads. More and more, they transform the problem of industrialization into hazardous bureaucratic superindustrialization. They abolished NEP, i.e., committed the very "crime" of which they had falsely accused the Opposition and for which our friends are still crowding the prisons and places of exile. Limitation of the kulaks they replaced with official "liquidation," which yesterday they had attributed to us and which we denied in good Marxist conscience.

The right wing, which was afraid to take the most elementary steps, now has joined with the center in a frantic rush "forward." The bloc is restored and the snail's pace is advanced to the speed of aircraft.

For how many months will the present leadership drive the party along the road of ultraleftism? Not for very many, we think. The more frenzied the character of the present course, the sooner and sharper its contradictions will break out. Then to the former 180-degree curve, the leadership will add another, returning close to its starting point from the other end. So it has been, so it will be again.

The problems briefly outlined in the present article will be the subject of an extensive work that we hope to bring out in a few weeks. Therefore our analysis here is in the nature of a synopsis. In the same way, we briefly answer the question: What is to be done?

Industry is racing toward a crisis primarily because of the monstrously bureaucratic methods used in the preparation of
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the plan. A five-year plan can be projected with the necessary proportions and guarantees only on condition of a free discussion of its rates and terms; only with participation in these discussions by all related industries and by the working class, drawing in all its organizations and above all the party itself; only with an evaluation of the whole experience of the Soviet economy in the last period, including the monstrous faults of the leadership. The most important element of the plan is not a question of what the workers and peasants want and are able to consume immediately, but what they can save and accumulate. The question of the tempo of industrialization is not a matter of bureaucratic fancy, but of the life and culture of the masses.

Therefore the plan for building socialism cannot be issued as an a priori bureaucratic command. It must be worked out and corrected in the same way that the construction of socialism itself can only be realized, i.e., through broad soviet democracy. The decision, for example, on the role of chemistry in the national economy can be established only through an open discussion among different economic groups and branches of industry. Soviet democracy is not an abstract political demand and still less a moral one. It has become an economic necessity.

The first condition for the success of socialism is to preserve or, more correctly, to save the party. Without this basic historic instrument the proletariat is powerless. In the meantime the Stalinist bureaucracy is destroying the party. To total collectivization in the countryside, it adds total admittance into the party of whole plants and artels. The vanguard is disappearing in the mass. The thought and the will of the party are crushed underfoot. The bureaucracy's hands are completely free. The leadership is blind and uncontrollable. The party will not be able to create a farsighted leadership until it becomes a party again. What must be done? Take from the usurpers' apparatus the power that has been usurped from the party. Who can do that? The proletarian nucleus of the party, relying on the working class.

The second condition is to preserve or, more correctly, to restore the proletarian dictatorship. This is possible only if the proletariat from year to year shows an improvement in its economic and cultural level and a growth of its importance in the state and country, and if simultaneously the scissors of agricultural and industrial prices begin to close, offering the peasants real advantages from the October Revolution.
The tempo of industrialization must guarantee, not the building of national socialism, but the reinforcement of the foundation of the proletarian dictatorship and the improvement of the conditions of the working masses of the city and countryside. This is an entirely realistic task. It demands a combination of courage and caution. It excludes both excess timidity and wild recklessness.

It would be absurd to pretend that the Opposition has an a priori plan for a painless way out of the new dangers created by the combination of adventurism and opportunism. The best directions for keeping on the road are useless if the car at the head of the line has already swerved off the road into the mud. Then a whole series of special measures are necessary to bring the column back on the road. We assert that even the best driver at the wheel could not solve the problem alone. The collective effort of the party and the class is necessary, with help from the ranks, which presupposes the right and the possibility of collective creative initiative.

Right now the measure that seems most immediate and urgent is the strictest financial discipline. It is absolutely necessary to pull the strings of the state's purse as tightly as possible, in both the budget and credit columns. There is no doubt that this measure will prove painful at the start, as it will inevitably stop many undertakings and enterprises halfway. But this measure is unavoidable. Financial discipline must become the first step toward general economic discipline.

If these exaggerated and unattainable projects are not immediately curtailed, if the tempo is not revised to a realistic one, runaway inflation may easily swell them to perilous proportions, with consequences that will not only puncture the false reputation of the ignorant leadership—a reputation founded wholly on self-inflation—but also real values of immeasurably greater importance: the October Revolution.

Again and again we decisively rejected the task of building a national socialist society "in the shortest possible time." Collectivization and industrialization we bind by an unbreakable tie to the world revolution. The problems of our economy are decided in the final analysis on the international arena. It is necessary to rebuild the Comintern. It is necessary to review the revolutionary strategy of the post-Lenin period and to condemn all three of its stages: the Zinoviev, the Bukharin-Stalin, and the Stalin-Molotov stage. It is necessary to remove the present leadership, because it is precisely in the field of
international questions that the Stalinist faction reaches the limits of theoretical cynicism and practical license, which threaten the proletarian vanguard with innumerable disasters. Refutation of the theory of national socialism and the practice of bureaucratic adventurism is the elementary prerequisite for the regeneration of the Communist International.
YES OR NO?\textsuperscript{125}

A First Answer on the Blumkin Murder

March 1, 1930

The official Communist press, as we assumed, has for several weeks tried to maintain silence on the question of the murder by Stalin of Comrade Blumkin. But this conspiracy of silence has finally been broken, at least at one point. The Vienna \textit{Rote Fahne} [The Red Flag] has entered into a polemic with the Social Democratic press on the question of Blumkin. It is obvious that the social democracy could not pass over such an exceptional opportunity to touch up its own reputation. The international party of Noske, responsible for the death of Liebknecht, Luxemburg,\textsuperscript{126} and thousands of the best worker revolutionaries, would of course have to grasp thirstily at the shooting by the Stalinists of an irreproachable revolutionary. It is not this aspect of the matter that interests us at present.

Irrespective of the plots, intrigues, and slanders of the social democracy, each revolutionary worker is faced with the question: Is it true that Stalin shot Comrade Blumkin because he visited Trotsky in Constantinople and tried to pass on letters from him to his cothinkers in Moscow? If it is true, then what are people who by such deeds besmirch the name of communism to be called? Only this question is of importance. For it is clear what a terrible blow such bloody treachery by the official leadership must be to the revolutionary prestige of Soviet power, not in the ranks of the bourgeoisie or the "sympathizing" intellectuals, lawyers, journalists, and writers, who travel magnanimously at Soviet expense to festivals and resorts—but rank-and-file revolutionary workers. That is why the question of Blumkin's fate must be fully resolved.

What in essence does the Vienna \textit{Rote Fahne} say? It calls the report of Blumkin's shooting "a clumsy lie any ass can see through at first glance." This looks like a very decisive
refutation. And we would be fully ready to welcome the firm and categorical tone of Rote Fahne. Actually, the fact in itself is so monstrous that the first and most natural reaction of any revolutionary is not to believe it, to reject and condemn it as slander.

Unfortunately, however, the refutation later becomes considerably less categorical. And not by chance. Rote Fahne piped up only on February 19, i.e., six weeks after the news had not only got into the bourgeois and Social Democratic press, but had even been posed in the form of a direct question in the Communist Oppositional press. In these several weeks Rote Fahne should have been able to get information, could not help getting it. But after such a categorical beginning, Rote Fahne in subsequent lines imperceptibly shifts its denial. The "slander" now is that Blumkin was shot "merely because he was a Trotskyist, that legendary Blumkin." This imperceptible shift in emphasis is a kind of careful insurance for the paper and at the same time takes the moral weight away from the refutation. The Stalinists' Vienna paper is clearly leaving the door open for two versions: the categorical denial of the fact itself, i.e., of the murder of Blumkin by Stalin, and the admission of the fact, but in a different, as yet unprepared, "light."

Why does Rote Fahne call Blumkin "legendary"? What does this rotten hint of mockery mean? Does Rote Fahne doubt the existence of Blumkin (that is, his former existence) altogether? Does Rote Fahne doubt that Blumkin was an irreproachable revolutionary, who had dozens of times proved his exceptional courage and heroic devotion to the proletariat? Does Rote Fahne doubt that Blumkin was shot? Or does the doubt concern only whether he was shot for passing on a letter of Trotsky's? It is unclear from the article; and this lack of clarity is deliberate. Rote Fahne is merely waiting for the version that will finally be selected by Stalin.

The latter is meanwhile preparing his version from a distance. The rumor has been spread through certain Soviet papers that some "Trotskyists" in Siberia sabotaged the railways at the time when troops were being sent against Chiang Kai-shek, by derailing trains, etc. This is now Stalin's third attempt to amalgamate the Opposition with the counterrevolutionaries. The first two collapsed shamefully. The third will certainly do likewise. If Stalin has nevertheless decided to repeat his despicable experiment, that is only because he still needs some kind of version or explanation for the shooting of Comrade Blumkin.
Rote Fahne finishes its article with a panegyric to Stalin as the "beloved disciple of Lenin." We know that such panegyrics are now a necessary condition for retaining the post of editor, secretary, people's commissar, stenographer, or president of the Comintern. But all the same we consider that the editor of Rote Fahne has been all too careless in linking the Blumkin case with Stalin's characteristics and his relations with Lenin.

The fact is that Lenin spoke against Stalin's appointment as general secretary, expressing a fear that "this cook will prepare only spicy dishes." Of course in 1922 Lenin did not yet see dishes quite as spicy as the shooting of Blumkin.

The fact is that in his testament Lenin mentioned Stalin's disloyalty and his inclination to the abuse of power, and for that reason recommended that Stalin be removed from his responsible post.

The fact is that even after the testament, on March 6, 1923, Lenin broke off in writing all personal and comradely relations with Stalin—as a result of his disloyalty and treachery.

This was the state of affairs seven years ago, when the position of general secretary had a strictly subordinate character, and when all power was concentrated in the hands of the Politburo headed by Lenin. Now the position has radically changed. The rule of the apparatus has led to the personal dictatorship of Stalin. The role of party opinion has been reduced hundreds of times. Stalin's disloyalty has proved to be armed by unheard-of means against his own party. The Blumkin case throws light on this new position with terrible force.

Yes, the shooting of Blumkin is being used by our class enemies, and above all by the social democrats. But whose is the responsibility? It belongs to those who have created this horrifying affair, i.e., to the murderers of Blumkin. They surely understood that the Opposition would not be silent. For silence would mean unbridling the Stalinist bureaucracy and preparing tens and hundreds of crimes like the Blumkin case.

That is why we declare to all official editors, secretaries, and other functionaries: We shall not let you evade an answer by covering yourself with polemics against bourgeois and social democratic newspapermen. We shall make you give the workers an answer about what has taken place. We shall compel you to answer the question: Do you or do you not take upon yourselves the responsibility for Blumkin's murder? Yes or no?
THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN
AND WORLD UNEMPLOYMENT

March 14, 1930

The internal development of the Soviet Union has reached a critical point. No matter how we evaluate the present course of the collectivization that in one year has surpassed by two and a half times the plan elaborated for the full five years (50 percent of the peasant holdings collectivized instead of the 20 percent projected at the end of five years), it is clear that the pace of collectivization has already exploded the whole five-year plan. Up to now, the official leadership has kept silent about this. But it is impossible to remain silent. To imagine that all the other elements of the plan—industry, transportation, commerce, finance—can develop on the former programmed scale while agriculture makes totally unforeseen jumps would signify seeing in the economic plan not an organic whole but a simple sum of departmental orders. Until recently it was recognized, at least in principle, that the link between industry and agriculture (smychka) forms the principal axis of the plan. Well, what has happened to this axis? If the smychka was originally taken into consideration in the plan, then it now must have been destroyed by the extraordinary leaps in collectivization which nobody foresaw. In what direction will the line of the plan be adjusted?

At this very moment, "complete collectivization" has already prompted within the frightened leadership a certain movement back. At what point will this retreat come to a halt? It is as yet impossible to tell. It is probable that this time also the retreat will go much further than the objective conditions require. But the retreat itself is unavoidable. Because of the effects of inflation, there may even be a revision of the slogan "the five-year plan in four years."
Retreat is always painful, in the military field as well as in politics. But a retreat carried out in time and in an orderly manner can prevent unnecessary losses and prepare the possibility for developing an offensive in the future. The fatal danger is in a belated retreat, under fire, in panic, when the enemy is at your heels. And that is why we, the Left Opposition, are not afraid to call out to the bureaucracy that is running ahead blindly: *Retreat!* It is necessary to call a halt to the racetrack speed of industrialization, to revise the tempo on the basis of experience and theoretical foresight, to coordinate collectivization with technical and other resources, to shape the policy toward the kulak according to the real possibilities of collectivization. In short, after the policy of tail-endism and the policy of adventurism, it is necessary to take the road of Marxist realism.

The plan corrected along these lines would be a *minimal* variant. It would necessarily proceed from the situation that has been created up to now as a result of great successes and no less great mistakes. Such a plan cannot eliminate the contradictions that flow from the historical past and the world surroundings. But it would reduce to a minimum the results of mistakes, partly mitigating and partly postponing the manifestations of a crisis, and in this way gain a new breathing space for the isolated workers’ state. *The task of the moment is a planned retreat from the position of adventurism.*

In addition to this "minimal" variant, however, it is necessary to prepare immediately another, more extensive variant, based not only on domestic but also on international resources. The perspective of proletarian revolution in Europe is by no means less of a reality than the perspective of genuine collectivization of the Russian peasantry. More correctly, the second perspective becomes a reality only in connection with the first. The official leadership of the Comintern conducts its policy as though we were on the eve of the insurrection of the European proletariat. At the same time, the economic plan for ten to fifteen years is predicated on "outstripping" the whole capitalist world by an isolated workers' state. This duality, flowing from the reactionary utopian theory of socialism in one country, permeates the program of the Comintern and all of its policies. Nobody knows the dates, but one thing can be said with certainty: the conquest of power by the European proletariat is undoubtedly closer than the liquidation of classes in the Soviet Union.

The elaboration of a minimal plan with the aim of mitigating
the approaching crisis must necessarily proceed from the fact of the present isolated position of the Soviet economy. But simultaneously it is necessary to create a variant based on a broad mutual relationship of the Soviet and world economies. A general plan elaborated for ten, fifteen, or more years cannot be constructed in any other way.

Obviously, systematic and all-embracing international economic cooperation will become possible only after the conquest of power by the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries. But the time of this overturn cannot be foreseen. That is why preparations must be made, politically as well as economically.

Moreover, there is every reason to anticipate that under the conditions of the present commercial and industrial crisis, particularly in case of its deepening, the Soviet government by a correct policy can gain incomparably greater access to the resources of the world market. Unemployment is a major factor that can influence the whole course of politics in the near future. Under the blows of unemployment the powerful structure of the conservative trade unions and the social democracy can suffer deep-going cleavages before the infinitely more powerful structure of the capitalist state begins to crack. But this will not happen on its own. Correct leadership of the working-class struggle acquires an exceptional significance in periods of social crisis. The general strategic line of communism, more than ever before, obviously must be directed toward the revolutionary conquest of power. But this revolutionary policy must be nourished by the concrete conditions and tasks of the transition period. Unemployment occupies an ever more central place among them. One of the most important slogans of the transition period can and must become the demand for economic cooperation with the Soviet Union. But agitation around this slogan must in turn have a thoroughly concrete character, armed with facts and figures. It must be based on a general economic plan which takes into account an ever-increasing interrelationship of the Soviet and world economies. This means that the general plan must be built upon a genuine Marxist foundation and not upon the theory of an isolated socialist society.

In the current European and world unemployment crisis, conjunctural events are bound up with the organic processes of capitalist decay. We have more than once repeated that conjunctural cycles are inherent in capitalist society at every stage
of its development. But at different stages these cycles have a
different character. Just as in a person's declining years a surge
of vitality is as uncertain as it is brief and every illness af­
fects the whole organism, so the conjunctural cycles of impe­
rialist capitalism, especially in Europe, show a tendency toward
the prolongation of crisis relieved by comparatively short up­
turns. The question of unemployment, under these conditions,
can become the central question for the majority of the cap­
italist countries. It is here that the knot is tied between the
interests of the Soviet Union and the interests of the world
proletariat.

The task in itself is clear and indisputable. It is only neces­
sary to approach it correctly. But that is precisely where the
difficulty lies. At the present time, the international education
of the world proletarian vanguard is based on two ideas: "The
Soviet Union will build socialism without us" and "The Soviet
Union is the fatherland of all the toilers." The first idea is
false, the second abstract. Moreover, one runs counter to the
other. This explains the astonishing fact that the struggle
against unemployment is now directed according to the pocket
calendar of Kuusinen and Manuilsky ("March 6," etc.) and
ignores the economic problems of the Soviet Union. Yet the
connection between the one task and the other is quite obvious.

Complete collectivization on the basis of the peasants' hold­
ings is an adventure that breeds a crisis in agricultural pro­
duction, with dangerous political consequences. But if the
possibility of fertilizing the collective farms arises in time
through an influx of advanced technology, then collectivized
agriculture could overcome its initial difficulties far more easily
and be able, almost in the next few years, to attain a greatly
improved harvest, with a quantity of products for export that
would radically change the picture of the European grain mar­
et and later put the consumption of the working masses on
a new foundation. The menacing disproportion between the
swing of collectivization and the level of technology flows di­
rectly from the economic isolation of the Soviet Union. If the
Soviet government were to obtain only the capitalist credits
"normal" in international relations, the rate of industrializa­
tion, as the framework of collectivization, could even now
be considerably increased.

Because of all these circumstances, the Communist parties
of the West are faced with the task of linking up, in their agi­
tation, the question of unemployment with the most essential
factors in world development and, in the first place, with the economic development of the Soviet Union. What is needed for this?

First, to stop fooling the workers of the West about the real situation in the Soviet Union. Along with the indisputable and immense successes arising out of nationalization, to show them honestly at the same time the internal contradictions arising out of the isolation of the Soviet Union and the mistakes of the leadership, which threaten it with political dangers.

Second, to explain to them that these dangers could be considerably diminished, and later overcome, by the establishment of a broad and coordinated exchange between the Soviet Union on one side and Germany and Britain, for example, on the other.

Third, to demonstrate that many tens, and later hundreds, of thousands of workers would be able to find work as a result of annual, planned Soviet orders for machinery and agricultural implements.

Fourth, to explain that through these conditions it would be possible for the Soviet Union to export a far greater quantity—besides lumber and other raw materials—of grain, butter, meat, and other consumer products for the broadest masses.

The importing of machinery and the exporting of raw materials and food products could, by an adequate agreement, be made directly interdependent on the basis of an extensive plan, equally accessible to the understanding and the verification of both the Soviet and foreign workers.

The successes that have been achieved by Soviet industry provide the necessary basis for this entry into the international arena. It is not a question of agitation alone, but of serious, well-thought-out economic proposals, motivated by all current experiences and formulated clearly in the language of technology, economics, and statistics. In this connection, the Soviet government must certainly proclaim its complete readiness to facilitate an all-sided examination of the accomplishments of the economic agreement by interested labor organizations (trade unions, shop stewards’ committees, etc.).

If we approach the question politically, and in the first place from the point of view of the relations toward the social democracy and Amsterdam, the task can be formulated as an application of the policy of the united front on a scale that has not been and could not be practiced up to now.

But is it possible to hope that MacDonald, Hermann Mueller, the trade unionists of Amsterdam, and the American Fed-
eration of Labor will consent to such an agreement? Then is it not utopian? Is it not conciliationist? And so on. Such objections will undoubtedly be made by those who yesterday hoped that the British trade unionists would struggle against imperialism for the defense of the Soviet Union (Stalin and Company). We did not nourish these pitiful illusions at that time and we do not nourish them now. Nevertheless, economic agreements by a Social Democratic government with the Soviets for the alleviation of unemployment in its own country must be considered far more probable than a struggle of the reformists against imperialism. If the crisis deepens, the reformist governments, which base themselves upon millions of organized workers, can be put in such a bind that they are compelled—to one extent or another—to yield to economic cooperation with the Soviet Union.

We have no desire or need to guess the extent to which this would actually be realized. Should the social democracy be averse even to a discussion—in the first period that is the most likely case—then the plan would from the beginning impel the masses of the workers to struggle against the social democracy. In any case, the reformists in power will find it more difficult to defend themselves from agitation based on a concrete plan of economically advantageous cooperation with the Soviet Union than from the shrill accusations on the theme of "social fascism."

It is evident that such a campaign in no way assumes the softening of our political relations toward the social democracy. On the contrary, by correct implementation the campaign as outlined can seriously shake the positions of the international social democracy, which during the last few years was given invaluable support by the Stalin-Molotov policies.

The necessity of posing the task of socialist construction in an international sense rises out of the internal needs of the economic development of the Soviet Union and simultaneously represents the most persuasive and irrefutable propaganda

*The paper of the Italian Communist Left, Prometeo, says quite appropriately that if it is very difficult for the social democrats to refute the accusations that they are agents of the bourgeoisie, it is, on the other hand, very easy for them to refute the contention that they are fascists. In labeling the social democrats as social fascists, the Comintern renders them a signal service.
in favor of international revolution. But in order to enter upon this road it is necessary to find it once again. Instead of soporific optimism, the revolutionary alarm must be sounded. It is impermissible to be content with ritualistic imprecations against military intervention. It is necessary to confront the economic problem. The communist agitator must say frankly and honestly to the Western masses:

"Do not think that socialism will be built up in Moscow without you. They have accomplished quite a bit, but they cannot accomplish everything. The many things they have already accomplished are only a small part of what is still to be done. In order to help them, measures must be taken now that will at the same time help you workers against unemployment and the high cost of living. The Soviet government has a plan for economic agreements with foreign industry.* All workers can familiarize themselves with it. To be sure, you are not obliged to have blind faith in me or in the Soviet government. Demand the examination of the Soviet proposals by your trade unions, your party, or by your Social Democratic government (Germany, Britain). Your government must be compelled finally to take the road of economic cooperation with the Soviet Union because that is the most effective and advantageous road of struggle against unemployment."

But is there any hope that under their present leadership the Communist parties are capable of a serious revolutionary mobilization of the masses? We will not decide this question in advance. The policy we defend has such profound roots in the objective situation and in the historical interests of the proletariat that it will finally make its way against all obstacles. It is entirely a question of time. But that is a very important question. The duty of the Communist Left Opposition, therefore, is to exert all its strength to shorten the period.

*We proceed from the assumption that such a plan must be created.
Here are some brief replies to a number of interesting letters and questions.

1. At the time of the Tenth Congress, Vladimir Ilyich had a very pessimistic view of the situation, admitting that we were close to disaster. Nevertheless, he felt it was necessary to conduct a resolute struggle against the syndicalist tendencies of the Workers' Opposition: "If we are to perish, it is paramount that we preserve the ideological line and provide a lesson for our successors." This we must never forget, even in hopeless circumstances. Moreover, the present situation is by no means hopeless.

2. Whoever says, "There is no longer any way out, no matter what, except through complete collectivization and the administrative liquidation of classes," is developing a philosophy of despair and suggesting that we rush headlong into the abyss with our eyes closed. We cannot take this course.

3. Our fundamental slogan, encompassing all our immediate tasks—economic, political, for the party, and for the Comintern—is this: "Timely and orderly retreat from adventurist positions." This means:

   A. In agriculture: To delay further collectivization, explaining to the peasants the limitations of our resources. To shift from complete collectivization to selective collectivization, concentrating our efforts and resources on the most viable and promising collective farms. To call a halt to de-kulakization. To substitute for it a tough system of contracts with the kulaks (the development and generalization of our idea of compulsory grain loans). (The kulak has been sufficiently panic-stricken politically to insure the meeting of contracts for a year or two.)

   B. In industry: To call a halt to the racetrack-gallop ap-
proach to industrialization. To discard the slogan "five-year plan in four years." To revise the distribution of resources between consumption and accumulation, for the purpose of seriously improving the living standards of the working masses. To stop, in deed and not just in words, turning out quantity at the expense of quality (here a catastrophe threatens).

C. In finances: The strictest fiscal discipline. Discontinuation of all excessive expenditures, even at the cost of suspending many projects that have been started. The aim: to avert a general crisis and stabilize the ruble.

D. In foreign trade: To make the most of the menacing rise in unemployment, especially in Germany and Britain, to obtain credits and make planned orders for agricultural equipment, machinery, etc., in exchange for the future products of collectivized agriculture. This kind of "international contracting" will help to fertilize with technology the collective farms that were created by administrative fiat, and it will ease the excessive burden placed on the five-year plan, especially in the area of agricultural machinery (recent decisions).

E. In the Comintern: To bring a quick end to the adventurist ballyhoo about "red days." To put forth transitional demands, centering first and foremost on the fight against unemployment. To work out a variant of the five-year plan aiming at the broadest possible collaboration with the industries of Germany and Britain, where unemployment is particularly high and where reformists are in power; and to mobilize on this basis the unemployed and the working class in general against [German] Social Democratic and [British] Labour governments on the basis of the united-front policy.

F. In the internal regime in the party: To stop the dissolution of the party into the class in the USSR. To condemn Stalinist "self-criticism" as a totally degenerate form of Bonapartist plebiscite technique within the party. To open a free discussion in the party of the "general line," going back to 1923; and on this basis to prepare for the party's Sixteenth Congress. Only in this way can the party, which in essence has been liquidated, be revived and rendered capable of meeting the crises whose onset has been hastened by the policies of the last seven years. Otherwise the main danger can turn out to come from the party itself.

G. In the area of theory: To discard the theory of socialism in one country. This theory is the basis for the policies of complete collectivization and the racetrack-gallop approach to industrialization. The same theory reduces the Comintern
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to acting as a frontier guard for the USSR (alas, a bad one at that).

These are the most general ideas which need to be elaborated upon with serious effort. In our present situation—being illegal, dispersed, etc.—the Opposition can hardly accomplish this work of elaboration in detail. Therefore it is most important to emphasize the general direction of our line. Its theoretical basis has been presented in a pamphlet which is now being completed.

Do we "support" or "not support" the centrists? This question should not be posed scholastically. We now cry out to the leadership for all to hear: "Stop before it is too late!" That is what we support! If we do not ourselves take the initiative for an orderly retreat from the positions of adventurism, tomorrow that retreat will take on a panicky and catastrophie character. It will then roll right over the heads of the right-wingers (who, however, have already decapitated themselves). There is no need to say that in the event of civil war or foreign intervention we will stand in the same ranks as the centrist bureaucracy against our common enemies. We refer, of course, to that part of the centrist bureaucracy that does not itself go over to the enemy.

Some comrades try to present a complete theoretical formula for centrism and dogmatically define its social base; on this ground the possibility of centrism "shifting to the left" is denied. This is a misunderstanding. The "essence" of centrism, if it can be said to have an essence, is its constant movement back and forth between the proletarian line and petty-bourgeois reformism with its corresponding ideological line. Centrism is always either moving to the left or moving to the right. It is never "just itself." Without having to abandon its organized proletarian base, thanks to the apparatus, Stalinist centrism sought a support in the middle peasantry in the struggle against us. But the middle peasantry is not a base since it is also always moving between the proletariat and the kulak. "Complete" collectivization is not only an adventurist stage of left centrism but, within certain limits, an impulsive, spontaneous move on the part of the middle peasantry frightened by the reprisals against the kulaks.

We cannot forget even for a minute that the Opposition represents an international current. Over the course of the last
year Europe, America, and China had the chance for virtually the first time to become acquainted with the living ideas and slogans of the Bolshevik-Leninists in the persons of certain advanced elements of communist circles. Thanks to this, a very serious regroupment has taken place on the basis of ideological differentiation. The Opposition has gotten on its feet ideologically on an international scale. The political fruits produced by this year's labor will show themselves more and more plainly in the near future. The "quality" that has been won will be converted into "quantity."

The French Opposition, which is marching in the vanguard, has a serious militant weekly and a serious theoretical monthly magazine. They are serving as a basis for a regroupment of forces. La Verite (the weekly) is even to a certain extent fulfilling the role of an international organ of the Opposition.

In Spain the Opposition has had very great success. The majority of the Oppositionist exiles have returned to their homeland.

The emigre Bordigists are publishing the biweekly newspaper Prometeo.134

In Germany the Marxist Left Opposition has finally dissolved its ties with the Urbahns faction through a split in the Leninbund. Within the next few days, its Marxist wing is expected to unite once and for all with the Wedding group (a platform for unity has been worked out), and to undertake the publication of a weekly.

The Czechoslovak group, which came into existence several months ago, is working with great energy; the first issue of its publication should be out very soon.

In Belgium developments are being held back by internal disputes. An excellent workers' organization in Charleroi bases itself on La Verite.

In Austria there are two Opposition publications. Talks are presently under way on the question of uniting the three Opposition groups around a common platform.

Hungarian, Spanish, Jewish, and other emigre groups have united around La Verite.

In America a good weekly newspaper, The Militant, is coming out, published by its own press, which is also proceeding to put out pamphlets and books. The Opposition in the United States and Canada is united around The Militant.

In Mexico a lithographed bulletin is coming out.

In Argentina a recently formed group has published pamphlets and is raising funds for its own periodical.
There are groups in other South American countries as well.

In China two Left Opposition groups are functioning. They have unfailingly published all the most important works of the Russian Opposition in Chinese.

In Britain valuable contacts have recently been made.

In Paris issue number 6 of the International Bulletin will come out in the next few days. Its task is to prepare for the international conference.

The slogan of the moment is found there too: "For the most rapid retreat, as orderly as possible, from the positions of adventurism to those of revolutionary Bolshevik realism."
OPEN LETTER
TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE SOVIET UNION

The State of the Party
and the Tasks of the Left Opposition

March 23, 1930

Dear Comrades:

This letter is prompted by a feeling of the greatest anxiety about the future of the Soviet Union and the fate of the proletarian dictatorship. The policy of the present leadership, that is, of the narrow Stalinist faction, is pushing the country full speed toward the most dangerous crisis and the worst catastrophe.

The very thing that was used as ammunition against the Opposition on the pretext that the Opposition rejected it—the smychka, the correct policy toward the peasant—has suddenly been forgotten, or rather transformed into its opposite. The most elementary principles of Marxism are trampled underfoot, most especially the question of collectivization. Under the direct effect of purely administrative measures in 1928 and 1929, in the struggle for grain, the collectivization has attained proportions that nobody had ever foreseen and have no relation to the real state of the means of production. As a result, a way has been opened for the collapse of most of the collective farms, the sharpening of profound internal divisions, and a serious setback in agricultural productivity, already so reduced.

But even the minority of collective farms that are viable, while their existence represents progress, are not equivalent to socialism. With their present means of production and the conditions of market economy that accompany them, the collective farms will unfailingly bring forth from their ranks a new layer of peasant exploiters. The administrative destruction of the kulak class outside the collectives not only fails to alter the economic fabric of the peasantry, but cannot prevent the development of kulakism inside the collective farms. This will be demonstrated primarily in the artels that are the most suc-
cessful economically. By proclaiming that the collective farms are socialist enterprises, the present leadership provides an excellent camouflage for the kulaks within the collectives. Of course it doesn't do this deliberately but that is precisely the trouble with its policy: thoughtless, blind, tail-ending, and zig-zagging from one extreme to the other.

In order to supply even a limited technological basis for "general" collectivization, it is necessary to rapidly increase the production of agricultural machinery. But the latter depends upon a number of other industrial processes. The production plan has already reached a very high degree of tension. Even granting that the new production targets for agricultural machinery are possible— which is far from certain—the present tempo of collectivization will still exceed considerably the material possibilities.

One must never lose sight of the fact that the collectivization was not born out of an extensive test that demonstrated the superiorities of collective economy over individual economy, but exclusively out of administrative measures to overcome the shortage of bread. The need for these measures arose, in turn, from the incorrect economic policy of 1923-28, above all from the industrial lag and an incorrect attitude toward the kulaks and the poor peasantry.

It is true that the fundamental difficulties of socialist construction are beyond the power of the leadership; they lie in the impossibility of establishing a socialist society in a single country, moreover a particularly backward country. But that is precisely why one must demand of the leadership a clear understanding of all factors of evolution, and the ability to distinguish the possible from the impossible. Within these limits, the realization of certain successes on the road of socialist construction is entirely possible, particularly the survival of the dictatorship of the proletariat until the time of the revolutionary victory in the advanced countries. Unfortunately the centrist leadership shows a fatal incapacity not only to evaluate accurately the internal resources of the dictatorship but to grasp their interdependence with the current world conjunctural forces.

The five-year plan first drawn up in 1926 envisaged an industrial growth of from 9 to 10 percent per year. Under the influence of the Opposition's criticism, thrown into relief by events themselves, the five-year plan was completely revised and the coefficient of growth was increased to 20 percent. But from that moment on, the leadership, alarmed at its own in-
decisiveness, no longer knew any restraint. Before the high projected tempos were tested in practice, before any degree of success had been achieved, before there were any improvements in the workers' living conditions, the Stalinist leadership advanced the slogan "the five-year plan in four years!"

At the same time, the production program for agricultural machinery adopted a still more accelerated tempo. As for the collectivization of the small peasant holdings—a most difficult and painstaking task—it outdistanced all the other economic problems. As has frequently happened in history, tail-endism was turned into its opposite—adventurism. But never before had there been a turnabout on such a scale. And above all, never before in history had the stakes been so important, namely, the fate of the October Revolution itself.

Economics cannot be cheated. An accelerated pace which runs ahead of existing possibilities soon leads to the creation of imaginary resources where there are no real ones. That is called inflation. All the symptoms of it are already present and they are also the symptoms of a threatening economic crisis. While inflation has not yet taken on an explosive character, it is already pressing heavily upon the daily existence of the masses, causing a rise in prices or preventing any reduction.

The problem of dividing the income of the collectives between the immediate daily needs and the needs of accumulation, that is, of expanded production, constitutes the basic problem of socialist construction, a problem intimately bound up with that of the mutual relations between the working class and the peasantry as well as between the different layers within the peasantry itself. These problems cannot be solved a priori, that is, bureaucratically. It is a matter of the daily life of the masses, and the masses themselves must have a way to apply "correctives" to the economic programs in advance. That is how economic questions become indissolubly connected to those of the party regime, the trade unions, and the soviets.

As has been said, the fundamental causes for the existing contradictions are inherent in the isolation of the Soviet Union. But instead of reducing them, the policy of the present leadership aggravates them. Herein lies the fundamental flaw of the entire economic plan. Instead of posing as its task the economic consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship and its alliance with the peasantry through the most advantageous, internally coordinated economic tempos, taking into account the vital necessities of the masses in the preparatory and transitional period at hand, that is, until the next stage of the international rev-
olution, the plan sets for itself an unrealizable, utopian, and economically reactionary task: on the basis of our backwardness and poverty to construct "in the shortest possible time" an independent, isolated, socialist society. Before this, the leadership had considered this task realizable only at a "snail's pace" (Bukharin). Now the leadership, fleeing the inconveniences of the prolonged delays, rushes headlong at a racetrack gallop (the same Bukharin, reconstructed).

For the sake of erratic and adventurist tempos which the leadership has not bothered to synchronize or verify, strenuous physical exertion is being demanded of the workers at the same time that their living standards are obviously being lowered. The abrupt leaps of industrialization lower the quality of the products, which in turn rebounds at the expense of the consumer and endangers tomorrow's production.

That is how by their industrial plan, and their agricultural and financial plans as well, the present leadership is leading the country to a painful crisis and political catastrophe.

As these lines are being written, the first signs reach us of the retreat that has just begun: first an article by Stalin, then a new circular of the Central Committee. Caught in the clutches of ever new contradictions for which he bears direct responsibility, Stalin pompously warns against "getting carried away by our successes," capsulizing his wisdom in the remark that it is impermissible, for example, to collectivize the "barnyard fowl." As if this were the issue! As if the utopian reactionary character of "100 percent collectivization" lay only in the premature collectivization of the hens, and not in the compulsory organization of huge collective farms without the technological basis that alone could insure their superiority over small ones.

The Central Committee circular already goes much further than Stalin's article. In retreat, just as on the offensive, the centrist leadership unfailingly tail-ends organic processes and their repercussions in the apparatus. After "collectivization" had embraced—in the course of only a few months!—more than one-half of the peasantry, the leaders suddenly recalled that "it was in violation of one (!) of Lenin's instructions" concerning the necessity for collectivization to be voluntary. In passing, the circular charged "those who implemented the policy" with violations of the "agricultural artel regulations" issued by the Central Executive Committee. This code appeared only quite recently, that is, after the collectivization had already en-
compassed more than 50 percent of the peasants' holdings. Moreover—and far more important—this code is full of contradictions and omissions because it deliberately ignores all differentiation within the collectives, presenting matters as if, apart from the kulaks, who are excluded, the remainder of the peasants constitute a homogeneous mass. The whole policy of collectivization amounts to an ostrich policy. The March 15 circular accuses the unfortunate executors of the collectivization policy of all the mortal sins, calling them (in the name of the Central Committee!) "dangerous zealots," thus shifting "rudely and disloyally," as is customary, the mistakes of the leadership onto the subordinate agents, who seriously accepted the slogan of the liquidation of the classes "in the shortest possible time." After the ineffective and crude circular of March 15, the unlucky "executors," and along with them the entire party, find themselves in an impasse. And now? More than half of the immense peasant ocean is already socialized. What share in this result falls to the "dangerous zealots"? Is it 5 percent or 40? In other words, does the character of the collectivization already accomplished, taken as a whole, rest upon an economic or a purely bureaucratic foundation? The circular does not answer this fundamental question. Yet the answer is not only an obvious but a merciless indictment of the "general line" of the leadership.

But the retreat will not end with these first manifestations, neither in the field of economic policy nor in relation to the internal life of the party. This time the blindness of the leadership has been demonstrated too openly. The party will have to take the consequences. The de-kulakization, the 100 percent collectivization, the bureaucratic transformation of the artels into communes—all these processes, encouraged only yesterday without any restraint, are today totally arrested. Of course, a diplomatic and administrative maneuver can sometimes be harsh; but abrupt turns reverberating to the vital foundations of 25 million peasant holdings and flinging the peasants from left to right for a whole year cannot be made with impunity. Shortsighted centrism and bureaucratic adventurism will come out of this experience irremediably compromised.

A correct policy in the USSR is conceivable only in harmony with an international policy of the proletarian vanguard. The leadership of the Comintern has fallen to a much lower level than the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
Since 1923 the Comintern has not rid itself of its tragic ways which undermine the organization and weaken its influence in the working class. Always lagging behind events and stumbling each time against their echoes, the Comintern leadership in these seven years has conducted an opportunist policy during the periods of revolutionary upsurge and a putschist policy during the periods of retreat. In the most recent years, after the Chinese revolution had been lost because of the leadership of Stalin-Bukharin, after the saboteurs of British trade unionism had succeeded with the aid of the blind bureaucracy of Moscow in stifling the uprising of the revolutionary masses, the leadership of the Comintern has announced the arrival of the "third period" as a period of immediate revolutionary struggles. Since then, that is for two years, the picture of world revolution has been systematically distorted along the lines required by the "third period." Revolutionary policy based on the real state of the class struggle gives way to a policy of fireworks.

These same years of follies of the Comintern were the years of revival of the social democracy. A new generation of workers has grown up, a generation that did not live through the betrayal of the social democracy during the war but has, on the other hand, known the vacillations of the Communist parties over the past six or seven years. Hoping with one stroke to win hegemony over the masses, the Sixth Congress adopted the theory of "social fascism." As if one could conquer a mighty enemy by means of a magic formula.

In identifying the democratic servants of capital with capital's fascist bodyguards, the Comintern has rendered social democracy the greatest service. In the countries where fascism is demonstrating strength, that is, first of all in Italy and then in Austria and Germany, the social democracy has little difficulty in showing the masses not only the differences but also the antagonism between it and fascism. By the same token, it absolves itself of having to show that it is not the democratic servant of capitalism. The whole political struggle is thus transposed to an artificial plane, to the greatest benefit of the social democracy.

Having thus erected a wall between itself and the social democratic masses, the Communist bureaucracy has in actuality ceased to struggle against the social democracy, reducing its task to tumultuous mobilizations of that small minority of the working class which it influences. That is what the "red days" are for.

Work inside the trade unions is invested with the same char-
acter. Referring to the indubitable necessity of utilizing economic conflicts to radicalize the masses and thus to prepare for a general strike and uprising, the Communist bureaucracy, under the spur of the theory of the "third period," applies an adventurist tactic which can lead only to defeats. Instead of a study of the concrete situation of a strike struggle, there are quotations from recent directives of Manuilsky or Molotov. "Politicization" of strikes is more often than not reduced to substituting sham slogans for the real ones, behind the backs of the disoriented masses. For the party bureaucracy the problem of staying in power looms above all others. The worse its errors, the quicker it is to use its methods of internal party struggle inside the trade-union movement, temporarily consolidating its positions in the apparatus as a substitute for the support it has lost among the masses.

The official press, and principally Pravda, misleads its readers concerning the real situation within the Comintern. Nevertheless the facts are there. At the present moment, when the commercial and industrial crisis is again creating great instability in capitalist relations socially and internationally, we see the Communist parties weakened, internally disorganized, without confidence in the leadership, and without the confidence of the masses in the Comintern slogans.

The gravest thing is that under the cover of "self-criticism" a disastrous regime of servile adulation before all the zigzags of the "general line"—concocted by a group of irresponsible functionaries—has been extended from the Communist Party in the Soviet Union to the Comintern.

Communism's right wing, inspired by the openly opportunist elements (Brandler, Louis Sellier, Lovestone, Jilek, Roy, etc.), who only yesterday worked hand in hand with Stalin in his blind fury against the left, is attracting many revolutionary workers misled by the nefarious adventurism of the official policy. But the number of worker communists who finally become completely alienated is still greater.

The break of the epigonic leadership from the Leninist tradition assumes a definite organizational form: all the cadres that participated in the building of the Comintern and presided over its leadership in the period of the first four congresses are not only expelled from the leadership but in their overwhelming majority are excluded from the ranks of official communism. This fact alone reveals the abyss that has been created between today and the revolutionary past. The new "theory," the new policy, and the new regime have acquired
new people. It must be said openly to the workers: at the hour of danger, at the moment of decisive combat, lack of revolutionary unity of the Comintern apparatus will become strikingly obvious to all. Irresponsible subordinates, always ready to accommodate themselves to each new leadership, have never been capable of leading the assault against the ruling classes.

The left wing (the Bolshevik-Leninists), whose clear-sighted criticism and slogans have been entirely confirmed from the standpoint of the internal development of the USSR and international events, is subjected to the most vicious attacks. Nevertheless, and in spite of all the lies of the official press, the Left Opposition is growing and fortifying itself ideologically throughout the world. Progress has been great especially in this last year. The press of the Left Opposition in Europe, in America, and in Asia is today the only serious Bolshevik-Marxist press, analyzing events, drawing conclusions, proceeding to the formation of new cadres, and laying the groundwork for the regeneration of the Comintern.

In every country the Left Opposition has put out of its ranks all those who, under cover of its banner, endeavored to dissimulate their spirit of opportunism, their petty-bourgeois dillettantism, or their semianarchist hostility to the land of the proletarian dictatorship. In spite of all the calumnies of the official press, the International Left Opposition remains unshakably faithful to the October Revolution and the Soviet state.

The false friends whom the Soviet bureaucracy draws to itself by means of concessions or handouts—the Purcells, Fimmens, and Barbusses of all countries—are all very good for anniversary "festivals" but not for revolutionary struggle. The Opposition is a result of ideological selection and is tempered by persecution and repression. At the difficult hours, it will be in the front lines.

The Russian Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionaries, and other groupings reduced to nothing at the same time as the bourgeoisie, eagerly await the crisis, hoping to emerge from the void. The "democratic" scoundrels of the exploiting classes think they can rise again in the fall of the Soviet power, which they impatiently await. In reality, the fall of the dictatorship of the proletariat would open up a period of civil war for many years, with sporadic attempts at impotent Bonapartist dictatorship in various corners of the country in the Chinese or Denikin manner, and with the inevitable consequence
that economic and cultural development would be arrested for many years. The way out of all this chaos could not be along the lines of a democracy—this political form is least likely in Russia, given its structure and history—but much more likely would take the form of colonial subjugation or of a new October Revolution.

The international social democracy does not want to and cannot acknowledge the economic and cultural scope of the October Revolution, which in all areas displayed a force of creativity unequaled by any regime in history. All the current dangers, whose source lies in the complete betrayal by the social democracy and its conscious submission to capitalism plus the mistakes of the Stalinist leadership, cannot for a single instant obscure the fact that thanks to the proletarian character of the state we have been able to attain a tempo of economic development that capitalism has never known. In itself, the experience of planned production and collectivization, despite contradictions and errors, is a gigantic acquisition for all of humanity. Can such errors be compared for an instant with "errors" such as the patriotic participation of the social democracy in the imperialist slaughter or the present disgusting game of Mueller and MacDonald, who crawl about in search of a magic formula for the rejuvenation of capitalism?

The achievements of the October Revolution are evidence of the infinite possibilities that would be opened to Europe and all humanity if the social democracy of Germany, Britain, and other countries—where it can even formally become a majority once it simply wants to, that is, once it advances a proletarian program—placed on the agenda socialist reconstruction based on indissoluble cooperation with the Soviet Union. But that is out of the question, for the social democracy constitutes the "democratic" base for capitalist conservatism and is the penultimate resource of a society based upon exploitation. Its ultimate resource will be fascism.

The social democratic "criticism" of the Soviet regime is like the cry of the night watchman: it serves to maintain the tranquility of the propertied and to let them sleep at night. To fight against the dictatorship of the proletariat, the social democracy utilizes the difficulties that it has itself created for the Soviet Union, augmented by those the leadership has caused. If with respect to the capitalist world the social democracy plays a protective role, with respect to the USSR its task has a purely restorationist character. The struggle for "democracy" and "freedom"—within the arena of world
imperialism protected by the social democracy—means a struggle for the revitalization of capitalism. This is the only reason the question is important. It indicates that the graver the crisis becomes, the more implacable our struggle will become against all the democratic agents of the restoration, no matter who they are. At the same time, events prove that communism cannot fight victoriously against the social democracy except on the road marked out by the Opposition.

The party is the supreme political weapon. It is the party that embodies the possibilities of the revolution and its future. But it is from the party itself that the dangers proceed today. The adventurism of the bureaucracy is not concerned with the fate of the party. Parallel with the drive for 100 percent collectivization goes the drive to register 100 percent of the factory and shop workers in the party. This means nothing less than the dissolution of the party into the class, that is, the abolition of the party. The bureaucratic apparatus at the same time is acquiring ever more self-sufficiency. Its erratic behavior encounters neither criticism, nor correction, nor opposition, until events themselves strike back. The first tremors of forewarning have already come. All indications are that the next tremor will be much more formidable than all those that have come before.

The entire population of the country, even though not very obviously, is taking this into account very profoundly. Naturally, each class in its own way. A dull uneasiness pervades the party. But the regime that prevails in the party is such that nobody dares to express fears or even to ask questions. The regime of "self-criticism" in its new stage obliges each and every one to subscribe not only to the absolute correctness but also to the "genius" of the leadership and to hound those whom the leadership orders hounded.

It is evident from this that the "victory" of the Stalinist bureaucracy over the Opposition was at the same time a victory over the party. This process coincides with the wearing out of a whole layer of revolutionaries, with the growth of bureaucracy and of the petty bourgeoisie in the USSR, with the wave of capitalist reaction and social democracy in the whole world, with the defeat of revolutionary movements, with the weakening of the influence of communism and the strengthening of opportunist tendencies in its ranks.

The 1927-28 crisis in grain collection having led it into a blind alley, the Stalinist apparatus abruptly reversed its policy
and began a struggle against a section of the petty-bourgeois forces, whose aid it had mobilized against the left wing. Without the slightest hesitation, the Opposition endorsed this reversal and declared itself ready to support the leadership all the way in the direction of a revolutionary policy and a cleansing of the party regime.

But it is now incontestable that the swing to the left in 1928, which was the origin of an extremely sharp zigzag, did not result in a new course. It could not result in one, since it was not accompanied by the ideological regeneration of the party. Nothing has changed: there is still the same miserable and eclectic hodgepodge instead of living theory; still the same factional bureaucratic selection of personnel, only much more narrowly based; still the same mechanical procedures, but pushed to the extreme.

The program of the administrative liquidation of a class is in actuality no less disastrous in the political field than the scandalous report of Stalin to the conference of Marxist agronomists was in the field of theory. There must be thousands upon thousands of people in Lenin's party who feel uneasy and indignant about Stalin's politics and theory. Nevertheless there was no protest at all. Nobody dared to reply, while in the press the latest sycophants began promoting the ideas of this ignorant report as the last word in historical thought.

The top-level Stalinist group has taken command in the most undisguised manner. This is precisely why its time of greatest victory — when the "leaders" of the right wing capitulated — was also the beginning of its end as the dominating force in the party. The coronation of the infallible leadership was judged necessary at the very moment that this same leadership faced bankruptcy.

The existence of the party becomes ever more illusory. Stalin handles party congresses in a more disgraceful way than the czar did the Duma. At the same time, within the formal confines of the Communist Party there are many tens of thousands of revolutionary proletarians who can become and will become the motive force for the party's regeneration. We are linking the destiny of our faction to this nucleus.

The circumstances in which the Opposition cadre has been placed are absolutely unprecedented in the history of the revolutionary movement. To the harsh material conditions of deportation is added the system for complete political isolation. A complex system of measures of a political and personal or-
der has been directed toward breaking the back of exile resistance. At the same time the official press brings the Oppositionists, abandoned in the most remote parts of the country, glowing reports on the progress of collectivization, industrialization, and the uninterrupted victories of the Communist parties throughout the world.

Some of the isolated and weaker elements do not withstand this pressure. But the majority of the capitulations are obviously simulated. Broken and exhausted, they sign what they do not believe. A new series of capitulations is being prepared for the Sixteenth Congress, beginning with furtive negotiations and followed by secret agreements behind the scenes. This sort of stage-play is one of the most disgusting manifestations of revolutionary exhaustion and moral decay. The pathetic invocation of the so-called need of "returning" to the party betokens only cynicism toward that party. For can the party be served by deception and falsehood? That is why the most "eminent" capitulators are immediately transformed into unburied political corpses, while the expelled and hunted Opposition remains an active factor in the life of the Soviet republic and the Communist International.

After all, there is nothing very astonishing in this. The innumerable books and pamphlets against the Opposition published since 1923, the special collections of quotations prepared for congresses and conferences, the arsenals constructed against "Trotskyism," etc., are today the most convincing proof in favor of the Opposition. We stand by our own platform. They fear it mortally, while seeking to assail it by means of provocative polemics. Yet today as yesterday, the whole ideological life of the party centers on the Oppositionist platform.

The declaration of Comrade Rakovsky, supported by the basic cadres of the Opposition, was an application of the policy of the united front toward the party. The centrist leadership replied to it by intensifying repressions. To the Opposition's expression of its sincere readiness to tone down the organizational rigidity of our struggle for a Marxist line, the apparatus responded by shooting Blumkin. We must speak about this openly to the party and to the working class. We must explain the meaning of our proposal, name those responsible for its rejection, and proclaim our indestructible determination to fight for our opinion and to increase twofold, fivefold, tenfold our efforts to consolidate the Bolshevik-Leninist faction. Only in this way can loyalty to the October Revolution be manifested today.
A French proverb says that one must know how to fall back sometimes in order the better to leap forward. That is the position in which the leaderships of the Soviet state and the Comintern find themselves today. Both are driven by their own adventurism into an impasse. Placing "prestige" above the interests of the world revolution, the centrist bureaucracy draws the noose around the neck of the party ever more tightly.

In matters of tactics, the first task is the following: to retreat from adventurist positions. A retreat is inevitable in any case. It must be carried out as soon as possible and as orderly as possible.

Put an end to "complete" collectivization, replacing it with a careful selection based on a real freedom of choice. Make the collectives correspond to the resources actually available.

Put an end to the policy of administrative abolition of the kulak. Curbing the exploiting tendencies of the kulak will remain a necessary policy for many years. The fundamental policy with regard to the kulak holdings must consist of a rigid contract system, that is, a contract with government organs obliging the kulak to furnish specific products at specific prices.

Put an end to the "racetrack-gallop" pace of industrialization. Reevaluate the question of the tempos of development in the light of experience, taking into account the necessity of raising the standard of living of the masses. Pose point-blank the question of the quality of production, as vital for the consumer as it is for the producer.

Put an end to inflation by establishing rigid financial discipline with a corresponding cutback in plans that are beyond us.

Give up the "ideal" of a closed economy. Work out a new variant of the plans based on as much interaction as possible with the world market.

Based on the growing unemployment in a number of countries, develop a serious international campaign of concrete proposals to enhance economic cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Organize an offensive of the working masses under this slogan, particularly of the unemployed, against the Social Democratic government in Germany and the Labour government in Britain.

Stop looking upon the Comintern as an auxiliary apparatus for the struggle against the dangers of intervention. It is no longer a question of occasional demonstrations against war
but of a struggle against imperialism and for the world revolution. It is necessary to develop a genuine struggle to win the masses in the capitalist countries, taking into account the real state of the economic and political processes in each country.

Stop falsifying facts, transforming (verbally) insignificant economic conflicts or small demonstrations into supposedly revolutionary struggles. End the falsification of statistical data in the service of preconceived schemas. Drive from our midst the boasters and liars—those who betray the masses.

Give up the scholasticism of the "third period"!

Put an end to the adventurist policy of "red days"!

Condemn the theory of "social fascism," which renders the greatest service to the social democracy!

Return to the Leninist policy of the united front!

The loss of influence over the youth is one of the most menacing symptoms of the abyss that is opening up before the Comintern and the masses. Never yet has bitter, cynical, self-interested, and conceited bureaucracy been able to find its way into the hearts of the younger generations.

What is needed is not official commands but sensitive and tactful leadership by the party. One must give the proletarian youth the opportunity to develop their own initiative, to make their own judgments, to discuss, to commit mistakes and correct them. Without such elementary steps there is a danger of a total rupture between the revolutionary generations.

Above all, it is necessary to alter the policy of the Comintern in the East.

The organization of peasant guerrilla warfare in China while the workers' movement in the proletarian centers continues to stagnate is to throw dust in the eyes—it is the sure road to the destruction of the Communist Party. It is necessary to stop playing with the fire of adventurism. The Chinese Communist Party must be armed with the slogans of revolutionary democracy to aid it in the mobilization of the great masses in the city and countryside.

The weakness of the Indian proletariat at a time when a profound revolutionary crisis is developing in the heart of an enormous colonial country is explained by the long reign of the reactionary theory and practice of the "workers' and peasants' party" (Stalin). The cowardly, halfway abandonment of this theory is not enough. It must be pitilessly condemned as the worst example of the political treachery that has for a long time compromised
the proletarian forces of Japan, India, Indonesia, and other countries of the East.

With no less decisiveness there must be a repudiation of the slogan of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," which is only a reactionary cover for a policy along the lines of the Kuomintang, that is, for the hegemony and dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in the national revolution.

The program of the Comintern adopted at the Sixth Congress is entirely eclectic. It gives an incorrect conception of the world situation. It is built up on a concoction of internationalism and national socialism. It gives a Menshevik characterization of the colonial revolutions and of the role that the liberal bourgeoisie plays in them. It is impotent and inept in the field of transitional demands. It defends the erroneous slogan of "democratic dictatorship." It combines the scholasticism of Bukharin with the empiricism of Stalin and gives a theoretical justification for all the zigzags of centrism.

It is necessary to construct a program worthy of the theory of Marx and the revolutionary school of Lenin.

It is impossible to emerge from the present contradictions without crises and struggles. A favorable change in the relationship of forces on a world scale, some striking success of the revolution, would constitute an important and even decisive factor in the domestic affairs of the Soviet Union. But it is impossible to construct a policy on the expectation of some miraculous salvation "in the shortest possible time." Certainly there will be no lack of economic and revolutionary crises in the coming period, especially in Europe and Asia. But this will not be enough to solve the problem. If the post-war defeats taught us anything, it was that without a strong and confident party which has won the trust of the masses victory is inconceivable. But on this very decisive point, the balance of the post-Lenin period shows a marked deficit.

That is why it is necessary to be able to foresee that the situation internally and internationally heralds a period of prolonged and grave difficulties which will have political repercussions. The suppressed questions, the hidden doubts, the heavy discontent of the masses will come to the surface. The problem is to understand whether they will explode tumultuously, taking the party by surprise, or if the party will be able to muster sufficient forces at the decisive moment to become a new party (or rather the old party again) in determining its
role in regard to the laboring masses. The key to the future is
to be found in this alternative.

To make the necessary retreat, to renew its strategic arsenal
without too much damage and without losing its sense of pers­
spective—this is only possible for a party that clearly under­
stands its goal and knows its strength.

This demands collective criticism of the whole experience of
the party in the post-Lenin period. The fraud and lies of "self­
criticism" must be replaced by internal democracy within the
party. A general examination of the general line—not in its
application but in its direction—this is the way to begin.

Only the Left Opposition is capable in the present circum­
stances of fearlessly criticizing and explaining all that is hap­
pening in the country and the party, to the extent that it is
the result of the whole preceding course of development. As
long as this has not been understood, it is of no avail to talk
of any sort of "general line" whatever.

At the present moment the Left Opposition is more than
ever a necessity for the party. The crimes of the Stalinist ap­
paratus must be stopped and the Opposition returned to its
place within the party. This we will say once more to the Six­
teenth Congress.

The mission of the Opposition at the present time can be
formulated as follows: to increase tenfold its efforts to aid the
party, despite all obstacles, to overcome the profound crisis
that is manifesting itself internally, before there should develop
in all its amplitude a crisis of the revolution.

Just as during the years of the imperialist slaughter little
uncompromising groups and even isolated revolutionary in­
dividuals—the "renegades" of the years of the imperialist war—
embodied proletarian internationalism, so the Left Opposition,
small in numbers and persecuted, is the guardian of the revo­
lutionary party. Neither the oppression of rulers nor the treach­
ery of the weak and exhausted will lessen our determination.

Against bureaucratism! Against opportunism! Against ad­
venturism!

For the October Revolution!
For the regeneration of the Communist Party and the Com­
intern on the basis of Leninism!
For the international proletarian revolution!
Mysterious things are happening in the headquarters of the Communist International. The apparatus has grown so powerful that it no longer feels embarrassed about performing its secret "functions" in the open. Articles and documents are being published that obviously have some very special—one may say occult—meaning. In these articles the priests of the first rank speak a language that can only be understood by the priests of the second rank. To those of the third rank, the occult meaning of their language is unintelligible, and ordinary mortals can only guess what it is all about.

Number 1 (1930) of the magazine Bolshevik—the principal cookery of bureaucratic mysticism and mystification—contains three speeches of Stalin which he made in May 1929 to the presidium of the Comintern and its committees.

The editors of the magazine have painstakingly emphasized, in the case of each speech, that it "is being published for the first time." But they have not explained why these old and, alas, very poor speeches were set in type at all. The speeches belong to the period when Lovestone, still a member of the presidium of the Comintern, was competing with Foster for the position of priest of the first rank. The description of their competition given in his speech is not without a certain cynical precision. Here is how realistically Stalin has pictured the fight between these two clans for the right to represent in the United States the latest revelations of Leninism:

"The Foster group, wanting to demonstrate its loyalty to the Russian party, declares itself 'Stalinist.' Very well! We, the Lovestoneites, will go further than the Foster group, and we will demand that Comrade Bukharin be recalled from the Communist International. Let the Fosterites try to beat that!
We will show those people in Moscow how we Americans can play the market! The Foster group, wanting to demonstrate its intimacy with the Communist International, demands that the decision of the Communist International about the removal of Pepper be carried out. Very well! We, the Lovestoneites, will go further, and expel Comrade Pepper from the party. Let the Fosterites try to beat that! We will show those people in Moscow how we Americans can play the market" (Bolshevik, number 1, 1930, p. 10).

To appreciate these lines adequately, one must remember that the talk is not about brokers, after all, but about two factions, one of which had been leading the American party for several years and had put through the renowned campaign against Trotskyism. The other was subsequently placed at the head of the American party in order to fulfill the tasks of the "third period."

One cannot help asking: What purpose does Stalin pursue in publishing these speeches today, many months after they were given, and thus publicly placing Foster, who is holding so high the banner of Stalinism, on the same level with Lovestone, who was expelled from the Communist International? The mystery is great. Such an unexpected publication of speeches, made in the most secret conferences, would be simply incomprehensible if one did not assume some new machinations behind the scenes, about which the priests of the first rank consider it timely to forewarn the priests of the second.

But can one be permitted to make such a disrespectful assumption? From other remarks in Stalin's speech it would appear not. The general theme of the speech is—although you might not believe it—revolutionary morals. Yes, yes. No joking. Here is what the gifted orator has to say about it:

"Either we are Leninists and our relations with each other, as well as the relations between the different sections and the Communist International, must be built on mutual confidence, must be as pure and transparent as crystal, and then there must be no room in our relations for rotten diplomatic tricks... or else we are not Leninists, and then..."—and then, of course, everything is permitted: intrigues, falsity, dark hints, vile slanders, murder from ambush.

However, insofar as Stalin is a Leninist he is, according to his own attestation, "as pure and transparent as crystal." To what extent this is true of him has been, as is well known, once and forever testified by Lenin himself in describing his character as disloyal. What then is the meaning of this unex-
pected publication of an old speech? For there must be a meaning.
Was it done only in order to completely discredit the expelled Lovestone? Suppose we admit that. Then what about Foster? Why does the pure and transparent moralist cast mud at the same time on the present leader of this party? Let us read on:

"To characterize the way in which pure communist morals are being distorted and covered with mud in the process of factional struggle we could refer to such facts as, for instance, my conversation with Comrades Foster and Lovestone. . . . I am talking about the conversation that took place at the time of the Sixth Congress. It is characteristic that in correspondence with his friends Comrade Foster alludes to this conversation as something mysterious, something that should not be mentioned aloud. . . . Where does this mysticism come from? And what is it for, dear comrades? What could there be mysterious about my conversation with Comrades Foster and Lovestone? To hear these comrades, one might think that I was talking to them about things that I would be ashamed to tell you about. But this is absurd, dear comrades. And what is all this mysticism for? Is it so difficult to understand that I have nothing to hide from comrades? Is it so difficult to understand that I am always ready at any moment to relate to the comrades all the contents of my conversation with Foster and Lovestone from beginning to end?" (p. 11, emphasis ours).

Thus Foster is accused of no more and no less a crime than "distorting" and "covering communist morals with mud." But Foster is the head of the Communist Party in the United States! Foster is a member of the presidium of the Comintern. How are we to understand this?

We do not demand that all communists, even though they belong to the breed of leaders, should necessarily be "as pure and transparent as crystal." That would be a too high, indeed a superhuman criterion. But still, between "crystal" and "mud" there are many intervening gradations. How shall a simple mortal explain the fact that a player of the market, Lovestone, has been replaced by Foster, who covers with mud "pure communist morals"? And why—this is the point of the question—does the pure-and-transparent-as-crystal leader of leaders find it necessary to disclose this hidden disgrace so many months after the muddy Foster has replaced the gambler Lovestone at the wheel of leadership?
At least we learn from these speeches—which, to tell the truth, we did not doubt before—that Foster won his victory, not at all against Stalin, but on the contrary with the help of some behind-the-scenes conversation with Stalin. "Where does this mysticism come from, and what is it for, dear comrades?" Precisely: Wherefrom and what for? Is it so difficult to understand that Stalin has nothing to hide from the comrades? Is it so difficult to understand that Stalin is "ready at any moment to relate to the comrades all and everything from beginning to end"—all, decidedly all?

In spite of our bewilderment, we cannot resist the temptation of a hypothesis: Isn't this all just a first step toward overthrowing Foster? It seems impossible otherwise to understand the necessity of slandering a recently appointed leader, calling him a mudslinger. Nor is the situation simplified by the following words in Stalin's speech:

"What is the solution?" he asks himself, and answers: "Comrade Foster suggested one plausible solution. According to his proposition it is necessary to transfer the leadership to the minority [i.e., the Foster group]. Can this solution be accepted? No, it cannot be accepted. The delegation of the ECCI made a mistake when it sharply dissociated itself from the majority group [the Lovestone group] and did not at the same time dissociate itself from the minority group. The proposition of Comrade Foster, with all its consequences, falls of its own weight" (p. 12).

It seems that in May 1929 Stalin flatly refused Foster the right to inherit Lovestone's place. Was it quite flat, though, his refusal? At that time it was understood that Foster had still to show proof of his "loyalty."

Stalin was accusing Foster, as if incidentally, of having been ready, in the interests of factional struggle with Lovestone, to use the "hidden Trotskyists." That was, in May 1929, the chief accusation. The task of Stalin's sermon, then, was not to discredit but to intimidate Foster. And it was wholly successful. Foster produced in abundance all the demanded proof of his loyalty. In his struggle against the Left Opposition he outdid himself. And in consequence, after a private conversation with Stalin in Moscow, Foster received into his own hands the American "apparatus" and—from being a minority became a majority. During this operation, while Foster was successfully "covering communist morals with mud," Stalin kept silent. But now, when Foster has completely received into his hands the fate of official communism in the United
States, Stalin publishes his previous sermon with a mysterious note: "Published for the first time."

The matter is complicated still more by the following quite unexpected attack:

"Foster and Bittelman" — the orator here becomes indignant — "do not see anything improper in declaring themselves 'Stalinists' in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the Russian Communist Party. But this is really indecent, dear comrades. Do you not know that there are not [!] and there must not be [!!] any 'Stalinists'? Why should such indecencies be permitted from a minority?" (p. 9).

It appears that to declare oneself a Stalinist is really indecent. Who would have thought so? In the same issue of Bolshevik another "crystal," smaller in size but no less transparent, Kuusinen, proves in twenty closely set pages that to be a Stalinist is the first and, as a matter of fact, the only duty of every official seriously interested in his own fate. The article of the incomparable hero of the Finnish revolution of 1918 is even entitled "Stalin and the Bolshevization of the Party."

With his usual brilliancy, the author proves that all its successes in China, Britain, and other countries, the Communist International owes to Stalin — all its defeats to someone else. On his part, Stalin praises Kuusinen highly in his speech. But we have to believe that this is just a mere accident, which has nothing to do with the case. If Kuusinen in January 1930 declares himself a Stalinist to the length of twenty pages, it is his private business. But when in May of 1929 Foster made similar announcements, he was trying to play on a rise in the market, and it was "really indecent, dear comrades."

Can it be that all this taken together is just a sad misunderstanding? It seems that we shall have to believe so, because — "Comrades, the Communist International is not a stock market, after all. The Communist International is the holy of holies of the working class. You must not confuse the Comintern with the stock exchange." Such are the incomparable, purely Stalinist formulas. They are taken from the same speech.

But nevertheless we hold to our conviction that everything in the world has its cause, and everything in politics its purpose. Is it possible to assume that this speech "is being published for the first time" only in order to prove once more the political incorruptibility of Stalin?

Taken by itself such an assumption is not absolutely incredible in the present "third period" — a period characterized above
all by its monstrous, arch-American, shamefully indecent advertisement of the personalities of the superleadership. Still it is difficult to imagine that the reputations of the as-yet undeposed leaders of the second rank might be dragged in the mud without any evident necessity—just casually besmirched in passing. If this is really so, it means that a new phase of the Bonapartist degeneration of the bureaucratic regime has arrived—a phase in which even the closest associates are regarded in the same light as the "mob."

But we think that the nub of the matter is not only there. All the precedents—and there are more than a few—point to the conclusion that in Stalin's faction the Foster stock is going down. Why? We do not know. We know only that it is not for reasons of principle. In that field it is doubtful whether Foster is inclined to cause any difficulties. What is the matter then? The mystery has not yet emerged from the keeping of the priests of the first two ranks. But why not ask the author of the speeches about it? He is the one who has no taste for mysteries. "Is it so difficult to understand that he has nothing to hide from the comrades? Is it so difficult to understand that he is always ready at any moment to tell the comrades, from beginning to end—everything, everything?"—except, perhaps, how and why he murdered Blumkin? (We intend to have an answer to that question too.)

But Foster, it seems, ought to be getting ready for a change—unless, indeed, the publication of this article should save him. 148

P.S. Pravda on March 7 brings the news that Stalin's speeches on the American question have been published in the form of a pamphlet. 149 The first edition is 100,000 copies. We were right. The matter is much more "profound" than it could have seemed to an outsider. However, such an unexpected circulation of such inane speeches (except for cynical casuistries there is nothing in them) does not offer any key to the mystery. An edition of 100,000! Then it was really meant for the masses. But what will the masses make out of this sudden commentary on the sudden career of Foster? Is this new edition merely designed to show Foster that the boss is not joking? Or is this apocalyptic circulation only a by-product of the efficiency of the administrators, as in the case of collectivization? It certainly becomes more and more difficult to find your way among the zigzags of the general line.
The Shooting of Oppositionists

The killing of Blumkin was only a beginning. We are informed of the shooting of two more Oppositionists, Comrades Silov and Rabinovich. Obviously, the idiotic story about Oppositionists participating in sabotage of the railroad system was meant to show something else, to create if you like some kind of explanation for the Thermidorean attack on the Bolshevik-Leninists. But Comrades Silov and Rabinovich had no connection whatsoever with "sabotage" or railroads.

The fact that Stalin has concealed till now that he shot Blumkin shows that he has nothing to say to substantiate the current treacherous assassination. Stalin's motives for these fresh crimes are to be explained by the desire for vengeance and the usurper's alarm.

The assassination does not intimidate the Opposition—of that there is no need to speak; neither does it stop Stalin from contemplating others. We have suffered heavily on account of the crimes of the Stalinist apparatus. But we do not identify the apparatus with the party. Punishment in reply to the murderous policy of the Stalinist faction is the right of the party as a whole. It falls to us, who are in its ranks.

Christian Georgevich Rakovsky in Danger

In the last number of the Biulleten we gave news of Comrade Rakovsky's health. Now we are in receipt of new, even more disturbing information about his condition. We are informed that at the beginning of March, Christian Georgevich suffered a severe heart attack. This was the second in recent times. The attack came at six o'clock in the morning. The doctors feared for Comrade Rakovsky's life unless he could be
moved immediately for climatic and sanatorium treatment. Comrade Rakovsky's next move — to Barnaul — is disastrous.

On March 26, the family of L.D. Trotsky sent a telegram from Constantinople to the family of Rakovsky in Barnaul. The text of the telegram read: "Extremely disturbed Christian's health." No reply to this telegram has been received. It is perfectly obvious the telegram was intercepted. In communicating these facts of a criminal move against Comrade Rakovsky's life, we address these lines afresh to all friends, with a call to help save Rakovsky!

**To Our Friends Abroad**

The profound crisis that has shaken the Soviet economy and the party imparts to the question of reliable connections with the Soviet Union special sharpness and urgency. It is necessary to provide our *Biulleten* with an up-to-date inflow of correspondence, articles, and any information in general from the USSR. This and other tasks can be solved; all that is needed is initiative, ingenuity, and persistence.

We turn to our friends abroad with a warm appeal not only to redouble but to increase tenfold their efforts for the maintenance of our *Biulleten*. Don't miss any occasion to provide the help we need so badly, send literature, get information, create or strengthen connections.

It is necessary to send into Russia suitable addresses from abroad for the systematic mailing of correspondence. The more addresses, the wider the correspondence, the more fully and currently will the *Biulleten* be able to comment on the tasks of the October Revolution, which is experiencing a profound crisis.

It is necessary to follow carefully what is received from the USSR in the way of letters and articles sent in good time to our editorial board.

No less important is it to send the *Biulleten* into the USSR, even if only individual copies. The number of tourists coming from the USSR and returning there is very great. Among them the percentage sympathetic to us is significantly high, as our friends abroad testify. Only correct organization is needed. It is necessary to appoint special comrades to tie up the connections and to make the most suitable arrangements for communication and transport.

Don't waste time! Get busy!
In the last number we told the story of L. D. Trotsky's lawsuit against the Dresden publisher Schumann (Reissner firm). We shall briefly recall the essence of the matter.

Appearing in Constantinople, and depicting himself as a fervent supporter of Karl Liebknecht, Schumann concluded an agreement with Comrade Trotsky to publish several of his books. Soon after the contract was signed, however, the author found out that some months previously Schumann had published Kerensky's scurrilous book against Lenin, Trotsky, and the Bolsheviks in general. The author appealed to the court for a dissolution of the agreement. The Berlin court granted the request, since it recognized that the publisher had concealed from the author a type of circumstance that could not help having a decisive influence on him.

This whole lawsuit would, of course, have been of secondary interest if Stalin and his agents had not intervened in the affair. Not long before the court examination (it was put off several times) Schumann unexpectedly declared to the court that he had become a publisher for the Soviet government, which had entrusted him with bringing out five volumes of state documents. On the basis that the "moral and political successors of Lenin," who in Schumann's competent estimation are Stalin, Molotov, etc., have sufficient trust in him, the publisher of Kerensky's scurrilous book, to entrust him with the publication of state documents, Schumann denied L. D. Trotsky the right to break the agreement and demanded that the court compel the author to hand over to him the manuscript of the book *Lenin and the Epigones*. At the time of the discussions with Comrade Trotsky, Schumann did not have, and from all
the circumstances could not have had, any relations with the Soviet government. These relations still did not exist at the moment Trotsky appealed to the court. It was precisely as a result of this appeal that the relations arose. And it was only on this basis that they could arise.

Stalin's interest in foreign editions of the works of Comrade Trotsky requires no proof. It is sufficient to mention the fate of Blumkin and to note in passing that old books of L. D. Trotsky, including official documents of the party, the Communist International, the Soviet government, the military department, etc., written by him, have been removed from storehouses, shops, and libraries and destroyed. In the list of proposed publications by Schumann the book *Lenin and the Epigones* stood in first place, as was mentioned. It is again unnecessary to explain the special interest of Stalin in this topic. Schumann's link with the Soviet institutions in Berlin was established via the head of the press bureau of the embassy. At least Schumann named this person in the first place as a witness he wanted at the trial. It is very probable that it was precisely the head of the press bureau, as part of his duties, who informed Moscow of the forthcoming publication by the Reissner press of Trotsky's book *Lenin and the Epigones*. The connection was made. It turned into a friendship. The pledge of the friendship was an order for five volumes of state documents. The nature of this type of publication is fairly well known: it is not the publisher who pays the "author" but the latter who subsidizes the publisher. The size of the subsidy depends on the extent of the political problems the orderer is pursuing. All circumstances compel the assumption that Schumann had done good business. Evidently Stalin also thought the game worth the candle.

What is Stalin's immediate practical aim? It is clear: to secure unlimited disposal of Trotsky's book *Lenin and the Epigones* and of the series of subsequent books. Schumann himself, of course, does not need the book now; he has already received an advance from Stalin, and on a scale he had not previously conceived. But the unfortunate thing is that Schumann himself is of no use to Stalin without the book. That is why Schumann is now fighting the suit. Having lost it in Berlin, he has transferred it to Dresden. Legal costs evidently do not stop him. The five volumes of state documents are enough to feed his legal idealism. The more so since there is no reason why the five volumes should not turn into eight or ten. Jurists consider that Schumann's only trump card in this
dirty game is the order from the Soviet government. The "moral and political successors of Lenin" are, so to speak, going bail before the court for Schumann's right to publish a book which proves the epigones—are epigones, and consequently in no way the political or moral successors of Lenin.

We already indicated last time that in his latest declaration to the Berlin court Schumann proposed to call two witnesses: the communist Yakubovich, secretary of the Berlin embassy, and the slanderer Kerensky. Yakubovich, to prove that Stalin actually did give, and in time too, the order to Schumann, and consequently trusts him. Kerensky, to prove that Lenin and Trotsky really were agents of the Hohenzollerns. If Yakubovich's authority had proved insufficient it must be supposed that even Kerensky himself would not have refused Schumann and Stalin the necessary service.

This exceptionally scandalous affair evokes some disquiet and confusion in the circles "friendly" to the embassy, which are admittedly not large, since the behind-the-scenes mechanism of the affair has not received the illumination it deserves. Krestinsky, Yakubovich, and the rest calm the excited and confused "friends" with the categorical assertion that they absolutely did not know—imagine, they had no idea!—about Schumann's having published Kerensky's book. And the "friends" hasten to believe. There are such special "friends of the USSR" who bear this appellation just as of old one bore the rank of collegiate assessor or aulic counselor.* These "friends" were earlier prepared to believe the explanations of any Bessedovsky (before he jumped over the fence)—just as they will not for anything believe the fact of the shooting of Blumkin. But the trouble is that apart from these gentlemen, whose friendship for the October Revolution is expressed mainly in festival trips at the expense of the state, there exist real, not titular, friends of the October Revolution, who look differently at the alliance of Stalin with Schumann and Kerensky—through the mediation of Krestinsky and Yakubovich—against Lenin and Trotsky. And we, for our part, will try to make sure they find out.

Or perhaps this alliance does not exist? For Yakubovich asserts that they found Schumann by chance. They knew neither that Schumann wanted to publish Trotsky's book, nor that Trotsky had decided to refuse him the book. These are

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*Grades in the czarist hierarchy of ranks. — Translator
statesmen—are they to bother with such matters? They didn't even know of Trotsky's lawsuit against Schumann. When they gave Schumann the state order, they did not bother to gather information about him. They did not even look at his brochures. They were in a very great hurry; documents brook no delay. But perhaps Yakubovich simply fell in love with Schumann's blue eyes; Stalin could not resist Yakubovich and gave Schumann the large order. Everything in this affair happened by chance. Only Bryukhanov breathed regularly. And all the Stalin-Krestinsky chances happened to coincide with Trotsky's lawsuit against Schumann. You can't do anything with someone who does not want to believe. That's what skeptics and doubters are for, not to believe. Not long ago, Stalin again explained that communists must be "as pure and transparent as crystal" in their actions. And who should know that better than Stalin?

Well, then, all right, let's believe it. There is no alliance; Stalin just happened to bump into Schumann through the mediation of Krestinsky who didn't look enough, with the aid of Yakubovich who didn't listen enough. Anything is possible. But Schumann all the same did publish Kerensky's book, and this book, with all its stupidity and lack of talent, qualities which could be brought out in court in mitigation of guilt, still remains one of the rottenest books written against the Bolsheviks. What steps are Stalin and all the Krestinskys and Yakuboviches intending to take to get away from Kerensky? That is the only question of political importance now.

L.D. Trotsky was deceived by Schumann. But this did not prevent the author, stuck in Constantinople, bound hand and foot, from moving against Schumann and with the help of a lawsuit securing a favorable judgment from the court. What prevents Stalin from taking this path? After all, a German court has decided that a cofighter of Lenin has the right to dissolve an agreement with Schumann, if at the time the contract was concluded a book of Kerensky's was concealed from the author. Stalin's and Krestinsky's way has been prepared. They have only to turn to the court and they will obtain a dissolution of the "chance" contract much easier than Trotsky did. If they really knew nothing of all this, if they have no alliance with Schumann and they are not seeking such an alliance, their way is clear: to turn to the court.

But they will not do this. Why? Because courts are not so credulous as titular "friends." And Schumann is not that simple. By contrast with the "friends," Schumann very well knows how and why he got to know first the head of the press bureau,
then Yakubovich, then the State Publishing House and—most important—the currency section of the People's Commissariat of Finance. Schumann—and not Schumann alone—bears these tender memories engraved not only on the tables of his heart, but in one of the drawers of his writing desk. He can in case of need present the court with a historical sketch of his acquaintance with Stalin's agents who so briefly and convincingly explained to him precisely where to find the "moral and political successors of Lenin." True, Schumann will thereby cause some damage to his own reputation. But firstly, he has not all that much to lose, especially if he is driven to extremities. Stalin cannot appeal to the courts. Krestinsky and Yakubovich do not dare appeal to the courts. Otherwise it cannot help coming out that Stalin is not all so pure and transparent as he ought to be according to the laws of crystallography.

That is why Schumann, despite the initial failure, regards the future with hope. From Stalin's side, Krestinsky will not threaten him with anything. They are allies and behind-the-scene inspirers. That is not the place from which the fight against the defilers who put out dirty papers against Bolshevism will come.155
THE SLOGAN OF
A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN CHINA

April 2, 1930

It seems to me that our Chinese friends deal with the question of political slogans of democracy too metaphysically, even scholastically.

The "intricacies" begin with the name: Constituent Assembly or National Assembly. In Russia until the revolution we used the slogan of a Constituent Assembly because it most clearly emphasized a break with the past. But you write that it is difficult to formulate this slogan in Chinese. If so, the slogan of a National Assembly can be adopted. In the consciousness of the masses, the slogan's content will depend, firstly, on the implication revolutionary agitation gives it and, secondly, on events. You ask, "Is it possible to carry on agitation for a Constituent Assembly while denying that it can be achieved?" But why should we decide in advance that it cannot be? Of course the masses will support the slogan only if they consider it feasible. Who will institute a Constituent Assembly and how will it function? Only suppositions are possible. In case of a further weakening of the military-Kuomintang regime and increasing discontent among the masses, particularly in the cities, it is possible that an attempt will be made by a part of the Kuomintang together with a "third party" to convene something on the style of a National Assembly. They will, of course, cut into the rights of the more oppressed classes and layers as much as they can. Would we communists enter such a restricted and manipulated National Assembly? If we are not strong enough to replace it, that is, to take power, we certainly would enter it. Such a stage would not at all weaken us. On the contrary, it would help us to gather together and develop the forces of the proletarian vanguard. Inside this spurious assembly, and particularly outside of it, we would
carry on agitation for a new and more democratic assembly. If there were a revolutionary mass movement, we would simultaneously build soviets. It is very possible that in such a case the petty-bourgeois parties would convene a relatively more democratic National Assembly, as a dam against the soviets. Would we participate in this kind of assembly? Of course we would participate; again, only if we were not strong enough to replace the assembly with a higher form of government, that is, soviets. Such a possibility, however, reveals itself only at the apex of revolutionary ascent. But at the present time we are far from there.

Even if there were soviets in China—which is not the case—this in itself would not be a reason to abandon the slogan of a National Assembly. The majority in the soviets might be—and in the beginning would certainly be—in the hands of the conciliatory and centrist parties and organizations. We would be interested in exposing them in the open forum of the National Assembly. In this way, the majority would be won over to our side more quickly and more certainly. When we succeeded in winning a majority, we would counterpose the program of the soviets to the program of the National Assembly, we would rally the majority of the country around the banner of the soviets, and this would enable us, in deed and not on paper, to replace the National Assembly, this parliamentary-democratic institution, with soviets, the organ of the revolutionary class dictatorship.

In Russia the Constituent Assembly lasted only one day. Why? Because it made its appearance too late; the Soviet power was already in existence and came into conflict with it. In this conflict, the Constituent Assembly represented the revolution's yesterday. But let us suppose that the bourgeois Provisional Government had been sufficiently decisive to convene the Constituent Assembly in March or April. Was that possible? Of course it was. The Cadets\textsuperscript{157} used every legal trick to drag out the convening of the Constituent Assembly in the hope that the revolutionary wave would subside. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries took their cue from the Cadets. If the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries had had a little more revolutionary drive, they could have convened the Constituent Assembly in a few weeks. Would we Bolsheviks have participated in the elections and in the assembly itself? Undoubtedly, for it was \textit{we who demanded all this time the speediest convening of the Constituent Assembly}. Would the course of the revolution have changed to the dis-
advantage of the proletariat by an early convening of the assembly? Not at all. Perhaps you remember that the representatives of the Russian propertied classes and, imitating them, also the conciliators, were for postponing all the important questions of the revolution "until the Constituent Assembly," meanwhile delaying its convening. This gave the landowners and capitalists a chance to mask to a certain degree their property interests in the agrarian question, industrial question, etc. If the Constituent Assembly had been convened let us say in April 1917, then all the social questions would have confronted it. The propertied classes would have been compelled to show their cards; the treacherous role of the conciliators would have become apparent. The Bolshevik faction in the Constituent Assembly would have won the greatest popularity and this would have helped to elect a Bolshevik majority in the Soviets. Under these circumstances the Constituent Assembly would have lasted not one day but possibly several months. This would have enriched the political experience of the working masses and, rather than retard the proletarian revolution, would have accelerated it. This in itself would have been of the greatest significance. If the second revolution had occurred in July or August instead of October, the army at the front would have been less exhausted and weakened and the peace with the Hohenzollerns might have been more favorable to us. Even if we assume that the proletarian revolution would not have come a single day sooner because of the Constituent Assembly, the school of revolutionary parliamentarism would have left its mark on the political level of the masses, making our tasks the day after the October Revolution much easier.

Is this type of variant possible in China? It is not excluded. To imagine and expect that the Chinese Communist Party can jump from the present conditions of the rule of the unbridled bourgeois-military cliques, the oppression and dismemberment of the working class, and the extraordinarily low ebb of the peasant movement to the seizure of power is to believe in miracles. In practice this leads to adventurist guerrilla activity, which the Comintern is now covertly supporting. We must condemn this policy and guard the revolutionary workers from it.

The political mobilization of the proletariat in leadership of the peasant masses is the first task that must be solved under the present circumstances—the circumstances of the military-bourgeois counterrevolution. The power of the suppressed
masses is in their numbers. When they awaken they will strive to express their strength of numbers politically by means of universal suffrage. The handful of communists already knows that universal suffrage is an instrument of bourgeois rule and that this rule can be liquidated only by means of the proletarian dictatorship. You can educate the proletarian vanguard in this spirit beforehand. But the millions of the toiling masses can be drawn to the dictatorship of the proletariat only on the basis of their own political experience, and the National Assembly would be a progressive step on this road. This is why we raise this slogan in conjunction with four other slogans of the democratic revolution: the transfer of the land to the peasant poor, the eight-hour working day, the independence of China, and the right of self-determination of the nationalities included in the territory of China.

It is understood that we cannot rule out the perspective—it is theoretically admissible—that the Chinese proletariat, leading the peasant masses and basing itself on soviets, will come to power before the achievement of a National Assembly in one or another form. But for the immediate period at any rate this is improbable, because it presupposes the existence of a powerful and centralized revolutionary party of the proletariat. In its absence, what other force will unite the revolutionary masses of your gigantic country? Meanwhile it is our misfortune that there is no strong centralized Communist Party in China; it has yet to be formed. The struggle for democracy is precisely the necessary condition for that. The slogan of the National Assembly would bring together the scattered regional movements and uprisings, give them political unity, and create the basis for forging the Communist Party as the leader of the proletariat and all the toiling masses on a national scale.

That is why the slogan of the National Assembly—on the basis of universal, direct, equal, secret ballot—must be raised as energetically as possible and a courageous, resolute struggle developed around it. Sooner or later the sterility of the purely negative position of the Comintern and the official leadership of the Chinese Communist Party will be mercilessly exposed. The more decisively the Communist Left Opposition initiates and develops its campaign for democratic slogans, the sooner this will happen. The inevitable collapse of the Comintern policy will greatly strengthen the Left Opposition and help it to become the decisive force in the Chinese proletariat.
In the March 30 *Pravda* there is an article by Yaroslavsky entitled "From Left to Right." The article is devoted to the "passage" of the Left Opposition—into the camp of the social democracy. How people, who for over two years have been jailed and exiled for "counterrevolutionary" activity, and even for "the preparation of an armed struggle against the Soviet government" (the official motivation for Trotsky's exile), how these old-time "counterrevolutionaries" can only now begin to "pass" into the camp of the social democracy remains a puzzle. But what is clear is that Yaroslavsky still has to sweat at the task of finding a "scientific" explanation for Article 58 of the penal code on the basis of which the Opposition has been persecuted. This search for an explanation takes on a particularly noisy character now, because there is a squeak in the apparatus and it must be drowned out.

It is no accident that it is Yaroslavsky who was let loose against the Opposition, even though there are more literate and wiser people in the party. But at present the more literate, the wiser, the more conscientious either do not want to be Yaroslavsky's yes-men but still cannot, partly dare not, speak their minds aloud, or else are simply confused. The Yaroslavskys are not confused, for there is nothing in them to be confused. This is why the defense of the Stalinist policy from the Opposition is taken on by Yaroslavsky, and he gives, by the way, a remarkable example of the rot the party is now fed on.

If by way of exception we pause this time to deal with Yaroslavsky's article, it is because with all its insignificance it is symptomatic, and shows very well in what place, according to the German expression, Stalin's shoe pinches.
The Tempo of Industrialization

Several months ago we wrote to the comrades in the USSR that the signs indicating the too great speed of industrialization are multiplying. Quoting our Biulleten, Yaroslavsky writes that this evaluation "is absolutely in no way different from what the Mensheviks write." Absolutely in no way!

It never occurs to Yaroslavsky that the question of correct or incorrect, realistic or unrealistic, tempos exists in itself independently of what the Mensheviks say about it and is decided in connection with material and organizational factors, and not newspaper quotations, still less when those are falsified.

In the period when we Oppositionists fought for higher tempos of industrialization (1923-29), the bourgeois press of the whole world, together with the social democratic, followed in the footsteps of Stalin, repeating the accusation that the Oppositionists were "romanticists," "fanatics," and "superindustrializers."

In 1923-25 we proved that even after the exhaustion of all the prerevolutionary means of production, Soviet industry could have a 20 percent yearly growth. We supported this contention on economic considerations which we will not cite here (see Whither Russia—Toward Capitalism or Socialism?). A year after that a five-year plan was worked out in the inner recesses of Gosplan [the State Planning Commission]. According to this plan the development of industry was to proceed at a declining rate of speed, from 9 percent to 4 percent a year. The Opposition condemned this plan mercilessly. We were accused of "demagogy." After another year the Politburo approved a new five-year plan with a 9 percent yearly growth. The Fifteenth Party Congress approved the correctness of this rate and accused the Opposition of—"disbelief" and "skepticism." This did not stop the Opposition from irreconcilably condemning the new five-year plan. A year and a half after that, Gosplan worked out a third five-year plan with a yearly increase of 29 percent. Growth had coincided—much closer than could be expected—with the hypothetical prognosis of the Opposition in 1925, and fully refuted all the preceding clamor about industrial romanticism and demagogy. Such is the brief prehistory of the question.

The actual growth of industry in the first year of the five-year plan (1928-29) exceeded the plan by fully 10 percent. The leadership, basing itself on this success, immediately decided to complete the five-year plan in four years. Against
this the Opposition raised a voice of warning, this time from the "right." What were our considerations?

1. It is impossible for there to be no disproportions in the draft of the five-year plan. With the fulfillment of the plan they will accumulate, and may manifest themselves sharply, if not in the first year then in the second or third year of the plan, which would result in an arrest of growth. Before industry takes on additional speed, we must, speaking in military terms, carefully examine all abutments or junctions, where all branches of industry interlink.

2. The noticeable depreciation in the quality of products, which is extremely low as it is, is a great danger not only for the consumer but for industry as well, because industry itself is the chief consumer of products. Low quality must inevitably result in a drastic decline in the quantity of production.

3. The question of the tempos of industrial development must not be separated from the question of the living standards of the working masses, because the proletariat is the main producing force, and only a sufficient rise in the proletariat's material and cultural standards can guarantee future high tempos of industrialization. We consider this question of supreme importance.

These are the three chief considerations that prompted the Opposition to raise its warning cry against the reckless pursuit of tempos which replaced the economic lag of the preceding period. If in 1923-28 the Politburo of the party, not understanding the tremendous possibilities inherent in nationalized industry and planned methods of production, was ready to make peace with the idea of 4 or 9 percent of growth, then now, not understanding the material limits of industrialization, it makes a light-minded jump from 20 to 30 percent, adventurously attempting to transform each partial and temporary achievement into an absolute rule and completely overlooking the interdependency of different phases of the industrial process.

When we call for the abandonment of the formal pursuit of quantity and for an actual improvement in quality—does this mean that we call for retreat from actually achieved successes? When we demand the utilization of a part of what is accumulated for the actual needs of the workers—does this mean that we endanger the industrialization? When we demand that, before the 30 percent annual growth is turned into an iron law, we should examine the interrelation between the different branches of industry and the national economy as a whole from the viewpoint of the productivity of labor and the costs
of production—does this mean that we call for a retreat to the Stalin position of yesterday?

If the question is really decided so simply, then why should we stop at 30 percent? Fifty percent is still more. Whoever does not wish to pull "back" must inscribe on his banner at least 75 percent. Or perhaps 30 percent is destined to be the rule? Destined by whom? Destined how? The unfortunate leaders simply arrived at this rule by running into it blindly in the first stages of carrying out the 20 percent plan, which they themselves fought against tooth and nail for several years. Now it appears that only 30 percent is Leninism. Whoever says to the frightened opportunists—Do not lose your heads, do not push industry into a severe crisis—is, don't you see, "absolutely in no way different from the social democracy." Absolutely, in no way!

Aren't these people jesters?

Collectivization

Matters fare still worse, if possible, with the peasant policy. For a number of years the Politburo built its agrarian policy on an idolization of the mighty middle peasant and the individual peasant economy generally. The kulak they simply did not notice or declared insignificant, until he concentrated in his hands 40 percent of the marketable grain and acquired leadership over the middle peasant in addition. Having created his own economic connections and channels, the kulak withheld grain from government industry. After this (to be exact, after February 15, 1928) the belated and frightened leadership struck the kulak with a hail of administrative repressions which immediately clogged the circulation of peasant commodities, practically liquidated NEP, and chased the middle peasant into a blind alley.

When we say that this blind alley was the starting point of the new chapter in collectivization we do not discover or invent anything new. We simply repeat what the official Soviet press has admitted many times. If Yaroslavsky wails that "not one reactionary has come to think of such an abominable explanation," it merely shows that, being absorbed by the perusal of Oppositionist correspondence, the poor man does not read the economic articles in the Soviet press. Yaroslavsky is particularly agitated when we say that the middle peasants have been wavering between collectivization and civil war. He calls this remark "complete renegacy." (The vocabulary of this eavesdropper is not very rich.) But the whole Soviet press is full of information that the peasants, i.e., the middle peasants,
are rapaciously destroying and selling their livestock and equipment. All the leaders call this situation "threatening." The newspapers attribute it to the influence of the kulak. But here one cannot speak of any "ideological" influence but only of the economic ties between the kulak and the middle peasant, of a certain degree of interdependence throughout the peasant market economy, the commodity-and-money economy of the peasantry. In the wholesale selling of cattle as a mass phenomenon we have nothing else but a quiet, sabotaging form of civil war. On the other hand, the tendency to join the collective farms also has a mass character. Isn't it clear that the double nature of the middle peasant, who combines within himself a toiler and a merchant, has reached in the present stage the most contradictory expression? The middle peasant wavers between collectivization and civil war and to a certain degree combines one with the other. This is where the acuteness of the situation and its danger lie. It will increase tenfold if we do not understand it in time.

In the years when three-quarters of the Politburo and 90 percent of the government apparatus had their orientation to the "mighty peasant"—that is, to the kulak—the Opposition demanded energetic measures for agricultural collectivization. Let us recall that in the platform of the Opposition these demands found the following expression:

"The growth of private proprietorship in the countryside must be offset by a more rapid development of collective farming. It is necessary systematically and from year to year to subsidize the efforts of the poor peasants to organize in collectives" [The Real Situation in Russia, p. 68].

And further:

"A much larger sum ought to be appropriated for the creation of state and collective farms. Maximum concessions must be accorded to the newly organized collective farms and other forms of collectivization. People deprived of electoral rights cannot be members of the collective estates. The whole work of the cooperatives ought to be penetrated with a sense of the problem of transforming small-scale production into large-scale collective production. A firm class policy must be pursued in the supply of machinery and an especial struggle waged against the fake machine companies" [ibid., p. 71].

We did not decide the tempo of collectivization in advance because it was for us (it still remains so) a derivative proposition in relation to the tempo of industrialization and a series of other economic and cultural factors.
The Politburo plan two years later outlined the collectivization of one-fifth of the peasants during the *five-year plan*. We suppose this figure did not simply come to Krzhizhanovsky in a dream but was based on technical and economic considerations. Was it so or not? Nevertheless during the first *year and a half* three-fifths of the peasantry were collectivized. Even if we should assume that this swing of collectivization is a complete triumph of socialism, we must simultaneously state that the complete bankruptcy of the leadership is a fact because planned economy presupposes that the leadership foresees the basic economic processes to a certain extent.

But there is not even a suggestion of that. Bukharin, the new, the reconstructed, the completely collectivized and industrialized Bukharin, admits in *Pravda* that the new stage of collectivization grew out of administrative measures in the struggle for bread and that this stage was not foreseen by the leadership "in all its concreteness." This is put not too badly. The mistakes of tempo they made in the considerations of planning amount all in all to a thousand percent. And in what sphere? Not in the production of thimbles but in the question of the socialist transformation of the whole of agriculture. It is clear that some of this "concreteness" Stalin and Yaroslavsky really did not foresee. Bukharin is right here.

As is well known, we never suspected the present leadership of an overabundance of penetrating insight. But it could never make this kind of mistake if collectivization would in reality have resulted from our convincing the peasants by experience of the advantages of large-scale collective economy over individual.

Of course we do not for a moment question the deeply progressive and creative significance of collectivization. We are ready conditionally to assume that in its scope it approximately corresponds to the sweep of the five-year plan. But where did the thousand percent additional success grow out of? That must be explained! Let us assume that the work of the collective farms during the preceding twelve years was so successful that it could convince the whole peasantry not only of the advantages but of the feasibility of general collectivization. It is clear that this kind of conviction could only be developed by means of collectives based on tractors and other machinery. It may be assumed that the overwhelming majority of middle peasants actually recognize today the advantages of working the land with tractors. But complete "tractorization" does not yet follow from this, because we need not
only the conviction of its advantages but the tractor itself. Did the authorities warn the peasants of the actual situation in the sphere of technical material possibilities generally? No! Instead of restraining a panicky collectivization, they extended it by their mad pressure. It is true that now in order to defend the mistake of the thousand percent tempo a new theory has been created, making the question of technical resources one of tenth-rate importance and claiming that socialist agriculture ("the manufacturing kind") can be created by catechism, irrespective of the means of production. We are, however, determined to reject this mystical theory. We do not believe in such a conception of socialism. Moreover we declare a merciless war against this mythology because the unavoidable disappointment of the peasants threatens to create a severe reaction against socialism in general, and this reaction may also embrace considerable circles of workers.

Stalin foresaw the inevitability of his latest retreat on its eve just as little as he foresaw complete collectivization half a year earlier when he was busy with his trivial "theorizing" about the untimeliness of a socialist regime for peasant poultry. The latest dispatches announce that Stalin has succeeded in marching a considerable distance—not forward (Oh wise Yaroslavsky!) but backward. From 60 percent collectivization to 40 percent. We do not in the least doubt that he will still have to retreat a considerable percentage more—always at the tail end of the actual process. Foreseeing this several months ago—that is, in the very heat of the collectivization push—we warned against the consequences of bureaucratic adventurism. If the party had read our warnings as they truly were, and not in the belated distortions of Yaroslavsky, many mistakes would have been, if not avoided, at least greatly modified.

**Our Slogan of Cooperation with the Soviet Union**

The approaching crisis of the Soviet economy coincides with the growing world capitalist crisis. This coincidence has in the final analysis common reasons. World capitalism has outlived itself but the gravedigger is not yet ready for his work. The crisis of the Soviet economy, if we leave aside the mistakes of the leadership, is the economic consequence of the isolated condition of the USSR, that is, the very fact that the world proletariat has not yet swept away capitalism. The problem of the proletarian revolution is the problem of the organization of socialist economy on a world scale. For Europe, whose capitalism is most overripe and sickly, the proletarian revolution means first of all the economic unification of the continent.
The only way we can and must prepare the European workers for the seizure of power is by revealing to them the immeasurable advantages of a correctly planned all-European and later world organization of socialist economy. The slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe, which is imperative now more than ever, is inadequate, however, in its abstract political form. This slogan must be filled with concrete economic content. The economic experience of the Soviet Union is fully sufficient to create an exemplary variant of the plan based on economic cooperation between the USSR and the industrial countries of Europe. In the final historical analysis, for the USSR this is the only way out of the growing internal contradictions. Neither has Europe any other way out of the crisis (unemployment, the growing domination of America, and the perspective of wars). The problem of cooperation in its full dimensions can be decided only through a proletarian revolution and through the creation of the Soviet United States of Europe which, through the medium of the Soviet Union, will also be tied up with liberated Asia.

The European workers must be led by this perspective. They must be presented with a clear and broad plan of economic cooperation based on the exceptionally high coefficients of growth accomplished even in backward, isolated Russia. This is the immeasurable revolutionary significance of the slogan of economic cooperation with the USSR if it is advanced correctly, that is, in a revolutionary manner.

Under the present circumstances this slogan is above all one of the most valuable weapons for the mobilization of the unemployed and the workers generally in connection with unemployment. This is not merely a matter of the possible delivery of commodities to the Soviet Union, as important as this question is in itself. It is a question of getting out of the historical impasse, of altogether new economic possibilities of a united European economy. With this kind of concrete "supranational" plan based on experience in our hands, the communist worker can and must approach the social democratic worker. Under the conditions of the crisis this is the most important approach to the problem of the socialist reconstruction of Europe. With the correct application of the united-front policy, the slogan of cooperation with the USSR and the economic transformation of Europe can be made the wedge that will break off large circles of social democratic workers from the present leaders.

But for that we must first of all liquidate, reject, and con-
damn the theory of socialism in one country. We must make clear to the world proletariat that the Russians are not constructing a separate socialist home for themselves, and that such a structure on a national scale is generally impossible. They are constructing one national wall for the European and later on also for the world socialist home. The further they get the harder it will be to construct this wall, because it may crash without the timely construction of the other walls. There cannot even be any talk about building a roof over the national wall. We must get started with simultaneous work in other countries according to a common plan. This plan must be worked out by the government of the Soviet Union, at any rate its basic features, as a plan of mighty material and spiritual growth of the people of Europe and the whole world.

This is what the slogan of economic cooperation with the Soviet Union means in its developed form, under the present historical circumstances. But such a policy presupposes a radical revision of the theory and practice of the Soviet leadership. The Yaroslavskys are very little fit for such a policy.

**From the Right or From the Left?**

As was not difficult to foresee, Yaroslavsky now "testifies" that the Left Opposition has gone to the Right. When we came out against the 4 percent rate of industrial development and for 20 percent—we were "ultralefts." When we give warning not to leap over to 30 percent, worsening the quality of production and overstraining the work force, we are "Rights."

When as against the Thermidorean policy of reliance on the mighty middle peasant we demanded the policy of collectivization—that was denounced as "ultraleftism." When in the form of antireligious propaganda, we come out against the myth of the faultless beginning of socialism, we are "Rights."

Ever since Molotov's feet became the measure of all things, questions are decided with great simplicity.

All the Mensheviks, cackles Yaroslavsky, came out against the present tempos of industrialization and collectivization. It is therefore clear that the Opposition shares the Menshevik point of view. Yaroslavsky is out to scare somebody. Is it us? No, he is aiming to intimidate his own people—because he hears a squeak in the apparatus.

Menshevism is for the return of the USSR to capitalism, which must for Menshevik satisfaction be crowned by bourgeois democracy. By the way, the Mensheviks supported the
Stalinist industrialization program of yesterday against the Opposition platform, seeing in the former the elements of economic "realism" and declaring the latter "romantic." This is the historic fact. It is self-evident that the Mensheviks are now too for a lowering of the tempos of industrialization. Does this mean that from the Marxian viewpoint the tempos of industrialization have no limits in general?

It is remarkable that in the same article Yaroslavsky refers with great satisfaction to the old Social Revolutionary Minor, who spoke sympathetically of the collectivization in the USSR at some meeting in Paris. From the personal standpoint Minor's declaration undoubtedly does him honor, because it shows that he has a socialist conscience and that he is trying to understand what is actually happening, without the malicious preconceptions of an offended petty bourgeois. But from the political viewpoint, it must not be forgotten for a moment that Minor is one of the oldest Narodniks, who by his whole past is the most insulated against Marxian ideas. How many spears did the Marxists not break in their struggle against the Populist utopians in regard to the construction of a socialism based on the peasant's primitive plow and the commune? Agrarian socialism bore an adventurer stamp with the left-wing Social Revolutionaries and a bureaucratic character with their right wing. In the Stalinist policy the elements of adventurism and bureaucratism unite. It is no wonder that Minor found in the new Stalinism some of the elements of his own old past.

One of the possible definitions of Bolshevism is that it gave in practice the most remarkable synthesis of reform and revolution. At first the social democracy was for reform against revolution; now it is even against reform out of fear of revolution. The social democracy is always against revolution. Does this mean that a denial that a revolutionary situation exists at any given moment is Menshevism?

The Mensheviks were opposed to the October Revolution, together with Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Milyutin, and others. The Mensheviks were opposed to the revolutionary offensive in Germany in 1923 (together with Stalin). The Mensheviks were opposed to a break with the Kuomintang and the building of soviets in China in 1925-27, openly supporting Stalin against our views. Our demand to declare war on the General Council of the Trades Union Congress in the British coal struggle of 1926, the Mensheviks together with Stalin considered an "adventure."
On the other hand the Mensheviks were against the insurrection in Estonia in 1924, against the terrorist adventure in Bulgaria, against the Canton uprising in 1927. Does this mean that we must support adventurist uprisings or organize them? In our pamphlet on the "third period" we demonstrated by means of facts and figures the criminal light-mindedness of Molotov and Company in declaring France to be on the threshold of revolution. The reformists and capitalists may attempt to grasp at our figures for consolation. Does this mean that we should ignore facts and figures? That we should blow out the lantern? Roam about in the dark?

From this brief and incomplete review we see that at all critical moments for the past thirteen years the Mensheviks together with the epigones denied the existence of a revolutionary situation whenever it was at hand. In all these instances they were opposed to us. On the other hand the Mensheviks' judgment, episodically and purely formally, happened to "coincide" with ours when they condemned an insurrection as such whereas we denied the presence of conditions for a successful insurrection. The same thing is now happening in the question of the tempo of industrialization and collectivization.

Tail-endism or Adventurism

Some comrades are disturbed by our denunciation of the present Stalinist course as ultraleft adventurism. One of our friends proves that "complete collectivization" has, on the part of the leadership, not an adventurist but a purely "tail-endist" character. There is no contradiction here. "Tail-endism" always and unavoidably results in ultraleft adventurism, either as its supplement, or else directly. The regeneration of Bolshevism means the unavoidable chemical decomposition of the elements of opportunism and empty "revolutionism."

It must not be forgotten that adventurism can be of two kinds. One expresses the revolutionary impatience of the vanguard and results in running ahead too precipitously; the second expresses the political desperation of the lagging rear-guard. In the April and July demonstrations of 1917, some of the Bolsheviks undoubtedly brought in an element of adventurism. The same kind of tendency, but expressing itself more sharply and having far worse consequences, can be perceived in the insurrection of the Spartacists in 1919, when they attempted to leap over the phase of the Constituent Assembly. On the other hand, the tactic of the German leadership in the March days of 1921 was an attempt to stage an insurrection
on a declining wave. The tactic of the ultraleft leadership in Germany in 1924 was an adventurist supplement to the tail-endism of 1923.\textsuperscript{164} The Canton uprising of 1927 was an adventurist transformation of the opportunism of 1925-27 and together with that a classic example of the desperation of the rearguard.

The movement of the peasants into the collectives, called forth by a combination of economic and administrative measures, became an elemental force. The policy of the bureaucracy was at bottom a model of tail-endism. But the bureaucracy not only proclaimed this policy as its greatest victory—"If we're going for a ride, let's really ride!" cried the parrot as the cat dragged it off by the tail—but also developed a mad pressure on the peasantry under the banner of the liquidation of classes. Tail-endism was transformed directly into adventurism.

Can this adventurism be called ultraleftism and can it be said that we, the Opposition, attack it from the right? Strategically, this would of course be senseless, because the tactical zigzag of Stalin undermines the revolutionary class strategy. Tactically, nevertheless, we have this time on the part of the Stalinists not a right but an ultraleft zigzag—it cannot be called anything else.

While working out tactics and strategy at the Third Congress of the Comintern, we rejected the ultraleft adventurism of Zinoviev, Bela Kun, Maslow,\textsuperscript{165} and others. Lenin did not at all fear to say that he criticized them this time from the right. Some of our friends were confused by this. The fetishism of words is an unpleasant malady.

The right course as a \textit{strategical line} is the reliance on the capitalist farmer in the village—capitalism in installments. In the first years Stalin traveled far on this road. At present Stalin is moving in exactly the opposite direction. The program of the administrative liquidation of the kulak is an ultraleft caricature of a revolutionary course. \textit{Tactically} we stand, at the moment, to the right of the zigzag course. \textit{Strategically}, we continue to stand on the basic revolutionary line.

On July 14, 1929, when the official turn to the left began to make itself felt, I wrote to Christian Rakovsky and other exiles as follows: "After the tail-enders missed the revolutionary situation in Germany in 1923, a very deep ultraleft zigzag followed in 1924-25. This ultraleft zigzag developed into right channels: the fight against the industrializers, the flirtation with La Follette and Radich, the Peasant International,\textsuperscript{166} the Kuomintang, etc. When ultraleftism smashed its head on the
right, a right course developed. It is therefore not inconceivable that we now have an extended reproduction of the same thing in a new stage, that is, ultraleftism supporting itself on opportunistic premises. The accompanying economic forces may, however, break down this ultraleftism at the very beginning and immediately give the whole course a decisive turn to the right."

As the principal activity of Yaroslavsky is to maintain surveillance over Oppositionist correspondence, he can easily check up on this quotation. Neither Stalinist ultraleftism nor the newest turn to the right was unexpected by us. As Marxists we should orient ourselves not on the bureaucrats' psychology but on the "accompanying economic forces."

**Shall We Call for a "Retreat"?**

The above-mentioned comrade expresses the idea that the slogan "Retreat" does not suit us. Just the same, he says, Stalin will now continue to retreat. Is it worth our while to add our voices to the outcries of these drag-in-the-rear politicians? If this were a case of a bourgeois state such a criticism would be correct. We are not at all obliged to give advice even to the most democratic and social democratic bourgeoisie as to how to get out of their difficulties. On the contrary we must mercilessly exploit all their difficulties in order to rouse the working class against the capitalist state. The position of Urbahns in relation to the USSR is a caricature of Marxist policy in relation to a bourgeois state. But in spite of the thousand and one lies of Yaroslavsky we considered and still consider the Soviet state a proletarian state. Even though Yaroslavsky "quotes" words he ascribes to us from the *Biulleten* about the "unavoidable death of the October Revolution," this honorable eavesdropper lies. We never said that, we never wrote that, and we never thought that, even though we do not in the least hide from ourselves or the party the tremendous danger that the October Revolution is approaching as a result of the monstrous mistakes of the last period. The Opposition does not identify the Soviet state either with Yaroslavsky or with Stalin. It considers the Soviet state *its own* state and will defend it not only from its open class enemies but also from its internal spoilers, among whom Yaroslavsky occupies not the last place.

In the same article "about the evolution of the Trotskyites" Yaroslavsky once more repeats that "L. D. Trotsky was convinced a year ago that our party would be compelled to call him back for aid." In that sense Trotsky was supposed to have warned those who "accompanied him" (agents of the GPU)
that in all probability he'd be called to save the situation in a few months. Yaroslavsky lies! This is not what I said. This is not how I spoke. Together with the whole Opposition I said that the country is entering a period of new difficulties on a higher historical basis; that the leadership does not see anything and does not foresee that these difficulties may bring about a sharp crisis in two years, in a year, or even in several months. Then, I said, it will be revealed that the government apparatus as well as the party is overrun with bureaucrats, careerists, political traitors, etc., but the Opposition will devotedly fight together with the revolutionary core of the party. You will be ashamed, I said to those "accompanying," if you have to recall the Oppositionists directly from prison and exile for aid in that difficult moment. This prognosis remains in force even today. What is truer is that now it takes on a more real and acute character.

Flattering the Peasantry

Giving the peasantry a crude and senseless economic yanking about is supplemented by Yaroslavsky with indecent political flattery. In regard to my words that the peasantry, finding itself before the closed gates of the market, "goes charging off" toward collectivization, Yaroslavsky writes, "Trotsky, still retaining his past views on the peasantry as an enemy force, cannot imagine the peasantry as any different than cattle which 'go charging' through the open gates of collectivization." I did not compare the peasantry to cattle. For such comparisons the lackey psychology of Yaroslavsky is needed. At no time did I consider the peasantry an enemy force; neither did I consider it a conscious socialist force. The peasantry is contradictory. Within it the dependence on the elementary forces of nature are still terribly strong even today, with its terribly split-up and helpless economy. Marx and Engels wrote in their time about the "idiocy of rural life." The Populists uttered not a few sorry words on the theme, and deduced from the Communist Manifesto an alleged enmity of the Marxists towards the peasantry. In what way does Yaroslavsky differ from them? Insofar as the peasant is a realist on questions of his immediate surroundings, he becomes, to the same extent, the victim of blind instinct on larger questions.

The whole history of the peasantry is such that after decades and centuries of heavy immobility, it plunges either in one direction or another. The peasant soldiers crushed the revolution of 1905. The peasantry elected Social Revolutionaries to
the Constituent Assembly in 1917 but then helped the Bolsheviks throw out the "Social Revolutionaries." How many times did it charge off in one direction after another during the civil war before it firmly bound its fate to that of the Soviet power? To liberate the peasant from the elementary forces pressing down on his consciousness, he must be "de-peasantized." This is the task of socialism. But this is decided not by the form of collectivization, but by a revolution in agricultural technology. The advanced peasant will sooner or later understand that the Oppositionist is far more farsighted in the question of peasant economy than the ruling bureaucrats.

Evidently, fate wanted to enjoy a particularly hearty laugh at the expense of Yaroslavsky. In the same issue of Pravda (March 30) where this malicious and wretched article is printed, there is a report of Bulat's speech at the plenum of the Moscow district conference. Bulat says that in one of the sections "the Right moods within the party organization were very strong. The district committee removed several leading functionaries. And then the whole organization flung itself to the 'left' to the extent of a complete turn." This is literally what was said. This speech is not about a peasant mass but about a party organization which is supposed to personify the consciousness of the working class. And the official leader tells us that after removing several "Rights" the organization was "flung" toward ultraleftism. This is far more typical of "cattle," to make use of the lackey vocabulary of Yaroslavsky.

Nevertheless, the picture drawn by Bulat symbolizes the whole fate of the party for the past two years. After the ultraright course, whose theoretician was Bukharin, the party, stunned by the Stalinist apparatus, went charging off toward complete collectivization. If for the peasantry this plunging about is a historic misfortune, then for the party as a conscious selection such a condition is not only a misfortune but a disgrace. It is the Stalinist regime, in which Yaroslavsky occupies a shameful but not the last place, that brought the party to this disgrace.

**On Flatterers and Slanderers in General**

However, about which of my past views of the peasantry as an enemy force does Yaroslavsky write? Aren't they those views that I expressed, let us say, thirty years ago, during my first exile, and about which Yaroslavsky gave an immeasurably enthusiastic account in the spring of 1923? "Around himself," Yaroslavsky told us, "Trotsky saw only the village. He was
pained by its needs. He was depressed by its isolation and lack of rights," etc. Yaroslavsky not only considered it necessary to glorify my exceptional attention to the peasantry and acquaintance with all of peasant life but he also demanded that my youthful articles on the peasantry be compiled into a textbook for study by the young generation. Literally!

I mentioned this grossly flattering response in my autobiography, throwing into the face of Yaroslavsky and many others of my critics their own words of yesterday. In connection with this Yaroslavsky speaks now about "Trotsky's self-praise" in his autobiography. He only forgets to add that this "self-praise" consists of quotations taken from those under whose leadership the campaign of poison and slander—dimensions of which were unparalleled—went on for the past seven years. To stir up all this refuse does not give me any pleasure. In this I will be believed, not only by a revolutionist, but by any thinking person who is not poisoned by the degrading spirit of a careerist bureaucrat. I merely carried out what I considered my revolutionary duty. Stalin and his Yaroslavskys rail against me precisely because I represent a system of views they despise.

For the sake of this struggle they considered it necessary to rake up the whole history of the party and the revolution, not leaving a single living point untouched. To defeat their whole slanderous front it was not so much a matter of personal self-defense as a matter of political necessity. I fulfilled this in several works. In the books *La Revolution Defiguree*, *My Life*, and finally in the book *Permanent Revolution*. In all these works, I expose on the basis of exact historic data, documents, and quotations the fraudulent web of the Stalinist school in which Yaroslavsky occupies a shameful front seat.

In regard to these books, which have already been published in many languages and continue to be translated and republished, the Stalinists have adopted complete silence. Let them try to refute my exposition. Let them defend themselves against those slanderous contradictions, falsifications, and slanders of which I accuse them on the basis of undeniable documents and more often on the basis of their own previous declarations. Let them deny at least one of the quotations or at least one iota of the evidence used by me. They cannot do it—they stand convicted by their own deeds. They are in the clamp of their own contradictions, they are compromised by their own denials, they are revealed ideologically impotent by the inconsistency of their own lies. Life does not stand still.
Life goes on, confirming the criticisms and prognoses of the Opposition.

**Why the New Polemic?**

Why, after all the preceding liquidations, crushings, and funerals of the Opposition, is Yaroslavsky compelled, or more correctly why was Yaroslavsky commissioned, to enter into such a highly principled polemic with the Opposition? Even though with the grossest distortions, the eavesdropper was nevertheless compelled to quote the *Biulleten Oppozitsii* and to divulge, partly because of need, partly because of thoughtlessness, something very inconvenient for the Stalinist faction.

If we look closer at Yaroslavsky's article we can only come to the conclusion that he wrote primarily in order to frighten the lower ranks of the Stalin apparatus. Lifting quotations from the *Biulleten*, clearly inconvenient for Stalin, Yaroslavsky speaks to someone: You hear what the Opposition says? Take care not to repeat these words! Under the pressure from below the alarm in the apparatus is growing, the doubts in the leadership are growing, and the voices condemning the latest zig-zag are growing. Precisely because of this Yaroslavsky so unexpectedly speaks of Trotsky's hopes to be called upon to "save" the revolution. Yaroslavsky was slightly overconscientious—ran too far ahead and revealed an overabundant alarm. A squeak in the apparatus is heard, and Yaroslavsky "frightens"—whom? His own people. Sit straight, be silent. No matter whether you believe in the leadership or not, be silent; don't stir up any doubts; otherwise, the apparatus will be endangered by the "intervention" of Trotskyism! This is the sense of Yaroslavsky's article; this is what its political music consists of.

But his music can no longer drown out the squeak in the apparatus. As a result of the latest experiences, which showed that the leadership plays around brainlessly, the differentiation inside the party will greatly increase. The Rights will undoubtedly experience a new growth, will bring forth new leaders, perhaps with lesser names but more fundamental and more persistent. This danger must be foreseen. But a deep awakening will also take place—undoubtedly is already taking place—in the party.

From day to day the desire will grow for a full understanding of this latest leap to the left in relation to the "general line" as a whole—which, alas, never truly existed. It is quite possible that the precongress discussion will not be as quiet
as the Bonapartist elements of the bureaucracy would like. The news that Stalin attempted once more to postpone the congress until the autumn, that is, to complete another alternative "overturn," the hundred and first by this time, and that his own Central Committee resisted, is highly credible and at the same time very symptomatic. This signifies the beginning of the party's awakening.

A new chapter opens before the Opposition—a very responsible one. Outside of the Opposition nobody will give the party a clear picture of what is happening at present in unbreakable connection with the policy of the whole period after the death of Lenin. No one except the Opposition is able to secure for the party a correct principled orientation.

The eavesdropper cites new declarations of repentance and skeptical voices of individual Oppositionists. By the combined force of starvation diets, GPU measures, Yaroslavsky's admonitions, and theoretical belaborings of the red-yellow professors, a new group of capitulators is being prepared for the Sixteenth Congress. But Yaroslavsky passes over in silence the hundreds of newly arrested Oppositionists in Moscow alone, the revival of the activities of the Opposition in the party ranks, and the growth and consolidation of the International Opposition.

Individually and in groups, Oppositionists who went dizzy over the complete collectivization are compelled by the logic of inertia to present their repentance to the Sixteenth Congress, at a moment when the difficult process of sobering up is beginning. Well, another group of crushed revolutionary reputations will be added. In their stead many hundreds more have already come forth, according to the statistics of the GPU. Tomorrow thousands and tens of thousands will follow. It is not the Yaroslavskys who can break the Opposition away from the party, no, now less than at any time before.
April 16, 1930

Dear Comrade Winitsky:

I have received your paper regularly. The various addresses [Prinkipo, Buyuk-Ada, etc.] signify the same place. In thanking you for your kind attention I nevertheless feel the need of frankly expressing to you a certain surprise on my part in connection with your letter. The Revolutionary Age has from its very beginning, and its present director long before its appearance, constantly and energetically denounced me and my friends as counterrevolutionists. I cannot doubt that this happened out of honest conviction.

You sign yourself, dear Comrade Winitsky, "fraternally." The sincerity of this salutation I also have absolutely no right to question. But since we are not diplomats, and what we say must correspond to what we think, I assume that, if not Revolutionary Age as a whole, at least a section around it no longer regards us as "counterrevolutionists." Would it not then be in place to acknowledge this openly?

I raise this question not in my interest but in the interest of political clarification in general.

In this spirit I also sign myself

Fraternally,
L. Trotsky
A BIG STEP FORWARD

Unification of the Left Opposition

April 1930

On April 6 the preliminary conference of the International Left Opposition took place in Paris. The following organizations were represented: the Communist League of France, the Communist League of America, the United Opposition of Germany, the Opposition Group of the Communist Party of Belgium, the Spanish Opposition, the Left Opposition of Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Communist Opposition, and the Jewish Opposition group in France. The Left Opposition of the Russian Communist Party, which could not be represented for police reasons, sent a letter declaring its support to the conference. Two Austrian groups did likewise. The Opposition groups of China, Mexico, and Argentina did not take part in the conference because of the distance. But those three organizations fully share the point of view of the International Communist Left and have insisted in a number of letters on the necessity of international unity. Their adherence to the decisions of the conference is beyond doubt.

The delegates to the conference made detailed reports on the state of the Opposition in their countries. The overall situation may briefly be characterized in this way: the last year has been a year of incontestable revival of the Opposition. This began with a clarification and refinement of the foundations of principle and with a demarcation from elements foreign to the Leninist Opposition who had become associated with it by chance. The regrouping of forces which arose out of this struggle at once enlivened the work of the Opposition and led to the setting up of militant printed publications and the formation of organizations.

In France there has existed for the last six months a regularly appearing weekly paper, La Verite, which to a cer-
tain extent has become the center not only of the French but also of the International Opposition, especially the "Latinos" (Italians and Spaniards, including Spanish-speaking South Americans). Along with this there has been appearing in France since January of this year a serious Opposition monthly, *La Lutte de classes,* which with the support of Marxist forces from other countries promises to develop into one of the best Marxist publications. In Germany, after the split in the Leninbund, a unification occurred of all groups in solidarity with the Russian Opposition, namely: the former Opposition of the Leninbund, two groups of the Wedding Opposition, and the Pfalz (Palatinate) Opposition organization. The United Opposition, which has one deputy in the Prussian Landtag, has started to publish its own organ, *Der Kommunist,* whose first issue came out in April. The journal is starting as a bi-weekly, but there is every reason to expect that it will soon become weekly. The *American* League issues an excellent weekly paper and is beginning to publish pamphlets. In Austria two monthly papers are appearing (unity of the Austrian Left Opposition has not yet been achieved). The Czechoslovakian organization has started to bring out its organ. In Argentina the first issue of a paper in Spanish, *Verdad* (Truth), has appeared. The Italian group of Bordigists in emigration is issuing a twice-monthly, *Prometeo.* In relation to the International Left Opposition the Bordigists remain a sympathizing group. The latest split in the official Italian party showed that the Communist Left Opposition has a great number of supporters there; their organizational grouping is a matter for the immediate future. A group of Jewish workers is issuing the Oppositional organ *Klorkeit* (Clarity) in Paris. The *Chinese* Opposition is issuing a lithographed journal (illegal) and pamphlets, and is legally publishing works of the International Opposition, in particular a series of Comrade Trotsky's pamphlets.

The Left Opposition does not yet have the character of a mass movement. Its work has not emerged from the preparatory stage. Differentiation from chance fellow travelers, who

*La Lutte de classes* has been appearing in small notebook format for two years. But the journal had no definite ideological direction and was in a period of searching. It is only this year that it has acquired a completely distinct and considerably enlarged format.
compromised the ideas of the Opposition and retarded its growth, took up much time, but was all the same a most important precondition for the unification of the Opposition and its transition to broad propaganda and agitational work. It is thanks to this that the possibility and necessity of close international unity of all Left Oppositional organizations has arisen.

Just as the formation of national Opposition factions has not meant the creation of second parties, so the unification of the national factions does not mean a course toward a fourth international. The Left Opposition considers itself a faction of international communism and acts as such. The present split would not exist if the Comintern apparatus were not completely dependent on the Stalin leadership, which is guided above all by the interests of the centrist bureaucracy and has compromised itself theoretically and politically. By the criminal work of the apparatus the Opposition has been placed outside the whole formal framework of the Communist International. But the Opposition feels its unbreakable link with those, alas already few, hundreds of thousands of revolutionaries who formally remain within the Comintern. The aim of the Opposition is to revive the Communist International on Leninist principles.

The April conference had, as has already been said, a preparatory character. It set up an International Secretariat and commissioned it to publish an international bulletin and prepare the convoking of a full conference.

The Secretariat is made up of a Russian, a German, and a French representative, with the possibility of adding a representative from the Belgian Opposition. The technical implementation of decisions is the obligation of the Communist League of France.

The International Bulletin will in all probability come out twice a month and, apart from exchanging documents, resolutions, and all kinds of information on the work of individual national organizations, will serve for international discussion and the working out of an international platform for the forthcoming conference. The basic language of the bulletin will be French; the most important documents and articles will also be printed in German; articles and documents that closely affect the Anglo-Saxon countries will be printed in English. The first issue of the bulletin should come out at approximately the same time as this issue of the Russian Biulleten.
The conference decided to send the following greeting:

"The first international meeting of the Communist Left Opposition, held on April 6 in Paris and bringing together German, American, Belgian, Spanish, French, Hungarian, Italian, and Czechoslovak delegates, sends its cordial greetings and expression of its close solidarity to the arrested and banished Bolshevik comrades, and to their exiled leader L.D. Trotsky."

At the conference an atmosphere of complete unanimity, faith in the banner, and readiness for struggle prevailed. We do not doubt that the very near future will show clear and incontestable results of the great work of preparation that has been carried out over the last year.
Dear Comrades:

A few months ago you addressed an open letter to me to which I replied at the time.172 Now it seems to me the time has come to address an open letter to your group.

A preliminary conference of the International Left Opposition was recently held in Paris. This conference is a serious step forward because it was made possible only as a result of long preparatory work of an ideological character. Your group, before whose eyes all this work unfolded, did not find it, however, possible to take part in this conference. This extremely important fact of absenteeism prompts me to ask you the following questions:

1. Do you conceive that communism can be nationalist in character? This is, for example, the position of Urbahns, who, while ritualistically repeating the formulas of internationalism, has created a purely German sect, without any international connections and therefore without any revolutionary perspectives. And so: Do you regard yourselves as a national tendency or as part of an international tendency?

2. If your answer to this question were to read that you are entirely satisfied with your isolated national existence, then there would be no room for any further questions. But I have no doubt that you consider yourselves internationalists. In that case a second question arises: To what particular international tendency do you belong? Today there are three basic tendencies in international communism: the centrist, the Right, and the Left (Leninist). In addition there are all sorts of ultra-left splinters floundering between Marxism and anarchism. Until now we thought that you stood closest to the Left Opposition. Your dilatory position we ascribed to your desire to acquaint yourselves with the development of the Left Opposition. But a dilatory position cannot be maintained permanently. Life does not wait, either in Italy or throughout the world.
In order to join the International Left there is no need whatever for false "monolithism" in the spirit of the Stalinist bureaucracy. What is needed is genuine solidarity on the basic questions of international revolutionary strategy that have stood the test of the last few years. Partial tactical disagreements are absolutely unavoidable and cannot serve as an obstacle for close common work within the framework of an international organization. What are your disagreements with the Left Opposition? Are they of a principled or episodic character? A clear and precise answer to this question is indispensable.

3. Your nonparticipation in the international preliminary conference can be interpreted politically to signify that you are separated from the Left Opposition by differences of a principled character. If that is so, then a third question arises: Why don't you proceed with the organization of an international faction of your own tendency? Because you cannot possibly hold the view that the revolutionary principles which are good for the whole world are no good for Italy, or vice versa. A passive, conciliatory attitude toward the Left Opposition coupled with a reluctance to join it and with a refusal to intervene in the life of the communist vanguard in other countries is characteristic of nationalistic socialism or nationalistic communism, which has nothing in common with Marxist communism.

Your answer to these questions is of serious importance not only from the international but, in the first instance, from the Italian point of view, insofar as these two viewpoints can be counterposed in general. The illegal character of the Italian Communist Party makes it difficult to follow its development closely. Nevertheless there is no doubt that within the framework of Italian communism there are, in addition to the official faction, your own group, and the group of Rights (Tasca), numerous revolutionary elements who have not yet openly defined their positions. Under these conditions you represent one of the factors of indefiniteness. Yet it is precisely the illegal existence of the party that demands with doubled force the full principled clarity of the leading groups.

Your reply is bound to facilitate and hasten the ideological crystallization within the proletarian vanguard in Italy. Needless to say, the Russian Opposition would be happy to learn of your decision to join the International Left.

With communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
TOWARD CAPITALISM OR SOCIALISM? 174

April 25, 1930

Liberal and Menshevik Perspectives

Russian liberalism, which years of emigration have not made much more cunning, sees a return to serfdom in all the new economic forms, especially in collectivization. Quite recently, Struve 175 ranted somewhere that Russia has returned to the seventeenth century, without God. Even if this judgment should be true, the revolution would still have been justified. Under the enlightened guidance of the former ruling classes the peasant economy had made no marked progress between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, so that even if there really has been a return there wasn't a long road to travel. And freeing the peasants from God at least meant freeing them from a serious hindrance. Unfortunately, God was a necessary item in the peasant inventory of the seventeenth century, making an agricultural trinity with the plowshare and the wretched nag. We shall do away with them only by using machines and electricity. This problem still remains to be solved — but it will be.

Liberalism pretends not to see the enormous economic progress accruing from the Soviet regime, i.e., the empirical proofs of the incalculable advantages of socialism. The economists of the dispossessed classes quite simply pass in silence over the rates of industrial development, unprecedented in world history. As for the Menshevik mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie, they explain them by an extraordinary "exploitation of the peasants." They omit to explain why, for example, British exploitation of the Indian peasants has never given either India or Britain industrial tempos coming anywhere near those achieved under the Soviet system. And why don't they ask about the tempo reached in India under MacDonald, who has the Indian workers and peasants shot down because they desire to live in independence? I doubt whether such "questions
The liberal Menshevik references to serfdom and the system of Arakcheyev constitute the classic argument of reaction against all innovations on the road of historical progress. The philosophical formula for this kind of "return" to the past was long since supplied by old Hegel in his "triad" of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The classes concerned with maintaining the antithesis (i.e., capitalism) will always be driven to discover in every step of the synthesis (i.e., socialism) simply a return to the thesis (i.e., serfdom). The philosophers and economists brought along in the baggage train of the executioner Galliffet accused the Paris Commune of a reactionary desire to lead contemporary society back to the medieval communes. On this subject Marx wrote:

"It is generally the fate of entirely new creations in history to be mistaken for a copy of other, older and even extinct forms of social life to which they might have a certain resemblance" (The Civil War in France). Contemporary bourgeois criticism has thought up nothing new. In any case, where would it have found it? The "ideology" of Russian liberalism and of Russian "democracy" is nothing but a plagiarism, desperately late in time at that. It was not without some point when this same Struve wrote thirty-two years ago, "The farther East, the more vile and weak becomes the bourgeoisie." History has added "and its democracy."

Today, Struve repeats his slogan of 1893, "Let's go on apprenticeship to capitalism!"; but there is a slight difference. Forty years ago this slogan—good or bad—constituted some progress; today, it is a backward move. Didn't czarist Russia go to the school of capitalism? The main result of this was the outbreak of the October Revolution. Contrary to the Russian proverb, it was the "root" of this apprenticeship which was sweet to the teacher and the fruit which was bitter. So how can one immunize oneself in the future against this "fruit" if capitalism is restored? Abroad, the Russian bourgeoisie has discovered nothing new in this domain unless it is the highly problematical (and very unstable) "prosperity" of the civilized nations. But the point is that the capitalist apprenticeship of the new countries is not at all a repetition of the history of the old countries, although it bears the burden of their sins. The October Revolution was the breaking of the world bourgeoisie at its weakest link. The dream of Russia returning to world capitalism after the October Revolution is the most fantastic and the most stupid of utopias. For would it not
be much more "simple" to insure a peaceful capitalist development in China and India? The power over the latter, by the way, is right in the hands of the Second International. Try it, gentlemen! We tell you in advance, it won't succeed—because China and India, precisely because of their short capitalist apprenticeship, are now going toward their October Revolution. That is the dialectic of world development. And there is no way of getting out of it.

Menshevism hopes for a rapid solution to "the double problem of adjusting the economic system of a country to the real level of its economic development and creating the political and juridical premises for this adjustment." Such a sleight-of-hand formula calculates on a restoration of the bourgeois system. "The political and juridical premises" means bourgeois democracy. "You have the factories and workshops," Menshevism says to the bourgeoisie, "and in exchange we want to have the possibility of becoming deputies, mayors, ministers, and Zoergiebels, just as in Germany and Britain." That is really "the dual problem." In 1917, when in power, Menshevism defended the bourgeoisie against the October Revolution. However, we saw that the bourgeoisie, distrustful of this defense, sought out a Kornilov. At the present moment, Menshevism offers to open the way to the bourgeoisie by a "democratic" liquidation of October. But the restorers of capitalism are perfectly well aware of the illusoriness of an "evolutionary" return to capitalism. The bourgeois counterrevolution would not (if it could) be able to achieve its goal except through a long civil war and a return to poverty in this country which the Soviet power has just raised from the ruins.

A second edition of Russian capitalism would be far from being a simple continuation and development of prerevolutionary—or more precisely, of prewar—capitalism, and not only because a long period of war and revolution separates them, but also because world capitalism—the master of Russian capitalism—has suffered profound collapses and great reversals in this period.

Finance capital has become infinitely more powerful, while the world feels itself increasingly restricted. A new Russian capitalism would be nothing but an exploiting colonial capitalism of the Asiatic type. The commercial, industrial, and financial Russian bourgeoisie—to the extent that it has succeeded in saving its liquid capital—has been entirely absorbed into the system of foreign capital. A restoration of a bourgeois Russia would mean for the "genuine," "serious" restora-
tionists nothing but the opportunity for colonial exploitation of Russia from outside. In the same way, in China, foreign capital operates through the mediation of *compradores*, a kind of Chinese intermediary which greases its palm on the robbery of its own people by world imperialism.

A capitalist restoration in Russia would be a chemically pure culture of Russian compradorism with the "political and juridical premises" of the Denikin-Chiang Kai-shek type. The whole thing fitted out, naturally, with "God" and "a Slavic binding," i.e., with everything murderers need for the "soul."

But how long would such splendor last? The restoration would see rising before it not only the worker question but also and particularly the peasant question. Under Stolypin, the fairly successful formation of a layer of farmers was tied up with such painful processes of proletarianization and pauperization, and with such an aggravation of all the social cleavages in the countryside, that the peasant war of 1917 acquired from them an irresistible impulse. The bourgeoisie and the social democracy have no other way than Stolypin's, nor can they have on the basis of existent capitalism. The only difference is that the number of peasant farms, which formerly amounted to between twelve and fifteen million, would today reach twenty-five million. And the setting up from them of a capitalist layer would mean such a proletarianization and pauperization that the processes leading up to 1917 would pale by comparison.

Even if the counterrevolution renounced the restoration of the gentry—but how could it renounce it?—the agrarian question, nevertheless, would rise before it like the specter of a second flood. Even in China where the gentry caste scarcely exists, the agrarian question enjoys an explosive power equal almost to that which we see in India. We repeat: capitalist development in Russia, even in a more advanced form, would be a development of the Chinese type. This is the only solution possible to Menshevism's "dual problem."

The conclusion is clear: even apart from the socialist perspective it opens up, the Soviet regime is for Russia in present world conditions the only thinkable regime of national independence. True, without a Serafim Sarovsky and the letter "yat." 180

**Old Contradictions in New Conditions**

To get a good understanding of the fundamental difficulties in the USSR today it is necessary not to lose sight of the fact that the present economic development—despite the catastrophic
depths of the October break—is a continuation, although in greatly altered form, of fundamental prerevolutionary and prewar processes. If, on the one hand, the hopes of liberalism and the social democracy are entirely based on their attachments to the past (capitalism, the February revolution, democracy), their criticisms of the present economic regime, on the other, rest on totally ignoring the succession between yesterday and today. Things are presented as if the contradiction between country and town emerged from the October Revolution, whereas in fact it created the very possibility of its victory by combining the proletarian uprising with the agrarian revolution.

The crisis in the Soviet countryside is basically the crisis of a backward rural and small-proprietor economy. The possessing classes had done everything in their power in the past to encourage, to advance, and to consolidate large agricultural enterprises: in the so-called "liberating" reforms of 1861, in the struggle against the 1905 revolution by means of Stolypin's counterrevolutionary laws, and finally in the policy during the period of dual power in 1917. But all these were of no avail.

Inside the backward Russian peasantry, suddenly transplanted into the new conditions of the market, the forced development of Russian capitalism under the pressure of world finance capital sharply accentuated the tendency to increase the size of holdings. It was capitalism itself that heightened to the most extreme limits the precapitalist "dreams" of the peasant for "a new division of the land." And the attempts—very realistic so far as its aims were concerned—to oppose to this peasant tendency a policy of installing a capitalist farm system failed "only" because the tempo of capitalist development as a whole did not coincide with the degree of evolution into farmers of the peasantry. The submission of czarist Russia to the world market and to finance capital, with all the commercial, fiscal, and military consequences flowing from it for the peasantry, advanced with seven-league boots; at the same time, the formation of a stratum of big farm owners proceeded at a "snail's pace." It was on this discord of tempo that the bourgeois and landlord counterrevolution of 1907-17 broke its head.

Thus the revolutionary nationalization of the land was the only possible way to free landholding relations of the extraordinary tangle that had accumulated on the land during the whole preceding historical epoch. Nationalization meant that
all or almost all the land passed to the peasantry. Given the
heritage of equipment and methods of cultivation, this transfer
of land to the peasants meant a further subdivision of the
land and consequently prepared the way for a new agricultural
crisis.

This contradiction between town and country inherited from
the past could not be liquidated in a dozen years. On the con-
trary, when the workers' state, having rid itself of its enemies,
seriously set about the industrial development of the country,
this contradiction had to become heightened. Given the gen-
eral growth of the population and the desire of the young
generation of the countryside for independence, the splitting
up of farms proceeded at an increasingly accelerated rate.
The development of industry and culture, with the inevitable
sacrifices in the countryside, went fast enough to awaken in
the peasants fresh interests and new needs but too slowly to
satisfy the peasants on the scale of the entire class. That is
how the contradiction between town and country reached a
new and exceptional degree of sharpness. And the basis of
this contradiction remains as before the hopeless isolation of
the class of backward small peasants.

Then what difference is there between this situation and that
of before the revolution? It is enormous.

First of all, the absence today of large estates makes it no
longer possible for the peasant class to seek a way out of its
economic impasse, or more exactly its twenty-five million im-
passes, through increasing land holdings by the expropriation
of the possessing classes. To the greatest advantage for the fu-
ture of the country, this stage has been passed entirely. But
by this very fact the peasant class is led to seek other ways.

In the second place—and this is a no less important dif-
ference—at the head of the country is a government that, what-
ever its faults, is trying by all means to raise the material
and cultural level of the peasants. The interests of the work-
ing class—still the ruling class of the country whatever the
changes that have taken place in the structure of the revolu-
tionary society—lie in the same direction.

From this broad historical, and in the last resort only ra-
tional, point of view, the liberals' assertion that the collectiviza-
tion as a whole is the product of naked violence appears ab-
solutely absurd. After this maximum possible subdivision, the
result of an old peasant way of making use of the land stocks
of the revolution, the integration of the plots and their com-
bination into larger agricultural holdings has become a matter
of life or death for the peasant class.
In previous historical epochs, in its struggle against the shortage of land to farm, the peasantry sometimes rose in revolt and sometimes fled in a large colonizing current to uncultivated lands and sometimes threw itself with bowed head into all kinds of religious sects, the heavenly void compensating for territorial shortages.

Marx once said that the peasant, besides his prejudices, also had his judgment.* These two characteristics run in various combinations through his whole evolution. Beyond a certain limit, the vital realism of the peasant comes up against monstrous superstitions. And the "prejudice" flourishes the better the less his "judgment" finds itself able to resolve the situation of the peasant economy from which there seems no way out.

In a fresh form, at a higher historical stage and in different proportions, peasant prejudices and judgment have found expression in the general collectivization too. Twelve years of revolution, including War Communism,¹⁸² NEP and its different phases, have led the peasant to think that to get out of his backward state he must seek new ways. Only these new ways have not yet been tested and their advantages have still not been checked. Government policy from 1923 to 1928 had directed the attention of the upper layers of the countryside toward a development and improvement of individual farms. The lower layers were still disoriented. The contradiction between town and country came to light this time in the question of the grain reserves. The government swiftly changed course and, closing the free market, opened wide the gates to collectivization. The peasantry streamed through them. In the peasantry's new hopes, prejudice was combined with judgment. Alongside the consciousness of a minority, the herd instinct of the majority poured into the movement. The government was caught unawares and — alas! — itself introduced a lot more prejudice than judgment into the matter. A monstrous "national" excess was discovered. With brilliant hindsight the leadership tried to exchange it for little provincial excesses. There is a large selection of prerecorded discs on this subject at the Central Committee secretariat, on provincial, district, and regional scales.

What Is the Essence of the Excess?

In his very long and, truth to tell, dreadfully illiterate "Reply to Collective Farm Comrades,"¹⁸³ Stalin uses double-talk about

*There is a pun in Russian, and also in German, on "prejudice" and "judgment."— Translator
"certain people" who had a wrong approach to the middle peasants and about "certain others" who have failed to understand the collective farm code (be it said in passing, the code was published after all the excesses)—and of the grief resulting from this for the learned leadership. All this is very interesting and in places even touching. However, Stalin does not say how 40 percent of the peasants (for from the 60 percent collectivized, as announced in March, Stalin now makes a reduction without any "retreat"—of 20 percent) will manage to run enormous agricultural enterprises without the equipment which alone can justify a large size for such enterprises, not to speak of their social form.

However great his "individualism," faced with irreducible economic facts the peasant is compelled to beat a retreat. Proof of this is to be found all through the history of peasant cooperation, even in capitalist countries. The very subdivision of production necessarily leads to the socialization of commercial and credit functions. After the 1905 revolution, cooperation in czarist Russia embraced millions of peasants, but this cooperation was limited to purchase and sale, credit and saving only, and did not include production. The cause of the maintenance of this subdivision in production should be sought not in peasant psychology but in the character of the peasant's equipment and methods of production; there is the nub of his individualism.

When the unexpected rate of collectivization, brought about by the impossible situation due to the fragmentation of peasant farms and whipped on by the triple knout of the bureaucracy, demonstrated the glaring contradiction between the means of production and the dynamic of collectivization, a face-saving theory was invented according to which the large enterprises with primitive equipment were to be considered socialist manufactories. That sounds scientific—but even the scholastics knew that changing the name of a thing does not change its nature.

The agricultural manufactory could be justified only if there were an advantage to production in manufactory methods of tilling the soil, and not in the "collectivized" form of the farms. We have still to learn why this advantage has not shown itself to this day.

Obviously, one can always prove by adroit statistical combinations that even the collectivization of the simplest peasant equipment can have advantages. This thought is at present being monotonously repeated in speeches, articles in the press, and circulars, but good care is taken not to illustrate
it with living experience. The large peasant family is the most "natural" form of all collectives. But it was this that underwent the cruelest decay after October. Can it seriously be imagined that on the same production basis it will be possible to build a substantial collective made up of families who do not know one another?

Cooperation in large-scale production and yet based on peasant equipment has already been put to the test of history; that was the case with the seigniorial lands given to the peasants for exploitation in exchange for goods in kind. What do we find? As a general rule, these estates were even worse managed than the peasants' land. After the 1905 revolution, these estates were liquidated en masse and the Peasant Bank sold them off in lots to the peasants. So "cooperation" in production based on a combination of seigniorial lands and peasant equipment was shown to be absolutely nonviable from the economic point of view. On the other hand, the large estate based on exploitation by machine, on the regular rotation of crops, etc., emerged unscathed from the shocks of 1905 and the years that followed. Except that the October Revolution nationalized them. It is true that in the first case we are dealing only with seigniorial lands. But the danger lies in this: that with the artificial, i.e., too-precipitate formation of large collective farms, where the work of the individual peasant is drowned in the work of tens and hundreds of other peasants like himself using the same individual equipment, it could happen that the exploitation of the land, where personal initiative is lacking, would be inferior to that in individual peasant holdings.

A collective farm based on the simple combination of peasant equipment is to a socialist agricultural holding as the seigniorial holding entrusted to the peasant in exchange for goods in kind is to the large capitalist holding. Which is a merciless condemnation of the idea of "socialist manufactories."

Exchanging the collective farms' material base for a theoretical flight of fancy, Bukharin explains that, given the lagging of the agricultural growth rates behind the industrial, "the socialist reconstruction of agriculture was the only possible way out." General collectivization is thus regarded not as a materially prepared stage in the development of production relations in agriculture, but the only "way out" of the present difficulties. This way, the problem is put from the angle of pure administrative teleology.

Bukharin is obviously correct when he says that the process operating today is not a simple return to the forms of "War
Communism." Indeed, it is in no way a return to the past. The present turn is pregnant with important consequences for the future. But the whole question lies in knowing whether the proportions and the relations are correct. Now, along with promise for the future of socialism, this turn also includes direct and mortal dangers. Bukharin only sketches them lightly: "As a result of the development of the collective farms and state farms, the gigantic demand for complicated machinery, tractors, combined harvesters, chemical fertilizers, etc., exceeds the supply and here the 'scissors' are still widening, and rapidly at that." These extraordinary lines are embedded in the text of an article of triumph, without any other comment. But the increase in the widening of the "scissors" between the foundations and the roof can mean nothing but the coming collapse of the whole structure.

Bringing out the importance of the planning element in the collectivization of agriculture, and the importance of close links between the district collective farm, industry, and the local Soviet apparatus, Bukharin says, "Here we have in embryonic form the future overcoming of bureaucratism." Yes, in embryonic form. But woe to him who takes this embryonic form for a child's form, or the child's form for the adolescent's. When it is not justified by a sufficient technological base, the collective farm leads inevitably to the formation of a parasitic economic bureaucracy, the worst of all. The peasant, who has often appeared in history as the passive support for all kinds of state bureaucratism, absolutely does not tolerate bureaucratism in the immediate economic sphere—that should never be lost sight of.

Collectivization must transform the nature of the peasant, says Bukharin. That needs no discussion. But for that the tractor, the rotary plow, the combined harvester are needed, not the "idea" of them. Platonism in the productive process has never had any success. True, the quantity of tractors, at present absolutely negligible, should, according to the plan, grow ever faster. But present collective farms cannot be built on future tractors. Moreover, tractors need fuel. The proper distribution of fuel over immense areas presents a gigantic problem of production, organization, and transportation. But even a tractor with fuel is nothing in itself; it becomes effective only as an integral part of a whole chain in which the links are technological development and great achievement in general. In any case, all of that is realizable. All of that will be realized. But there is still needed "an exact computation of the timing"—without which
an economic operation, just like a military one, will fail. Under favorable internal and international conditions, the material and technological conditions of agriculture could change completely during the coming ten to fifteen years, and insure a production base for collectivization. Only, during these same ten to fifteen years which separate us from such a result it could also happen that there will be many opportunities for overthrowing the Soviet power. But, alas, there is nothing to be gained from Bukharin. Spurning reality, this time with his left foot, he rushes off in "a mad gallop" toward the highest sphere of metaphysical speculation, and we expect to see him again answering for the pots Stalin has broken. However, it is not Bukharin we are interested in.

While collectivization was going full speed ahead, the world bourgeois press—at least the most perspicacious, i.e., the most capable of long-term provocation—repeated in every tone of voice that this time there could be no retreat. Either the experiment would be carried through to the end or the Soviet dictatorship would be defeated; and from its point of view even "carrying through" the experiment could mean nothing but defeat. On its side, the official Soviet press, from the beginning of the campaign for collectivization, trumpeted forth unceasingly the triumph of an uninterrupted advance, without any turning back or reverses. Stalin openly called on the poor peasants to "exterminate ruthlessly" the kulak—as a class. Only the Left Opposition introduced a discordant note, publicly warning since the previous autumn that in the confusion of badly harmonized tempos lay the elements for an inevitable crisis in the most immediate future. Events were not slow to show that only the capitalist press at one pole and the Communist Left press at the other knew what was what. The offensive on the peasant front soon exposed its contradictions, aggravating them immediately to an extreme degree. Then came the accusations of excesses, the facilitating of resignation from the collective farms, the halting in practice of the "de-kulakization," etc. At the same time, it was absolutely forbidden to call this retreat "a retreat." And nobody yet knows what tomorrow holds in store.

One day it will be necessary to draw up the balance sheet. If the ruling party does not do it, it will be done by the elemental process of development, on the back of the dictatorship. The sooner, the more widely, and the more boldly comes this revision of the "plans"—more exactly: the more quickly a collectively worked-out plan is introduced into the chaos of menacing "success," the less painful will be the operation of
correcting all the errors committed, and the easier will it be to moderate the sharpest disproportions between the development of town and country and the "time span," which is closer, moreover, to the maturing "time span" of the European revolution.

The present disorderly retreat masked by bureaucratic fables and grandiloquence is the worst thing possible. The party is troubled—but remains silent. There lies the main danger.

**Only the Party Can Find a Way Out**

It was in a constant struggle between parties and currents that the bourgeoisie conquered and came to preside over the destinies of society, a struggle which often took the form of civil war. True, the proletariat is much more homogeneous than the bourgeoisie, but this homogeneity is far from absolute. The workers' bureaucracy, besides constituting an instrument for the proletariat to influence other classes, constitutes equally an instrument through which other classes influence the proletariat. The complex of world relations, which in the last analysis says the decisive word, joins together here. All this in toto explains sufficiently why on the basis of the proletarian revolution there can arise and develop inside the leading party profound differences, which take on a factional character. A mere prohibition cannot change this.

The inevitable struggle about the right road to follow—to the extent that the struggle is waged not only on the basis of but in the interests of the dictatorship—must be conducted by methods that reduce to a strict minimum the cost of working out a correct political line. But the Stalinist bureaucracy has tried to rid itself quite simply of any political cost flowing from the existence of a party. Unfortunately, however, the greatest cost proves to result from the bureaucratic zigzag policy. These zigzags are inseparable from the regime of an apparatus that has escaped from the control of a party and each time evades the responsibility for its own mistakes. It would be fatal to imagine that the dictatorship of the proletariat has a right to an infinite number of zigzags. On the contrary, this historical "credit" is limited.

The party congress has not been called for two and a half years, during which time the policy has varied sharply on many occasions and on the most fundamental questions. And the present congress, convened against the wishes of "the top," is not considered at all by the ruling apparatus as a way of getting out of internal difficulties but rather as an annoying mishap and a real danger. At the time of the civil war, con-
gresses met every year and sometimes twice a year, whereas now, in time of peace, after the incontestable successes of socialist industry and after—as the apparatus claims—"the turn of the peasantry to socialism is assured," how do we explain that the internal life of the party has reached such a state of tension that a congress becomes a burden, a mystery, and a danger?

The reply could be that the main enemy is not the internal bourgeoisie but the external one, which since the war has become still more powerful. And that would be true. But if the socialist base has really been consolidated internally, external danger in no way explains the bureaucratization of the regime. A socialist society would be able to struggle very well against external enemies on the basis of the widest, fullest, and most unlimited democracy. No; the fact that the internal regime grows systematically worse can have only internal reasons. External pressure is to be understood only in connection with the internal relations between classes.

Whoever explains and justifies the depressed character of the internal regime by the need for a struggle against an internal enemy thereby implicitly admits that the relation of forces has altered in recent years in a direction unfavorable to the proletariat and its party. But how can the kulaks today constitute a greater danger than was offered in the past, at the time of the civil war, by the bourgeoisie with and including the same kulaks, when the old ruling classes had not yet lost their confidence—counting on the rapid fall of Bolshevism—and when they still had their armies? Such an admission would contradict the obvious. And in any case, it cannot be reconciled with the whole official teaching, which sees around it nothing but the continuous strengthening of the socialist sector and the ousting of the capitalist sector.

Less comprehensible still is the reason why every disagreement with the leadership, i.e., with the militarized Stalinist faction, every attempt at criticism, every proposal not anticipated "at the top," leads to an immediate and organized pogrom, carried out in silence like a pantomime; after which follows a "theoretical" liquidation resembling a burial rite sung by sextons and choir leaders from the ranks of the red professors.

To admit that the present party regime is the only possible one and that its evolution is natural and irreversible is to admit that the party is dead, and consequently the revolution too. Would it be necessary to change much in order to decree now
that henceforth party congresses will convene only "as the need arises"? What difference would such a measure make to the present regime? Almost none. But an apparatus that sees itself forced to find within itself sanctions against itself cannot help being dominated by one person. The bureaucracy needs a superarbiter and for this it nominates the one who best meets its instinct for survival. That is what Stalinism is—a preparation for Bonapartism inside the party.

Bureaucratic centrism begins its career as a current maneuvering between two extreme party currents, one of which reflects the petty-bourgeois line, the other, the proletarian; Bonapartism is a state apparatus that has openly broken from all traditional attachments, including party ones, and from now on maneuvers "freely" between the classes as an imperious "arbiter." Stalinism is preparing Bonapartism, all the more dangerous since it is unaware that it is doing so. It is necessary to understand this. It is very much time to do so.

What then are the factors which, despite the economic successes, have worsened the political situation and furthered tension in the regime of the dictatorship?

These factors are of two kinds: some have their roots in the masses, others in the organs of the dictatorship. Philistines have often repeated that the October Revolution was a product of the "illusions" of the masses. That is true in the sense that neither feudalism nor capitalism educated the masses in the spirit of a materialist interpretation of history. But there are illusions and illusions. The imperialist war which ruined and bled humanity would have been impossible without the patriotic illusions of which the social democracy was the main support. The illusions of the masses with respect to the October Revolution consisted in overestimating hopes for a rapid change in their fate. But have we ever seen anything in history of any grandeur without these creative illusions?

However, it is incontestable that the real course of the revolution brings a deterioration of these illusions of the masses and deducts from the sum total the supplementary credit that was opened up by the masses for the ruling party in 1917. On the other hand, be it noted that in exchange there is a gain in experience and understanding of the real forces of the historical process. But it must never be forgotten that the loss of illusions proceeds much more quickly than the accumulation of theoretical understanding. That is one of the main causes for counterrevolutionary successes in the past, to the extent that
Toward Capitalism or Socialism?

these causes are to be sought in the psychological changes that take place within the revolutionary classes.

Another element of danger is in the degeneration of the apparatus of the dictatorship. The bureaucracy has restored many characteristics of a ruling class and that is very much how the working masses consider it. The bureaucracy's struggle for its own preservation stifles the spiritual life of the masses by consciously forcing on it fresh illusions which are no longer in any way revolutionary, and thereby hinders the replacement of lost illusions by a realistic understanding of what is happening. From the Marxist point of view, it is clear that the Soviet bureaucracy cannot change itself into a new ruling class. Its isolation and the increase in its commanding social role lead unfailingly to a crisis in the dictatorship which cannot be resolved except by a rebirth of the revolution on deeper foundations or by a restoration of bourgeois society. It is precisely the approach of this second alternative, felt by everyone even if few understand it clearly, that gives to the present regime this extreme tension.

It is incontestable that the growth of the bureaucracy reflects the general contradictions in the building of socialism in one country. In other words, even under a healthy leadership, bureaucratism would still be a danger within some limit or other. It is all a matter of these limits and of timing. To admit that world, especially European, capitalism will exist for many more years would mean admitting the inevitable fall of the Soviet regime, in which the pre-Bonapartist degeneration of the apparatus would prepare the way for upheavals of a Thermidorean or even directly Bonapartist type. We must never lose sight of the possibility of similar perspectives if we wish to understand what is happening. The whole question lies in the timing, which cannot be anticipated for it depends on the clash of living forces. If it had not been for the shameful and disastrous defeats of the revolution in Germany and China the world situation today would have been different. Thus the objective conditions bring us back again to the problem of leadership. And it is not only a question of one person or of a group (although this question is far from being unimportant). The problem is the interrelationship of the leadership and the party, the party and the class.

It is precisely from this angle that the question of the regime in the Soviet Communist Party and the Comintern is posed. We have been told of a fresh theory by some unsteady ele-
ments of the Opposition (Okudzhava and others) according to which a more healthy regime should "hatch" by itself from the present "left" Stalinist policy. This optimistic fatalism is the worst caricature of Marxism. The present leadership is not a blank sheet of paper. It has its own history, intimately bound up with its "general line," from which it cannot be separated. The history of the Stalinist regime is the history of unprecedented mistakes and the ravages they caused among the international proletariat. The "left" turn in the present leadership is entirely a function of yesterday's right course. The sharper this turn was, the more pitiless was the bureaucratic pressure so as not to give the party time to get its bearings in the contradictions between yesterday and today.

The fatal ossification of the party apparatus is not simply a product of objective contradictions but the result of the concrete history of the particular leadership through which these contradictions infiltrated. It is in this leadership with its artificial selection of individuals at top and bottom that all the mistakes of the past are crystallized and all its mistakes of the future are laid down. And above all it is this leadership that contains the basis for its own further Bonapartist degeneration. It is along this road that the most menacing, the most acute, and the most immediate danger for the October Revolution is concealed.

The left zigzags do not in any way mean that the centrist leadership is capable of transforming itself into a Marxist leadership by its own internal bureaucratic efforts. The left zigzags mean something quite different: both in the present objective conditions and in the suppressed feelings of the working class, a deep resistance to the Thermidorean trend is breaking out; going over to this Thermidorean course is still not possible without real counterrevolutionary upheavals. Although it stifles the party, the leadership cannot help pay attention to it, because through its channel—however incomplete and muffled—there come warnings and appeals from the class forces. Discussion of problems, ideological struggle, meetings and congresses have given way to an information agency inside the party, to spying on telephone communications, and to censorship of correspondence. But even by these devious ways the class pressure is felt. That means that the sources of the left turn and the reasons for its abruptness are to be found outside the leadership. The latter conditions only the lack of reflection, the lack of seriousness, and the tail-endism of this left turn.
Making peace with the leadership quite simply because, though it has neither recognized nor understood its errors and crimes, it has turned on its axis under the pressure of external events—and is about to accumulate fresh mistakes in a new direction—is to give proof that one is nothing but a wretched philistine incapable even of rising to the level of a functionary, and certainly not a revolutionary. But perhaps there is really "no other way," as the Radeks, Zinovievs, Kamenevs, Smilgas,184 and other pensioned-off goats bleat? Their whining can be interpreted only as a conviction that the revolution is lost anyway and since one must die, it is better to die with the "people": even death is fine in company. We can never have anything in common with such rotten sentiments.

Nowhere is it written and nobody has shown that the present party, nonexistent at this very moment as a party but capable nevertheless of silently turning the leadership through 180 degrees, could not, given the necessary initiative, regenerate itself internally by means of a profound reorganization of forces on the basis of a collective analysis of the course that has been followed. Much less flexible and more ossified organisms than the Communist Party have more than once in history shown a capacity for resurrection and renewal through a profound internal crisis. It is in this way—and in this way alone—that the problem is posed for us on the national and international scale. The point of view of the Opposition has nothing in common with the self-satisfied metaphysics of Comrade Okudzhava and others, because it presupposes an intense struggle of tendencies and consequently the highest degree of activity on the part of the Left Opposition. Only political bankrupts leave their posts at critical times, throwing the responsibility onto the objective march of events and looking for a way out in optimistic oracles. The herd instinct and tail-endism characterize marvelously periods of backsliding and degeneration. It was in struggle against them that Bolshevism was born. The Left Opposition continues its historical line. Its duty is not to dilute itself in centrisim but to step up all of its activities.
Dear Comrade Olberg,

In your letter you raise a number of fundamental questions that would take entire treatises to answer. But the fact of the matter is that the Opposition has already written a great deal on these questions in the past. I have no idea whether or not you have read all of this. It would be very good if you would jot down something about yourself, even if only a little bit: whether you have been in the movement a long time, where you have been in recent years, what Opposition literature you have read.

I must say that I am particularly surprised by what you say about the Anglo-Russian Committee: it is impossible to imagine reasoning which is more contrary to the principles of revolutionary class tactics and the entire history of Bolshevism. As you would have it, revolutionaries do not have the right to break with strikebreakers as long as the masses have not rebelled against them. This is the classic philosophy of "tail-endism." You refer to August 4. But you are defeating your own argument with this. Immediately after August 4 we proclaimed the necessity of breaking with the social-patriots and forming the Third International. Moreover, you should take note, in the former case it was a matter of an international party to which we had belonged for ten years; but in the latter case, that of the Anglo-Russian Committee, it was a matter of a temporary bloc with the British participants in the Amsterdam conference whom we proclaimed as the best of the Amsterdam group but who betrayed the general strike. If only several thousand workers had been involved in a rebellion, we should have been with those several thousand. But you are misrepresenting the situation: millions were
dissatisfied; hundreds of thousands were in revolt. The Mi­nority Movement\(^{187}\) at that time involved several hundred thousand workers. The Anglo-Russian Committee destroyed this movement, just as it destroyed the Communist Party for a number of years. We "expressed criticisms." Yes, in Russian newspapers; but in Britain—before the eyes of the masses—we arranged joint banquets, passed foul, hypocritical, pacifist reso­lutions, supported the strikebreakers, and strengthened them against ourselves. How else do you explain that as a result of the mighty revolutionary movement of 1926 not only the Minority Movement in the trade unions but also the Communist Party were reduced to virtually nothing?

However, instead of repeating old ideas, it is better to send you a copy of one of my old articles written as long ago as September 23, 1927.\(^{188}\) In view of the enormous importance of this question for the entire policy of the Comintern, I ask you to familiarize those comrades who show an interest in the question with the contents of this article. After you are finished with it, please return it to me.

Just one comment: "We need not bear the odium of a split." What kind of a term is this? Revolutionaries must always take upon themselves, in the eyes of the masses, the honorable initiative, the revolutionary duty—not at all the "odium"—of a split with strikebreakers and traitors. The entire history of Bolshevism proceeded to the accompaniment of constant charges of splitting.

Do you read the Russian *Biulleten Oppozitsii*? Answers to some of the questions you have posed have been given there.

In any case, for a successful continuation of our correspon­dence, I await from you information of, so to speak, an auto­biographical nature.

February 5, 1930

Comrade Valentin Olberg
Dear Comrade,

I have received your letter of January 28 with my article enclosed.

It would be very good if you would write an article about the Latvian Communist Party—its work, strength, the group­ings within it, and so forth. It would be highly desirable if you gave at least some figures and some factual material in general because there is almost no information of this kind. We would gladly print your article in the Russian *Biulleten*. In addition
it could appear in La Verite and other Opposition publications.

Do you have the latest issue of the Bullett en, devoted to the "third period" and French affairs?

The next issue will be devoted to the Soviet economy and to Stalin's latest course.

I know nothing about the Latvian publishing house Bereg [Shore]. I am inquiring about it through our Russian publisher in Berlin.

I hope that during your stay in Germany you will keep in contact with our German cothinkers. If for no other reason than your knowledge of Russian, you will be able to render them very valuable service.

February 23, 1930

Dear Comrade Olberg,

I received your article about the Latvian party. If it had arrived three days earlier, it would have gotten into number 9 of the Bullett en. It had to be sent on immediately and I am not sure whether it can still be included. At the same time I sent it to La Verite, where I hope it will appear soon.

Of course I can only be pleased if the pamphlet Who Is Leading the Comintern Today? appears in Lettish. The same applies to my pamphlet about the permanent revolution. I am prepared to allow the Latvian comrades to publish these two pamphlets with the understanding that if there is any profit, it will go to cover the expenses of the Opposition group.

Of course the most urgent task for the Bolshevik-Leninists in Germany is to start putting out a publication. I think that the unification of the Grylewicz group with the Wedding group is a prerequisite for this. To tell you the truth, I see no serious reasons standing in the way of such unity. Are you familiar with the Weddingists? Are you meeting with them? Write about your impressions. Is it possible to count on both groups uniting soon? If not, why? Who and what are the obstacles on the road to the necessary fusion?

March 24, 1930

Comrade Olberg
Dear Comrade,

Attached to this I am sending you a copy of my open letter to the members of the Soviet Communist Party. The letter was more or less timed to coincide with the forthcoming Sixteenth Congress (if Stalin convenes it at all).
In this letter I tried to answer in a condensed form the most critical questions in the life of the Communist Party and the Comintern. I am extremely interested in getting this letter to the Soviet republic and also to the neighboring countries—Latvia, Estonia, and so forth—as soon as possible. At the same time as I send this I am sending one copy each to Grylewicz and Mueller. One copy will be enough for the translation into German. Two other copies should be immediately sent on with the request that they be duplicated and distributed.

If you have addresses to which several copies can be sent, copies of the letter could be made in Berlin. I would, of course, cover the necessary expenses.

It is most important not to lose any time, but to act quickly and try by every available means to hasten the letter's passage to the USSR.

Do you have my *Permanent Revolution* in Russian? It came out about two weeks ago. If you do not, you may obtain it through the kind assistance of A.I. Pfemfert by showing her this letter from me.

I shake your hand and wish you the best.

April 3, 1930

Comrade V. Olberg

Dear Comrade,

This is in response to your letter of March 28.

I am expecting to receive any day now information about the [German] unification conference. To date I have received only a telegram. Because I am waiting for documents, for the time being I am not responding to letters from a number of Berlin comrades, including a recent long letter from Comrade Landau. The lack of a German coworker [in Prinkipo] also makes correspondence difficult. Please pass word of this on to Comrade Landau. I read through his letter with interest, and it was very useful to me because of the information it contained.

I don't want just now to go back over the conflicts that preceded unification and delayed it for a number of weeks. I don't at all think that only the opposition of the Leninbund was to blame. Quite recently I received letters against the unification from very responsible members of the Wedding group. Without a doubt there exist in both the former and the latter not a few elements embittered and poisoned by the past.

As I have said, I still do not know on what basis and in
what form the unification took place. But it is absolutely clear that the main difficulties, not only those of a general political nature (that goes without saying) but also those relating to the merging of the two groups, are still to come. It is extremely important that within the unified Opposition a nucleus of "unity patriots" be formed, composed, of course, of the best representatives of both old groups. A body of opinion within the United Opposition must be formed which will reject any intrigues by groups or individuals. In case of imminent danger, timely internal measures must be taken, and, if need be, you should resort to the aid of representatives of the International Opposition. About a month and a half have been lost because of delays regarding the unification. We cannot afford to lose another hour. It is necessary to organize the work seriously, to mobilize everything without exception for this work, and to make a clean sweep of any troublemakers if they appear.

You write about a trip by one of the German comrades with the view of setting up contacts [in the Soviet Union]. This idea is absolutely correct. But work of this kind requires an experienced comrade who is careful and resourceful. It is not so easy to find a suitable person.

In any case, in the meantime we must make use of all sorts of amateur methods to send materials and documents. If one copy of the "Open Letter" makes it to a person who should have it, then it will surely make its way further.

Getting back once more to the German Opposition, I will mention that the most difficult task right now is the selection and training of a leadership group. Under the present circumstances the leadership can less than ever be an individual one. It must be collective. Consequently, it must be selected from comrades who are able and willing to work collectively. It must be under the control of the entire Opposition cadre, and it must seek support not outside the German Opposition but within it. In short, it must be a leadership based on democratic centralism.

April 27, 1930

Comrade Olberg
Dear Comrade,

In your letter of April 14 you present a rather pessimistic picture of the state of affairs within the leadership of the United Opposition. If information I have received very recently is
correct, it may be that the situation has improved somewhat. Or don't you agree?

You write in detail about Comrade Pfemfert and his journal *Aktion*. It goes without saying that we have disagreements with Comrade Pfemfert on very basic questions. But you must not forget that until very recently the Left Opposition was represented in Germany by the Leninbund, with whom our disagreements were in no way less than those we have with Comrade Pfemfert, with one great difference: Urbahns functioned in a totally disloyal and often downright unscrupulous way while Comrade Pfemfert has at all times functioned with absolute loyalty. You raise a point about the article devoted to the question of a visa. I wrote this article for the organs of the Leninbund. Urbahns for some reason unknown to me did not print the article. But because I considered it necessary, precisely in Germany, to explain the meaning and nature of my appeal to the Social Democratic government, I passed the article on for publication in *Aktion*. Thus, no abuse was committed on its part.

I have just received word from Pfemfert that in view of the fact that it is impossible for the Opposition to publish my "Open Letter to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (Grylewicz told him of this), he, Pfemfert, is publishing this letter in the next issue of *Aktion*. Would it have been right for me to refuse? No, it would have been wrong. Very likely, you are right in your conviction that I will not be able to make the old experienced readers of *Aktion* change their minds. But on the other hand I will give our cothinkers or sympathizers, at least some of them, an opportunity to become familiar with these documents, which I cannot publish by other means.

The same goes for the publication of pamphlets. Of course I will be fully prepared to pass my pamphlets on to the United Opposition as soon as it gets on its feet and sets up its own publishing house. This is absolutely essential and is the task of the immediate future. But it is impossible to do this now. In the meantime, I think the pamphlet *Permanent Revolution* should be published. Comrade Pfemfert has pledged to pass along to the United Opposition as many pamphlets as it needs, at cost.

You write about the advisability of my meeting with Comrades Landau and Neumann. I absolutely agree with you and hope over the course of the summer to be able to arrange this, if no unforeseen obstacles arise.
Comrade Graef's article poses a question of the greatest importance, and does so, in all essentials, in an entirely correct way, in our opinion. His illustration of how the Stalinists "understand" uneven development, by the example of the agrarian overpopulation problem, is presented most convincingly.

But there is a point on which we disagree with the author. Comrade Graef deals too lightly with the question of the relations between the rate of collectivization and the technical-industrial base of present-day agriculture. It is totally wrong to suppose that it is possible first to create collective farms and then to supply them with a technical base. The collective farms will fall apart while waiting for the technical base, this collapse being accompanied by a ferocious internal struggle and causing great harm to agriculture, which is to say, to the entire economy in general as well.

It is not true, as he claims, that "even the lowest, most primitive form of collectivization is bound to result in a higher productivity of labor than that of the individual peasant farm." The whole question turns, on the one hand, on the extent of collectivization and, on the other, on the character of the means of production. "It cannot be otherwise," writes Comrade Graef, "for if it were, the economic usefulness and progressive nature of the pooling of resources would then be disproved." But the truth of the matter is that the whole problem consists in determining the limits within which collectivization, at the given economic and cultural level, can be "economically useful" or "progressive."

One must regard as an obvious misunderstanding Comrade Graef's reference to the October Revolution as supposedly
having first transformed the organizational superstructure and then moved on to reorganize the technical and economic base. That the economic base cannot be reorganized along socialist lines without power having first been conquered and without the state (the "superstructure") having first been reorganized is indisputable. When the Mensheviks told us that social conditions were not yet "ripe" for socialism, we answered: "Conditions are completely ripe for the seizure of power by the proletariat, and we shall build socialism at a rate that corresponds to the material resources."

If conditions in the Soviet village are "ripe" for collectivization, it is only in the sense of there being no other way out. That, however, is not enough. At any rate, there are no grounds whatsoever for rushing headlong from a relative state of impasse, which still permits a postponement of the historical payment due, to the conclusion that the impasse is absolute. It is necessary to make clear to the peasantry in an open and honest way what a disproportion there is between the present extent of collectivization and the material resources available to support it. The practical steps to be taken follow from this automatically.

We will not dwell further on this question, since it is analyzed in other articles in the Biulleten, particularly in the article "Toward Capitalism or Socialism?" in this issue.

We hope that the reader will agree with us that in spite of the indicated error on economic perspectives, Comrade Graef's article represents a valuable contribution to the discussion of the problem of collectivization.
FORGETFUL MYASNIKOV

Brief News for the Use of Ultradefts

Published May 1930

Some small ultraleft groups and, among others, Myasnikov (who has no group at all) chatter about the "capitulation" of the Russian Opposition, with Comrades Trotsky and Rakovsky at the head. These ravings are altogether out of place in Myasnikov's mouth and put him in a ridiculous position. We have no wish to engage in useless polemic; we limit ourselves to recalling some recent facts.

1. In June 1929, Myasnikov had preliminary talks with the Soviet consulate in Trebizond about the conditions for his return to the USSR. Myasnikov advanced certain demands for the right of return to the USSR with a guarantee of personal inviolability. For his part, he would abstain from political activity. Receiving no reply, on August 8 Myasnikov wrote this new statement:

"During our preliminary talks on the conditions for my return to the USSR it was agreed that I would return to the USSR if (a) I would be guaranteed personal inviolability; (b) this guarantee of personal inviolability would be made public through the periodical press (newspapers) before my return to the USSR; (c) after my return to the USSR I would have the right to reside in Moscow and Leningrad with the assurance of work; (d) this guarantee of personal inviolability would be granted when, on my return to the USSR, I ended my political activity."

It was only because of Comrade Trotsky's advice that this statement was not sent to the consulate by Myasnikov. It is proper to recall here that Myasnikov was accepting those same terms which Stalin had put to Comrade Trotsky in Alma-Ata just prior to his exile to Turkey, and to which Comrade Trotsky replied with the following firm and precise statement:
"Only completely corrupted bureaucrats could demand such a renunciation from revolutionaries (renunciation of political activity, i.e., of serving the party and the international proletariat). Only contemptible renegades could give such a promise."

2. When the Sino-Soviet conflict broke out, Myasnikov wrote to Comrade Trotsky (November 25, 1929):

"It is not the time for discussions [with the Stalinists] but for battle [against Chiang Kai-shek]. One must tell oneself so, and tell it to the whole world! Forward against Chiang Kai-shek — and forward into battle."

Comrade Trotsky answered Myasnikov as follows:

"I confess to you that your letter has greatly astonished me: you pose the question of the defense of the USSR as if it had arisen for the first time under the influence of the last stage of the Sino-Soviet conflict. However, the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition has given a categorical answer to this question, particularly in its platform, which says: 'Whoever is against the defense of the USSR is a traitor to the international proletariat.' That does not mean that in the event of war we must forget all our differences.

"We must fight as if these differences did not exist. But we must preserve our right to raise even during the war all questions in dispute if the interests of the victory of the revolution demand it. That is why I consider it is impossible for an Oppositionist to renounce his political activity during peace as during war. Greetings. L. Trotsky."

3. Not long ago Myasnikov requested insistently from the "capitulator" Trotsky a preface to his pamphlet. Here is what Comrade Myasnikov wrote on August 3, 1929:

"Your criticism is useful to me and above all to the proletariat of the whole world. I do not fear criticism; on the contrary, I want loyal, honest, and documented criticism. Now there is only you who can give this criticism," etc., etc.

Comrade Trotsky refused to write this preface, not wishing to create the appearance of a political rapprochement where none existed in reality.

All this proves that Myasnikov and his friends should be a little more prudent.
PROBLEMS OF
THE ITALIAN REVOLUTION

May 14, 1930

Dear Comrades:

I have received your letter of May 5. Thanks very much for this study of Italian communism in general and of the various tendencies within it in particular. It filled a great need for me and was most welcome. It would be regrettable if your work were to be left in the form of an ordinary letter. With a few changes or abridgments, the letter could very well find a place in the pages of La Lutte de classes.

If you do not mind, I will begin with a general political conclusion: I regard our mutual collaboration in the future as perfectly possible and even extremely desirable. None of us possesses or can possess preestablished political formulas that can serve for all the eventualities of life. But I believe that the method with which you seek to determine the necessary political formulas is the right one.

You ask for my opinion concerning a whole series of grave problems. But before attempting a reply on some of them, I should formulate a very important reservation. I have never been closely acquainted with Italian political life, for I have spent only a very short time in Italy, I read Italian very poorly, and during my time in the Communist International I did not have the opportunity to dig deeper into an examination of Italian affairs.

You should know this fairly well yourselves, for how explain otherwise the fact that you undertook so detailed a work to bring me up to date on the pending questions?

It follows from the foregoing that my answers, in most cases, ought to have only an entirely hypothetical value. In no case can I consider the reflections that follow as definitive. It is quite possible and even probable that in examining this or that other problem I lose sight of certain highly important concrete circumstances of time and place. I will therefore await your objections and supplementary and corrective information. Inasmuch as our method, as I hope, is common, it is in this way that we shall best arrive at the right solution.
1. You remind me that I once criticized the slogan "Republican Assembly on the Basis of Workers' and Peasants' Committees," a slogan formerly put forward by the Italian Communist Party. You tell me that this slogan had an entirely episodic value and that at present it has been abandoned. I would like nevertheless to tell you why I consider it to be erroneous or at least ambiguous as a political slogan. "Republican Assembly" constitutes quite obviously an institution of the bourgeois state. What, however, are the "Workers' and Peasants' Committees"? It is obvious that they are some sort of equivalent of the workers' and peasants' soviets. Then that's what should be said. For, class organs of the workers and poor peasants, whether you give them the name of soviets or committees, always constitute organizations of struggle against the bourgeois state, then become organs of insurrection, to be transformed finally, after the victory, into organs of the proletarian dictatorship. How, under these conditions, can a Republican Assembly—supreme organ of the bourgeois state—have as its "basis" organs of the proletarian state?

I should like to recall to you that in 1917, before October, Zinoviev and Kamenev, when they came out against an insurrection, advocated waiting for the Constituent Assembly to meet in order to create a "combined state" by means of a fusion between the Constituent Assembly and the workers' and peasants' soviets. In 1919 we saw Hilferding propose to inscribe the soviets in the Weimar constitution. Like Zinoviev and Kamenev, Hilferding called this the "combined state." As a new type of petty bourgeois, he wanted, at the very point of the most abrupt historical turn, to "combine" a third type of state by wedding the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie to the proletarian dictatorship under the sign of the constitution.

The Italian slogan expounded above seems to me to be a variant of this petty-bourgeois tendency. Unless I have understood it in a wrong sense. But in that case it already has the incontestable defect of lending itself to dangerous misunderstandings. I profit by it to correct here a truly unpardonable error committed by the epigones in 1924: they had found in Lenin a passage saying that we might be led to wed the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets. A passage saying the same thing may likewise be discovered in my writings. But what exactly was involved? We were posing the question of an insurrection that would transmit the power to the proletariat in the form of soviets. To the question of what, in that case, we would do with the Constituent Assembly, we replied:
"We shall see; perhaps we shall combine it with the Soviets." We understood by that the case where the Constituent Assembly, convoked under the Soviet regime, would have a Soviet majority. As this was not the case, the Soviets dispersed the Constituent Assembly. In other words: the question was posed of whether it was possible to transform the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets into organs of one and the same class, and not at all of "combining" a bourgeois Constituent Assembly with the proletarian Soviets. In one case (with Lenin), it was a question of the formation of a proletarian state, of its structure, of its technique. In the other (with Zinoviev, Kamenev, Hilferding), it was a question of a constitutional combination of two states of enemy classes with a view to averting a proletarian insurrection that would have taken power.

2. The question we have just examined (the Republican Assembly) is intimately connected with another which you analyze in your letter, namely, what social character will the antifascist revolution acquire? You deny the possibility of a bourgeois revolution in Italy. You are perfectly right. History cannot turn back a considerable number of pages, each of which is equivalent to half a decade. The Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party already tried once to duck the question by proclaiming that the revolution would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "popular." It is a simple repetition of what the Russian Populists said at the beginning of this century when they were asked what character the revolution against czarism would acquire. And it is still this same answer that the Communist International gives today with respect to China and India. It is quite simply a pseudorevolutionary variant of the social democratic theory of Otto Bauer and others, according to which the state can raise itself above the classes, that is, be neither bourgeois nor proletarian. This theory is as pernicious for the proletariat as for the revolution. In China it transformed the proletariat into cannon fodder of the bourgeois counterrevolution.

Every great revolution proves to be popular in the sense that it draws into its wake the entire people. Both the Great French Revolution and the October Revolution were wholly popular. Nevertheless, the first was bourgeois because it instituted individual property, whereas the second was proletarian because it abolished individual property. Only a few hopelessly belated petty-bourgeois revolutionists can still dream of a revolution that would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "popular" (that is, petty-bourgeois).
Now, in the imperialist period, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable not only of leading a revolution, but even of playing an independent role in it. In this way the formula of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" henceforth constitutes a simple screen for a petty-bourgeois conception of a transitional revolution and a transitional state, that is, of a revolution and a state that cannot take place in Italy or even in backward India. A revolutionist who has not taken a clear, point-blank position on the question of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry is doomed to fall into error after error. As to the problem of the antifascist revolution, the Italian question, more than any other, is intimately linked to the fundamental problems of world communism, that is, of the so-called theory of permanent revolution.

3. Following from what has been said comes the question of the "transitional" period in Italy. At the very outset it is necessary to establish very clearly: transition from what to what? A period of transition from the bourgeois (or "popular") revolution to the proletarian revolution—that is one thing. A period of transition from the fascist dictatorship to the proletarian dictatorship—that is something else. If the first conception is envisaged, the question of the bourgeois revolution is posed in the first place, and it is then a question of establishing the role of the proletariat in it. Only after that will the question of the transitional period toward a proletarian revolution be posed. If the second conception is envisaged, the question is then posed of a series of battles, disturbances, changing situations, abrupt turns, constituting in their entirety the different stages of the proletarian revolution. These stages may be many. But in no case can they contain within them a bourgeois revolution or its mysterious hybrid, the "popular" revolution.

Does this mean that Italy cannot, for a certain time, again become a parliamentary state or become a "democratic republic"? I consider—in perfect agreement with you, I think—that this eventuality is not excluded. But then it will not be the fruit of a bourgeois revolution, but the abortion of an insufficiently matured and premature proletarian revolution. In the event of a profound revolutionary crisis and mass battles in the course of which the proletarian vanguard will not have been in a position to take power, it may be that the bourgeoisie will restore its rule on "democratic" bases. Can it be said, for example, that the present German republic is a conquest of the
bourgeois revolution? Such an assertion would be absurd. What took place in Germany in 1918-19 was a proletarian revolution, which for lack of leadership was deceived, betrayed, and crushed. But the bourgeois counterrevolution nevertheless was forced to adapt itself to the circumstances resulting from this crushing of the proletarian revolution and to assume the form of a parliamentary "democratic" republic. Is the same—or about the same—eventuality excluded for Italy? No, it is not excluded. The enthronement of fascism resulted from the fact that the 1920 proletarian revolution was not carried through to its completion. Only a new proletarian revolution can overturn fascism. If it should not be fated to triumph this time either (owing to the weakness of the Communist Party, maneuvers and betrayals of the social democrats, the Freemasons, the Catholics), the "transitional" state that the bourgeois counterrevolution would then be compelled to set up on the ruins of the fascist form of its rule could be nothing else than a parliamentary and democratic state.

What in the long run is the aim of the Antifascist Concentration? Foreseeing the fall of the fascist state by an uprising of the proletariat and in general of all the oppressed masses, the Concentration is preparing to arrest this movement, to paralyze it, and to thwart it in order to pass off the victory of the renovated counterrevolution as a supposed victory of a democratic bourgeois revolution. If this dialectic of the living social forces is lost sight of for a single moment, the risk is run of getting inextricably entangled and of swerving off the right road. I believe there cannot be the slightest misunderstanding between us on this score.

4. But does this mean that we communists reject in advance all democratic slogans, all transitional or preparatory slogans, limiting ourselves strictly to the proletarian dictatorship? That would be a display of sterile, doctrinaire sectarianism. We do not believe for one moment that a single revolutionary leap suffices to cross what separates the fascist regime from the proletarian dictatorship. In no way do we deny a transitional period with its transitional demands, including democratic demands. But it is precisely with the aid of these transitional slogans, which are always the starting point on the road to the proletarian dictatorship, that the communist vanguard will have to win the whole working class and that the latter will have to unite around itself all the oppressed masses of the nation. And I do not even exclude the possibility of a constituent assembly which, in certain circumstances, could be im-
posed by the course of events or, more precisely, by the process of the revolutionary awakening of the oppressed masses. To be sure, on the broad historical scale, that is, from the perspective of a whole number of years, the fate of Italy is undoubtedly reduced to the following alternative: *fascism* or *communism*. But to claim that this alternative has already penetrated the consciousness of the oppressed classes of the nation is to engage in wishful thinking and to consider as solved the colossal task that still fully confronts the weak Communist Party. If the revolutionary crisis were to break out, for example, in the course of the next months (under the influence of the economic crisis, on the one hand, and under the revolutionary influence coming from Spain, on the other), the masses of toilers, workers as well as peasants, would certainly follow up their economic demands with democratic slogans (such as freedom of assembly, of press, of trade-union organization, democratic representation in parliament and in the municipalities). Does this mean that the Communist Party should reject these demands? On the contrary. It will have to invest them with the most audacious and resolute character possible. For the proletarian dictatorship cannot be *imposed* upon the popular masses. It can be realized only by carrying on a battle—a battle in full—for all the transitional demands, requirements, and needs of the masses, and at the head of the masses.

It should be recalled here that Bolshevism by no means came to power under the abstract slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We fought for the Constituent Assembly much more boldly than all the other parties. We said to the peasants: "You demand equal distribution of the land? Our agrarian program goes much further. But no one except us will assist you in achieving equal use of the land. For this you must support the workers." In regard to the war we said to the popular masses: "Our communist task is to war against all oppressors. But you are not ready to go so far. You are striving to escape from the imperialist war. No one but the Bolsheviks will help you achieve this." I am not dealing with the question of what exactly the central slogans of the transitional period in Italy should be right now, in the year 1930. To outline them, and to effect correct and timely changes, it is necessary to be far better acquainted with Italy's internal life and in much closer contact with its toiling masses than it is possible for me to be. For, in addition to a correct method, it is also necessary to *listen* to the masses. I want simply to indicate the general
place of transitional demands in the struggle of communism against fascism and, in general, against bourgeois society.

5. However, while advancing this or that democratic slogan, we must fight irreconcilably against all forms of democratic charlatanism. The "Democratic Republic of the Workers," slogan of the Italian social democracy, is an example of this petty charlatanism. A republic of the workers can only be a proletarian class state. The democratic republic is only a masked form of the bourgeois state. The combination of the two is only a petty-bourgeois illusion of the social democratic rank and file (workers, peasants) and an impudent falsehood of the social democratic leaders (all the Turatis, Modiglianis and their ilk). Let me once again remark in passing that I was and remain opposed to the slogan of a "Republican Assembly on the Basis of Workers' and Peasants' Committees" precisely because this formula approaches the social democratic slogan of the "Democratic Republic of the Workers" and, consequently, can make the struggle against the social democracy extremely difficult.

6. The assertion made by the official leadership [of the Communist Party] that the social democracy allegedly no longer exists politically in Italy is nothing but a consoling theory of bureaucratic optimists who wish to see ready-made solutions where there are still great tasks ahead. Fascism has not liquidated the social democracy but has, on the contrary, preserved it. In the eyes of the masses, the social democrats do not bear the responsibility for the regime, whose victims they are in part. This wins them new sympathy and strengthens the old. And a moment will come when the social democracy will coin political currency from the blood of Matteotti just as ancient Rome did from the blood of Christ. It is therefore not excluded that in the initial period of the revolutionary crisis, the leadership may be concentrated chiefly in the hands of the social democracy. If large numbers of the masses are immediately drawn into the movement and if the Communist Party conducts a correct policy, it may well be that in a short period of time the social democracy will be reduced to zero. But that would be a task to accomplish, not yet an accomplishment. It is impossible to leap over this problem; it must be solved.

Let me recall at this point that Zinoviev, and later the Manuilskys and Kuusinens, announced on two or three occasions that the German social democracy also essentially no longer existed. In 1925 the Comintern, in its declaration to the French party written by the light hand of Lozovsky,
likewise decreed that the French Socialist Party had definitely left the scene. The Left Opposition always spoke up energetically against this flighty judgment. Only outright fools or traitors would want to instill the idea in the proletarian vanguard of Italy that the Italian social democracy can no longer play the role that the German social democracy did in the revolution of 1918.

It may be objected that the social democracy cannot succeed again in betraying the Italian proletariat as it did back in 1920. This is an illusion and a self-deception! The proletariat has been deceived too many times in the course of its history, first by liberalism and then by the social democracy.

What is more, we cannot forget that since 1920 ten full years have elapsed, and since the advent of fascism eight years. The children who were ten and twelve years old in 1920-22, and who have witnessed the activities of the fascists, today comprise the new generation of workers and peasants who will fight heroically against fascism, but who lack political experience. The communists will come into contact with the full mass movement only during the revolution itself and, under the most favorable circumstances, will require months before they can expose and demolish the social democracy which, I repeat, fascism has not liquidated but on the contrary has preserved.

To conclude, a few words on an important question of fact, about which there cannot be two different opinions in our circle. Should or can Left Oppositionists deliberately resign from the party? There cannot be any question about this. Except for rare exceptions, and they were mistakes, none of us ever did that. But I do not have a clear idea of what is required of an Italian comrade to hold on to this or that post inside the party in the present circumstances. I cannot say anything concrete on this point, except that not one of us can allow a comrade to accommodate to a false or equivocal political position before the party or the masses in order to avoid expulsion.

I shake your hand.

Yours,

Leon Trotsky
WITH MARXIST SPECTACLES

May 16, 1930

The tardiness of my reply is to be explained not only by my very heavy correspondence and other work but also by the fact that for a certain time I was in doubt whether it would be expedient, after the organizational split, to begin a polemic in private letters. Today in Germany there are two publications in which the polemic can be conducted in such a manner that third persons, who are quite numerous, will learn something from it. However, in order not to miss an opportunity to eliminate misunderstandings (if they are only misunderstandings), I will attempt to answer your letter privately also.

The chief argument of your letter—which is the chief argument of Urbahns as well—consists of the contention that "German matters must not be viewed with Russian spectacles." This argument is the most important reason for the split, because it is a national or, more correctly expressed, a nationalist argument, which has nothing in common with an internationalist point of view. I have been accustomed to view German as well as Russian affairs with Marxist spectacles and the national chauvinists were never able to dissuade me from this habit when they claimed that we, the intransigent Marxists, viewed Russian affairs with German spectacles (since Marx was German). A revolutionary or, rather, pseudorevolutionary tendency that is national and not international proves thereby that it is non-Marxist and anti-Marxist. The single fact that the Leninbund has no ideological comrades in the international field today already condemns it inexorably from the Marxist point of view. In France, Urbahns claimed "Contre le Courant."
they have decisively rejected his advances. This proves that the spectacles of the Leninbund may perhaps be German, but never Marxist.

You maintain, dear comrades, that German conditions cannot be judged from away off in Constantinople. I admit this, too, and I have always expressed myself on internal German questions with the greatest caution. Do you believe, however, that it is much easier to view Russian, French, and Chinese affairs from Berlin or from Wattenscheid? The point of departure in the whole conflict was the question of the class character of the Soviet state. Am I to deny Urbahns and yourselves the right to express your opinions on that question because you live in Germany? No, that I will not do! I cannot accept your point of view—not because it is German but because it is wrong. We have in Russia elements who have the same point of view (Myasnikov), and since the Left Opposition cannot conduct any common work with these elements in Russia, how can we alter our principled line for the sake of the Leninbund in Germany? When you look at the matter more closely, you will not demand this of us. The fundamental mistake of Urbahns consists in (a) his theory of the state in general (basically he is with Otto Bauer against Marx, Engels, and Lenin); (b) his evaluation of the Soviet state; (c) the lessons of the Chinese revolution; (d) his relation to the Comintern and the Communist Party of Germany. All these are not internal German affairs, about which it would be difficult to form a concrete judgment from this distance, but on the contrary involve the most principled and fundamental questions of communist theory and international communist policy.
Dear Friends:

It surely has not escaped your attention that Pravda, Bolshevik, and all the rest of the official press have now renewed the campaign against "Trotskyism" with all their might. Although the behind-the-scenes reasons for this turnabout are unfortunately not known to us, the very fact that the discussion has been renewed after having been virtually suspended for a period of time represents a great victory for us.

Half a year ago Molotov specially recommended to the French Communists that they refrain from polemicizing against "Trotskyism" since in fact it had been totally annihilated. At about that time I was writing to the French comrades that our victory would be half assured the moment we forced the official apparatus to enter into polemics with us, for here our ideological superiority, long since established, would inevitably make itself felt with full force. And we are beginning to harvest the fruits of the Opposition's theoretical and political labor of the past seven years. This applies first of all, of course, to the Western countries, where we have our own publications and where we can answer blow for blow. In the USSR the apparatus can, thanks to the one-sided nature of the polemic, postpone the final outcome of the ideological struggle. But it can only postpone it. The past has seen so many mix-ups, lies, contradictions, zigzags, and mistakes that the simplest general conclusions now thrust themselves of their own accord upon wide layers of the party and the working class. And since these elementary conclusions about the present leadership coincide in essentials with the ideas the Opposition has promoted, the apparatus is forced to start "working over Trot-
skyism" again from the beginning, in order to try to prevent a link-up between the criticism and dissatisfaction in the party and the slogans of the Opposition. But there can be no doubt that the warmed-over serving of the same old dish will not bring salvation. In some recent articles, for example those by that helpless soul Pokrovsky, the belated call for a "working-over of Trotskyism" has an obviously panicky tone. The importance of these symptoms cannot be rated too highly. A lot of things have begun to stir in the party and are moving in our direction.

In the West we are meeting with real success, especially in France and Italy. The official press of the French Communist Party has totally rejected the advice from Molotov referred to above—advice which Molotov himself has even managed to repudiate. Instead of attacking us with hopelessly absurd fabrications in the style of the "Wrangel officer," the French Communist press is trying to develop a polemic on matters of principle. But that is exactly what we want! The French Opposition is taking part more and more effectively in the activities of the CP, making a record for itself in them and making a criticism of them, thus gradually breaking down the wall between itself and the party. The Opposition has found support in the trade-union movement, where our cothinkers have published their own platform and established their own center, continuing the struggle of course for a united confederation of labor (the CGTU).

In the Italian party, serious shifts have also taken place recently. You know about the expulsion from the party, on charges of solidarity with Trotsky, of Comrade Bordiga, who recently returned from exile. The Italian comrades have written us that Bordiga, having acquainted himself with our latest publications, did indeed make a statement, it seems, about his agreement with our views. At the same time a split that had long been in preparation has taken place in the official party. Several members of the Central Committee, who had been responsible for some of the most important work of the party, refused to accept the theory and practice of the "third period." They were declared "right deviationists," but in fact they had nothing in common with Tasca, Brandler, and Company. Their disagreement on the "third period" forced them to re-examine all the disputes and differences of recent years, and they declared their full solidarity with the International Left Opposition. This is an exceptionally valuable widening of our ranks!
In one of my recent letters I emphasized that the past year was a year of great preparatory work for the International Left Opposition and that now we could expect political results from the work we had done. The facts I have cited, involving two countries, attest that these results have already begun to take on tangible form. It is no accident, after all, that the Comintern press feels forced, in the wake of the Soviet Communist Party, to take the road of open "principled" polemics with us, which, naturally, will only work in our favor.

The Sixteenth Congress will not yet reflect these obvious, indisputable shifts in the Soviet party and Comintern, shifts that promise much but that are nevertheless only beginning. This will be a congress of the Stalinist bureaucracy, as before. But a frightened, distraught, "reflective" bureaucracy. Organizationally Stalin will hold onto his positions at the congress, in all likelihood. Even more, this congress is sure to formally draw the balance sheet on the whole range of Stalin's "victories" over his opponents and to sanctify the system of "one-man rule." But in spite of that—or more precisely because of that—one may say without the slightest hesitation: the Sixteenth Congress will be the last congress of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Just as the Fifteenth Congress, which sealed the victory over the Left Opposition, powerfully spurred on the disintegration of the Right-center bloc, so too the Sixteenth Congress, which presumably will crown the defeat of the Rights, will spur on the disintegration of bureaucratic centrism. This disintegration should proceed faster, the more it has been held back by the rude and disloyal apparatus crowd. Not only does all this open up new possibilities for the Left Opposition; it also imposes very great obligations upon it. The road to the party lies through the process of reviving the party itself, and only through that, and consequently through the strengthening of the tenacious theoretical and political work of the Opposition in the party and working class. All the rest follows of its own accord.

With firm communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
Trotsky and Natalia Sedova in Turkey.
WHAT IS CENTRISM?  

May 28, 1930

In *Le Cri du peuple* [The People’s Call], the publication of the bloc of Monattists with the "municipal" POP clique, Chambelland publishes an open letter to the "centrist" leaders of the Teachers Federation. I won't bother with the letter itself because it is completely devoid of any revolutionary ideas. Only one point is of interest. Chambelland describes the communists as "centrists." His idea—for I think nevertheless we have a kind of an idea here—is probably this: at one end of the present political front are those who support union autonomy, that is, Monatte’s friends together with the POPists; at the other, those who support the subordination of the unions to the party, that is, the official CGTU leadership. And between these two stand the Oppositional communists who fight timidly for "autonomy" but don't risk a break with communism.

These, then, are centrists, because they take their place in the center. Now, since the Left Opposition emerged from a war against centrism, Chambelland is announcing an internal contradiction, which at first sight appears to give him victory without even a fight.

For a naturalist nothing in the world of nature is insignificant. For a Marxist nothing is insignificant that has to do with the world of politics. Chambelland's classification, while superficial, can yet provide an opportunity for making certain revolutionary notions precise.

That is what we shall try to do.

It is a fundamental error to think that "centrism" is a geometrical or topographical description, as in a parliament. For a Marxist, political concepts are defined not by characteristics of form but by their class content considered from an ideological and methodological standpoint. The three tendencies in the
present workers' movement—*reformism, communism, and centrism*—flow inescapably from the objective situation of the proletariat under the imperialist regime of the bourgeoisie.

*Reformism* is the current that emerged from the upper and privileged layers of the proletariat and reflects their interests. In some countries especially, the workers' aristocracy and bureaucracy form a very important and powerful layer with a mentality, in most cases, that is petty-bourgeois by virtue of the very conditions of their existence and way of thinking; but they have to adapt themselves to the proletariat on whose back they grew up. The highest of these elements attain to supreme power and well-being through the bourgeois parliamentary channel.

In the person of a Thomas, a MacDonald, a Herman Mueller, or a Paul-Boncour we have a conservative big bourgeois who still preserves in part a petty-bourgeois mentality, more often a petty-bourgeois hypocritical outlook toward the proletarian base. In other words, we have here, in a single social type, the product of the sediments of three different classes. The relation between them is as follows: the big bourgeois gives orders to the petty bourgeois and the latter abuses the workers. As for knowing whether the big bourgeois allows a Thomas to come to see him—through the service entrance—in his home, or bank, or ministry; or whether, on the other hand, he has introduced this same Thomas to his wealth and ideas—that, though secondary, is not unimportant. The imperialist stage of evolution, which increasingly aggravates contradictions, often forces the bourgeoisie to transform the leading groups of reformists into real activists for its trusts and governmental combinations. This is what characterizes the new—much higher—degree of dependence of reformism on the imperialist bourgeoisie, and sets a much more distinctive stamp on its psychology and politics, making it suitable for directly taking the helm in the affairs of the bourgeois state.

Of this upper layer of "reformists" we can least of all say, "They have nothing to lose but their chains." On the contrary, for all these prime ministers, ministers, mayors, deputies, and union leaders, the socialist revolution would mean the expropriation of their positions of privilege. These watchdogs of capital do not protect merely property *in general* but mainly their *own* property. They are the bitter enemies of the proletariat's liberating revolution.

As against reformism, under the name of a *revolutionary*
and proletarian policy (Marxist communist), we conceive of a system of ideological and methodological struggle which aims at the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state by the method first of uniting the proletariat, signalized by the dictatorship, then of reorganizing society in a socialist way.

Only the most advanced minority—the most conscious and daring of the working class—is able to assume the initiative for this task, a minority which, basing itself on a clearly defined and scientifically established program, and with great experience in workers' struggles, concentrates around itself the ever-increasing majority of the proletariat with a view to socialist revolution. So long as capitalism lasts, which reduces the proletariat to wretched ideas, it cannot be expected that the differences will disappear between the party—produced by ideological selection—and the class—constituted automatically by the process of production. It is only after the victory of the proletariat—signalized by a genuine economic and cultural revival of the masses, that is, by the very process of the liquidation of classes—that the party will be seen to dissolve itself little by little in the toiling masses until it, like the state, completely disappears. Only phrase-mongers or mandarins of sterile sects can speak of proletarian revolution while denying the role of the communist vanguard.

Thus, the two fundamental currents in the world working class are social imperialism on the one hand and revolutionary communism on the other. Between these two poles come a number of transitional currents and groupings that are constantly changing their appearance and are always in a state of transformation and displacement: going sometimes from reformism to communism, sometimes from communism to reformism. These centrist currents do not have, and by their very nature cannot have, a well-defined social base. While reformism represents the interests of the privileged tops of the working class, and communism is the standard-bearer of the proletariat itself, centrisim expresses the transitional process inside the proletariat, different waves inside its different layers, and the difficulties in the progress toward final revolutionary positions.

That is precisely why centrist mass organisms are never stable or viable.

True, there always will be inside the working class a layer of constant centrists, who do not want to go all the way with the reformists but who, organically, cannot become revolutionaries either. One of these types of honest centrist work-
What Is Centrism?

ers, in France, was old Bourdon. A more brilliant and striking example—in Germany this time—was old Ledebour.207

As for the masses, they don't ever stay for very long in this transitional stage: temporarily they rally to the centrists, then they go on and join the communists or go back to the reformists—unless they lapse, temporarily, into indifference.

That is how the left wing of the French Socialist Party changed into a communist party, abandoning its centrist leaders on the road. That is how the Independent Social Democratic Party in Germany disappeared, sharing its adherents between communism and social democracy.

That is how, similarly, the "Two-and-a-Half" International disappeared from the world.208

The same phenomenon can be observed in the realm of trade unionism: the centrist "independence" of the British trade unions that adhered to Amsterdam changed into the most "yellow" Amsterdamite policy of betrayal at the time of the general strike.

But the disappearance of these organizations cited above as examples does not at all mean that centrism has spoken its last word, as is claimed by the Communist bureaucracy, whose own ideology is very close to centrism. Well-defined mass organizations or currents were reduced to nothing in the period immediately after the war when the European workers' movement had subsided. The present worsening of the world crisis and the incontestable new radicalization of the masses have inevitably led to the emergence of new centrist tendencies inside the social democracy, the unions, and the unorganized masses.

It is not excluded that these new centrist currents will once more bring to the surface some former centrist leaders. But once again, that won't be for long. Centrist politicians in the workers' movement are very much like a hen who hatches duck eggs and then laments bitterly at the water's edge: How unashamed are these children to leave their "autonomous" hen and go swimming in the waters of reformism or communism. If Chambelland wishes to take the trouble, he will easily find around him a number of respectable hens right now busy hatching reformist eggs.

In the past, the workers' bureaucracy always and everywhere covered itself with the principle of "autonomy," "independence," etc., in this way insuring its own independence from the workers; for how could the worker control the bureaucracy if it proclaimed some principle or other as its slogan? As we
know, the German and British trade unions long proclaimed their independence of any parties; the American trade unions pride themselves on it to this day. But the evolution of reformism shown before, which has definitively bound it to imperialism, from now on prevents the reformists from using the label of "autonomy" as easily as they did in the past. The centrists, who cling to it more than ever, probably take advantage of this. For is it not their nature precisely to guard jealously the "autonomy" of their hesitations and duplicity vis-a-vis reformism and communism?*

That is how the idea of autonomy, which in the history of the world's labor movements has been primarily an attribute of reformism, today is a sign of centrism.

But what kind of centrism?
We have already shown that centrism always changes its position: going either to the left, toward communism, or to the right, toward reformism.

If Chambellan would cast an eye on the past history of his group—if only since the beginning of the imperialist war—he would easily find confirmation of what I am putting forward. At the present moment, the "autonomous" unions are clearly moving from left to right, from communism to reformism. They have even rejected the label of communism. That is what makes them kin to the POPists, who are following the same evolution but in a more disorganized manner.

Centrism, by moving to the left and detaching the masses from reformism, is performing a progressive function; it goes without saying that this does not in any way prevent us from denouncing in this case also the duplicity of centrism, for the progressive hen will be abandoned sooner or later at water's edge. When, on the other hand, centrism tries to detach the workers from communist objectives to facilitate—under the mask of autonomy—their evolution toward reformism, then centrism performs a task that is no longer progressive but reactionary. That, at the present moment, is the role played by the Committee for Trade-Union Independence.

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*In the French syndicalist movement of 1906-14, "independence" meant breaking with parliamentary opportunism. For this reason—by its nature—French revolutionary syndicalism established a party, but this did not develop to the full and therefore, even before the war, it had gone into decline.
"But these are almost the exact words of the Stalinists," Cham­
belland will repeat; he has already written it. It would be use­less to ask oneself who—the Chambelland group or the In­
ternational Communist Left Opposition—is conducting the more­
serious and bitter struggle against the lying policy of the Stalin­
ists. But one fact is certain: the direction of our struggle is di­
ametrically opposed to that of the "struggle" of the "autono­
mists," because we are keeping on the Marxist road while Chambelland and his friends pursue the reformist one. True, they never do it consciously, never! But, in general, centrism never has a conscious policy. Would a conscious hen sit down to hatch duck eggs? Certainly not.

How, in that case, someone might ask, can you accuse polar oppo­sites like Chambelland and Monmousseau of centrism? That can appear paradoxical, however, only to those who do not understand the paradoxical nature of centrism itself: it is never the same, and never recognizes itself in the mirror even when it pushes its nose right to it.

For two years now, the centrists of official communism have been zigzagging violently from right to left while Monatte and his friends go from left to right. The leaders of the Communist International and of the Red International of Labor Unions have had to act blindly to hold back the wave they let loose. Terrified by their adventurist leaps, the centrists of the Cham­belland type hurriedly bend their backs against the new wave now forming on the horizon. In such a transitional period, be­tween two tides, what is washed ashore first of all is a centrist camp, inside which are born movements that are most dis­parate and are heading in different directions. It is no less true that Chambelland—or to press reality closer—Monatte and Monmousseau are nothing but two sides of the same coin.

Here I think it is necessary to recall how the present leaders of the CGTU and of the Communist Party envisaged the prob­lem of the unions barely six years ago, when they were in fact already at the head of the official party and when they had already begun—be it said in passing—their struggle against "Trotskyism." In the month of January 1924, after the un­happy, bloody meeting in the Maison des Syndicats [Trade­Union House], the CGTU leaders, pressed to disassociate them­selves not only from all responsibility for the action of the party but also from the party itself, wrote in the solemn "Dec­laration of the CGTU":

"As concerned with the organic and administrative autonomy of parties and sects as they are with the autonomy of the Con-
federation [CGTU], the responsible bodies of the CGTU did not have to discuss the meeting which the Seine Confederation and Communist Party Youth had organized on their own responsibility. Whatever the character of meetings organized or activities undertaken by outside parties, sects, and groupings, the Executive Committee and the Bureau of the Confederation have no intention of abdicating their power any more today than yesterday to anyone, whoever he may be. They will know how to preserve control and mastery over the activity of the Confederation against all attacks from outside.

"The CGTU has neither the right nor the power to apply censure to any outside groups, to their programs and their objectives; it cannot interdict any of them without violating its indispensable neutrality in order to show favoritism between contending parties.

"Monmousseau, Semard, Racamond, Dudilieux, Berrar."

This is the document—truly incomparable—which will forever remain a monument of communist clarity and revolutionary courage! And under this document we read the signatures of Monmousseau, Semard, Racamond, Dudilieux, Berrar.

I think the French Left Oppositionists should not only publish this "declaration" in full but should also give it the publicity it deserves. For no one knows what surprises the future holds in store for us!

During the years that separate us from the signing of the "declaration" in which Monmousseau, Semard, and Company announced their most absolute neutrality toward the Communist Party and all other sects, these Communist leaders performed not a few acts of opportunist heroism. In particular, they very sensibly carried out the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee, which was based completely on the fiction of autonomy: the party of MacDonald and Thomas is one thing—taught Stalin—but the trade unions of Thomas and Purcell quite another. After Thomas, with Purcell's help, had turned the Communist centrists into donkeys, the latter grew afraid of their own selves.

Only yesterday Monmousseau was demanding that the unions be equally independent of all sects and parties. Today he wants the unions to be no more than a shadow of the party, thus turning the unions into sects! Who is the Monmousseau of today, or Monmousseau number two? He is Monmousseau number one who from fear of himself has turned himself inside out like a glove. Who is Chambelland? He is a communist
What Is Centrism?

of yesterday who, terrified by Monmousseau number two, has thrown himself into the arms of Monmousseau number one.

Does it not leap to the eye that we have here two varieties of the same species, or two stages of the same confusion? Monmousseau is trying to frighten the workers with the phantom of Chambelland; Chambelland is trying to frighten the workers with the phantom of Monmousseau. In reality, however, each is doing no more than looking at himself in a mirror, with fist extended.

That is what it is really all about, if we look at the question more closely than does Le Cri du peuple—where there is more clamor than people.

Communism is the vanguard of the working class united by the program of socialist revolution. An organization like this still does not exist in France. Only elements of one, and in part some debris, are to be found. Whoever dares to assert to the workers that such an organization is not necessary for them, that the working class is self-sufficient, that it is mature enough to be able to dispense with the leadership of its own vanguard—such a person is a base flatterer, a courtesan of the proletariat, a demagogue, but not a revolutionary. It is criminal to embellish reality. The workers must be told the truth and they must get accustomed to loving the truth.

Chambelland is deceiving himself seriously if he thinks the communists are in the "center," between Monmousseau and himself—Chambelland. No, the communists are above them both. The position of Marxism is high above all varieties of centrism and above the level of all its mistakes. The unions can be transformed into organs of the masses and provided with genuine revolutionary leadership only by the one current in the working class that examines each question thoroughly, whose blood and marrow are permeated with the Marxist understanding of the relation between the class and its revolutionary vanguard. In this fundamental question there is no room for the slightest concession or for anything to be left unsaid.

Here more than anywhere else, clarity is needed.
INDIA is the classic colonial country as Britain is the classic metropolis. All the viciousness of the ruling classes and every form of oppression that capitalism has used against the backward people of the East is most completely and frightfully summed up in the history of the gigantic colony on which the British imperialists have settled themselves like leeches for the past century and a half. The British bourgeoisie has diligently cultivated every remnant of barbarism and every institution of the Middle Ages that could be of service in the oppression of man by man. It forced its feudal agents to adapt themselves to colonial capitalist exploitation and made them its link, its organ, its convoy to the masses.

The British imperialists boast of their railroads, canals, and industrial enterprises in India, in which they have invested close to the equivalent of four billion dollars in gold. Apologists for imperialism triumphantly compare present-day India with India prior to the colonial occupation. But who can doubt for a moment that a gifted nation of 320 million people would develop immeasurably quicker and more successfully were it freed from the burden of systematic and organized plunder? It is enough to mention the four billion dollars that represent the British investment in India to imagine what Britain takes from India in the course of perhaps five or six years.

Allowing India carefully measured doses of technology and culture, exactly enough to facilitate the exploitation of the country's wealth, the Shylock of the Thames could not, however, prevent the ideas of economic and national independence and freedom from spreading more and more widely among the masses.
As in the older bourgeois countries, the numerous nationalities that exist in India can only be fused into a single nation by a revolution that will more and more bind them together as a unit. But in contradistinction to the older countries, this revolution in India is a colonial revolution directed against foreign oppressors. Moreover, it is the revolution of a historically backward nation where feudal serfdom, caste divisions, and even slavery exist alongside the class antagonisms of the bourgeoisie and proletariat, which have become greatly exacerbated in the recent period.

The colonial character of the Indian revolution against one of the most powerful oppressors masks to a certain extent the internal social antagonisms of the country, particularly in the eyes of those to whom such masking is advantageous. In reality, the necessity of throwing off the system of imperialist oppression, whose roots are intertwined with the old indigenous exploitation, demands extraordinary revolutionary effort on the part of the Indian masses, and that in itself assures a tremendous sweep to the class struggle. British imperialism will not abandon its positions voluntarily; while humbly wagging its tail toward America, it will direct every last bit of its energy and all its malice against insurgent India.

What an instructive historical lesson. The Indian revolution, even in its present stage, when it has not yet broken loose from the treacherous leadership of the national bourgeoisie, is being crushed by the "socialist" government of MacDonald. The bloody repressions of these scoundrels of the Second International, who promise to introduce socialism peacefully in their own countries, represent an initial deposit on what British imperialism has in store for India. The pleasant social democratic deliberations about reconciling the interests of bourgeois Britain with democratic India are a necessary supplement to the bloody repressions of MacDonald, who is always ready, between executions, for the thousand and first commission of reconciliation.

The British bourgeoisie understands very well that the loss of India would mean not only the crash of its sufficiently rotten world power but also a social collapse at home. It is a life and death struggle. All forces will be set in motion. This means that the revolution will have to mobilize all of its resources. Millions of people have begun to stir. They demonstrated such spontaneous power that the national bourgeoisie was forced into action to master the movement in order to blunt its revolutionary edge.
Gandhi's passive resistance movement is the tactical knot that ties the naivete and self-denying blindness of the dispersed petty-bourgeois masses to the treacherous maneuvers of the liberal bourgeoisie. The fact that the chairman of the Indian Legislative Assembly, that is, the official institution for collusion with imperialism, gave up his post to head the movement for the boycott of British goods is of a deeply symbolic character. "We will prove to you," say the national bourgeois elements to the gentlemen on the Thames, "that pensable to you, that without us you will not quiet the masses; but for this we will present you with our own bill."

By way of reply, MacDonald puts Gandhi in jail. It is possible that the lackey goes further than the master intends, for he is conscientious beyond the call of duty in order to prove himself beyond doubt. It is possible that the Conservatives, serious and experienced imperialists, would not have gone so far at this stage. But on the other hand the national leaders of passive resistance are themselves in need of this repression in order to bolster their considerably shaken reputations. MacDonald does them this service. While shooting down workers and peasants, he arrests Gandhi with adequate notice in advance, just as the Russian Provincial Government arrested the Kornilovs and Denikins.

If India is a component element of the internal rule of the British bourgeoisie, then similarly the imperialist rule of British capital over India is a component element of the internal order of India. The question cannot simply be reduced to that of the expulsion of some tens of thousands of foreign exploiters. They cannot be separated from the internal oppressors, and the stronger the pressure of the masses becomes, the less will the internal oppressors want to separate from the external ones. Just as in Russia the liquidation of czarism together with its indebtedness to world finance capital became possible only because to the peasantry the abolition of the monarchy was necessary for the abolition of the landowning magnates, to the same degree in India the struggle against imperialist oppression develops among the countless masses of the oppressed and semipauperized peasantry out of the necessity to liquidate the feudal landlords, their agents and intermediaries, the local officials and the loan sharks.

The Indian peasant wants a "just That is the basis of democracy. And that is at the same time the social basis of the democratic revolution as a whole.

At the first stage of their struggle the backward, inexperi-
enced, and dispersed peasants, who in each village oppose the individual representatives of the hated regime, always resort to passive resistance. They do not pay rent or taxes, they escape to the woods or desert from military service, etc. The Tolstoyan formulas of passive resistance were in a sense the first stage of the revolutionary awakening of the Russian peasant masses. Gandhism represents the same thing in regard to the masses of the Indian people. The more "sincere" Gandhi is personally, the more useful he is to the masters as an instrument for the disciplining of the masses. The support of the bourgeoisie for passive resistance to imperialism is only a preliminary condition for its bloody resistance to the revolutionary masses.

From passive forms of struggle, the peasants have more than once in history passed over to the severest and bloodiest wars against their immediate enemies: the landowners, the local officials, and the loan sharks. The Middle Ages record many such peasant wars in Europe; but they are also replete with merciless suppression of the peasants. The passive resistance of the peasants as well as their bloody uprisings can be turned into a revolution only under the leadership of an urban class, which then becomes the leader of the revolutionary nation and, after victory, the bearer of the revolutionary power. In the present epoch only the proletariat is such a class, even in the East.

It is true that the Indian proletariat is smaller numerically than even the Russian proletariat on the eve of 1905 and 1917. This comparatively small size of the proletariat in Russia was the main argument of all the philistines, all the Martinovs, all the Mensheviks, against the perspective of the permanent revolution. The very idea that the Russian proletariat, thrusting the bourgeoisie aside, could take hold of the agrarian revolution of the peasantry, encourage it, and rise on its wave to the revolutionary dictatorship seemed fantastic to them. They thought they were being realistic when they counted on the liberal bourgeoisie, leaning on the masses of the city and the countryside, to carry through the democratic revolution. But it turned out that population statistics were no indication of the economic and political role of the different classes. The October Revolution has proved this once and for all and very convincingly.

If today the Indian proletariat is numerically smaller than the Russian, this in itself does not mean that its revolutionary possibilities are not as great; the numerical weakness of the
Russian proletariat compared to the American and British was no obstacle to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia. On the contrary, all the social peculiarities that made the October Revolution possible and inevitable exist in India in a more acute form. In this country of poor peasants, the hegemony of the city is no less established than in czarist Russia. The concentration of industrial, commercial, and banking power in the hands of the big bourgeoisie, primarily the foreign bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the swift growth of an industrial proletariat on the other, exclude the possibility of the independent role of the urban petty bourgeoisie and, to a certain extent, even of the intellectual. This transforms the political mechanics of the revolution into a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for the leadership of the peasant masses. There is "only" one condition missing: a Bolshevik party. And this is where the problem lies now.

We have witnessed the way Stalin and Bukharin applied the Menshevik conception of the democratic revolution in China. Armed with a powerful apparatus, they were able to apply the Menshevik formulas in action and because of that were compelled to carry them to a conclusion. In order to insure the leading role of the bourgeoisie in the bourgeois revolution (this is the basic idea of Russian Menshevism), the Stalinist bureaucracy transformed the young Communist Party of China into a subordinate section of the national bourgeoisie. According to the terms officially agreed to between Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek (through the intermediary of the present people's commissar of education, Bubnov), the Communists could occupy only one-third of the posts within the Kuomintang. The party of the proletariat therefore entered the revolution as an official captive of the bourgeoisie with the blessings of the Comintern. The result is known: the Stalinist bureaucracy destroyed the Chinese revolution. This was a political crime unequaled in history.

Along with the reactionary idea of socialism in one country, in 1924 Stalin advanced the slogan of the "two-class workers' and peasants' parties" for India as well as for all of the countries of the East. This was another slogan that continued to rule out an independent policy and an independent party of the proletariat. The unfortunate Roy has since that time become the apostle of the all-inclusive supra class "popular" or "democratic" party. The history of Marxism, the developments in the nineteenth century, the experience of the three Russian revolutions, everything, everything passed by these gentlemen
without leaving a trace. They have not yet understood that the "workers' and peasants' party" is conceivable only in the form of a Kuomintang, that is, in the form of a bourgeois party which draws behind it the workers and peasants in order to betray and crush them later on. There has never been any other type of all-inclusive supra-class party in history. After all, Roy—Stalin's agent in China, prophet of the struggle against "Trotskyism," and executor of the Martinovist "bloc of four classes"—became the scapegoat for the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy after the inevitable defeat of the Chinese revolution.

Six years have been spent in India in debilitating and demoralizing experiments to carry through the Stalinist formula of the two-class workers' and peasants' parties. The results are at hand: feeble provincial "workers' and peasants' parties" that vacillate, limp along, or simply disintegrate and disappear precisely at the moment when they are supposed to act, at the moment of revolutionary tide. But there is no proletarian party. It will have to be created in the heat of events. And for that it is necessary to remove the rubbish piled high by the bureaucratic leadership. That is the situation! Since 1924 the leadership of the Comintern has done everything possible to leave the Indian proletariat powerless, to weaken the will of the vanguard, to clip its wings.

While Roy and the other Stalinist pupils were wasting precious years in the elaboration of a democratic program for a supra-class party, the national bourgeoisie made maximum use of their dawdling to seize control of the trade unions.

A Kuomintang has been created in India, not as a political party, but as a "party" inside the trade unions. Now, however, its creators have become frightened by their own handiwork and have jumped aside, slandering the "executors." This time the centrists jumped, as is known, to the "left," but this did not help matters. The official position of the Comintern on the problems of the Indian revolution is such a miserable tangle of confusion that it almost seems especially intended to disorient the proletarian vanguard and bring it to despair. At least half of the time, this happens because the leadership is constantly and willfully trying to conceal its mistakes of yesterday. The second half of the tangle must be credited to the hapless nature of centrism.

We are not referring now to the program of the Comintern, which attributes a revolutionary role to the colonial bourgeoisie, completely approving the constructions of Brandler and Roy,
who continue to wear the Martinov-Stalin hat. Nor are we talking about the innumerable editions of Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* where, in all the languages of the world, the discourse on the two-class workers' and peasants' parties continues. No. We limit ourselves to the present, to today's latest posing of the question in the East, which is in conformity with the third period errors of the Comintern.

The central slogan of the Stalinists for India, as well as for China, still remains *the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants*. Nobody knows, nobody explains, because nobody understands what this slogan means at present, in the year 1930, after the experience of the past fifteen years. In what way is the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants different from the dictatorship of the Kuomintang, which massacred the workers and peasants? The Manuilskys and Kuusinens will perhaps answer that they are now talking about the dictatorship of three classes (workers, peasants, and the city petty bourgeoisie) and not four as in China where Stalin had so happily attracted his ally Chiang Kai-shek to the bloc.

If so, we reply, then make an effort to explain to us why you reject the national bourgeoisie as an ally in India, that same ally for the rejection of whom in China you expelled Bolsheviks from the Communist Party and then imprisoned them? China is a *semicolonial* country. In China there is no powerful caste of feudal lords and agents. But India is a classic colonial country with powerful remnants of the feudal caste regime. If Stalin and Martinov derived the revolutionary role of the Chinese bourgeoisie from the presence in China of foreign oppression and feudal remnants, in India each of these reasons should apply with doubled force. This means that the Indian bourgeoisie, according to the strictest reading of the Comintern program, has immeasurably more right to demand its inclusion in the Stalinist bloc [of four classes] than the Chinese bourgeoisie with its unforgettable Chiang Kai-shek and "loyal" Wang Ching-wei. But since this is not the case, since, in spite of the oppression of British imperialism and the whole heritage of the Middle Ages, the Indian bourgeoisie is capable only of a counterrevolutionary and not a revolutionary role—then you must implacably condemn your own treacherous policy in China and immediately correct your program, in which this policy has left cowardly but sinister traces!

But this does not exhaust the question. If in India you construct a bloc without the bourgeoisie and against the bour-
geoisie, who will lead it? The Manuilskys and Kuusinens will perhaps answer with their usual lordly indignation, "Why, the proletariat, of course!" Good, we answer, very commendable. But if the Indian revolution will develop on a basis of a bloc of the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie; if this bloc will be directed not only against imperialism and feudalism but also against the national bourgeoisie which is bound up with them in all basic questions; if at the head of this bloc will stand the proletariat; if this bloc comes to victory only by sweeping away its enemies through an armed uprising and in this way raises the proletariat to the role of the real leader of the whole nation—then the question arises: in whose hands will the power be after the victory if not in the hands of the proletariat? What is the significance in such a case of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants as distinct from the dictatorship of the proletariat leading the peasantry? In other words, in what way will the hypothetical dictatorship of the workers and peasants be different from the actual dictatorship that the October Revolution established?

There is no reply to this question. There can be no reply to it. By this course of historical development the "democratic dictatorship" has become not only an empty fiction but a treacherous trap for the proletariat. A fine slogan it is that admits of two diametrically opposed interpretations: one being the dictatorship of the Kuomintang and the other the October dictatorship! But these two are mutually exclusive. In China the Stalinists interpreted the democratic dictatorship in two ways, first as a dictatorship of the Kuomintang of the right, and afterwards of the left. But how do they explain it in India? They are silent. They are compelled to remain silent, for fear of opening the eyes of their supporters to their crimes. This conspiracy of silence is actually a conspiracy against the Indian revolution. And all the present extremely left or ultraleft clamor does not improve the situation one iota, for the victories of the revolution are not secured by clamor and clatter but by political clarity.

But what has been said does not yet unwind the tangled yarn. Some new threads get caught up in the tangle precisely at this point. Giving the revolution an abstract democratic character and permitting it to reach the dictatorship of the proletariat only after some sort of a mystical or mystifying "democratic dictatorship" is established, our strategists at the same time reject the central political slogan of every revolutionary democratic movement, which is precisely the slogan
of the *Constituent Assembly*. Why? On what basis? It is absolutely incomprehensible. The democratic revolution signifies *equality* to the peasant—above all, *equality in the distribution of land*. Equality before the law depends on that prior equality. The Constituent Assembly, where the representatives of all the people formally settle accounts with the past but where actually the various classes settle accounts with each other, is the natural and inevitable generalized expression of the democratic tasks of the revolution, not only in the consciousness of the awakening masses of the peasantry but also in the consciousness of the working class itself. We have spoken of this more fully with regard to China and we do not see the necessity of repetition here. Let us only add that the provincial multiformity of India, the variegated governmental forms, and their no less variegated interpenetration with feudal and caste relations, fills the slogan of the Constituent Assembly in India with a particularly deep-going revolutionary democratic content.

The theoretician of the Indian revolution in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at present is Safarov,²¹² who through the happy chance of capitulation has transferred his injurious activities to the camp of centrisim. In a programmatic article in *Bolshevik* about the forces and tasks of the revolution in India, Safarov carefully circles around the question of the Constituent Assembly just like an experienced rat circles around a piece of cheese on a spring. This sociologist does not by any means want to fall into the Trotskyist trap a second time. Disposing of the problem without much ceremony, he counterposes to the Constituent Assembly this perspective:

"The development of a new revolutionary ascent on the basis [!] of struggle for proletarian hegemony leads to the conclusion [leads who? how? why?] that the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in India can be achieved only in the soviet form" (*Bolshevik*, number 5, 1930, p. 100).

Amazing lines! Martinov multiplied by Safarov. Martinov we know. And about Safarov, Lenin said, not without tenderness, "Safarchik will go leftist, Safarchik will pull boners." The above-mentioned Safarovist perspective does not invalidate this characterization. Safarov has gone considerably leftist, and it must be admitted that he did not upset the second half of Lenin's prediction. To begin with the question, the revolutionary ascent of the masses develops "on the basis" of the struggle of the Communists for proletarian hegemony. The whole process is turned on its head. We think that the proletarian vanguard enters or prepares to enter or should enter
a struggle for hegemony on the basis of a new revolutionary ascent. The perspective of the struggle, according to Safarov, is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Here, for the sake of leftism, the word "democratic" is shaken off. But it is not said frankly what kind of a two-class dictatorship this is: a Kuomintang or an October type. For that we are assured on his word of honor that this dictatorship can be accomplished "only in the soviet form." It sounds very noble. Why the slogan of the Constituent Assembly? Safarov is ready to agree only with the soviet "form."

The essence of epigonism—its contemptible and sinister essence—lies in the fact that from the actual processes of the past and its lessons it abstracts only the bare form and makes a fetish of it. This is what has happened to the soviets. Without saying anything about the class character of the dictatorship—a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, like the Kuomintang, or a dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, like the October type?—Safarov lulls somebody, primarily himself, with the soviet form of the dictatorship. As if soviets cannot be a weapon for deceiving the workers and peasants! What else were the Menshevik-Social Revolutionary soviets of 1917? Nothing but a weapon for support of the power of the bourgeoisie and the preparation of its dictatorship. What were the Social Democratic soviets in Germany and Austria in 1918-19? Organs for saving the bourgeoisie and for deceiving the workers. With the further development of the revolutionary movement in India, with the greater surge of mass struggles and the weakness of the Communist Party—and the latter is inevitable if the Safarovist muddle prevails—the Indian national bourgeoisie itself may create workers' and peasants' soviets in order to direct them just as it now directs the trade unions, in order to strangle the revolution as the German social democracy, by getting at the head of the soviets, strangled it. The treacherous character of the slogan of the democratic dictatorship lies in the fact that it does not tightly close such a possibility to the enemies, once and for all.

The Indian Communist Party, whose creation was held back for six years—and what years!—is now deprived, in the circumstances of revolutionary ascent, of one of the most important weapons for mobilizing the masses, precisely the democratic slogan of the Constituent Assembly. Instead of that, the young party, which has not yet taken its first steps, is afflicted with the abstract slogan of soviets as a form of abstract
dictatorship, that is, a dictatorship of nobody knows what class. Truly this is an apotheosis of confusion! And all this is accompanied as usual by a repulsive touching up and sugaring over of a situation that is still quite serious, and not at all delectable.

The official press, particularly this same Safarov, depicts the situation as if bourgeois nationalism in India were already a corpse, as if communism had either won or were winning the allegiance of the proletariat, which, in its turn, were already almost leading the peasantry behind it. The leaders and their sociologists, in the most conscienceless manner, proclaim the desired as the existing. To put it more correctly, they proclaim what might have been with a correct policy during the past six years for what has actually developed as a result of a wrong policy. But when the inconsistency of the inventions and realities is revealed, the ones to be blamed will be the Indian Communists, as bad executors of the general inconsistency that is advanced as a general line.

The vanguard of the Indian proletariat is as yet at the threshold of its great tasks, and there is a long road ahead. A series of defeats will be the reckoning not only for the backwardness of the proletariat and the peasantry but also for the sins of the leadership. The chief task at present is a clear Marxist conception of the motive forces of the revolution and a correct perspective, a farsighted policy which rejects stereotyped, bureaucratic formulas, but which, in the accomplishment of great revolutionary tasks, carefully adjusts to the actual stages of the political awakening and revolutionary growth of the working class.
TOWARD THE SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

May 31, 1930

The publication of the current issue of our Biulleten coincides roughly with the Sixteenth Party Congress. It is not too difficult to predict what the character of the congress will be. To do this it is enough to know who is convening it and how they are going about it. It is a matter of the Stalinist faction—with the support of the GPU and the army, by means of the party apparatus and with the help of the state apparatus—convening a carefully selected and sufficiently intimidated legislative body whose decisions on every fundamental issue have been prescribed beforehand, while the implementation of these decisions will cease to be binding as far as the Stalinist faction is concerned the morning after the congress adjourns. Not a single member of the party who is capable of observing and reflecting will find the slightest exaggeration in what we have said. On the contrary, it is the most objective and accurate diagnosis of what really exists.

The congress is assembling after an exceptionally grave crisis in the country's internal life, which has confronted the Soviet regime with new tasks and new, acute dangers. It would seem that if the party congress were to have any sort of significance, it would be precisely as the forum in which the party passes judgment on the policies of its Central Committee, i.e., on its supreme governing body between congresses. Between congresses, in this instance, means for a period of two and a half years. And what years they were! Years in which all the warnings and predictions of the routed and slandered Opposition were, to the party's surprise, confirmed with a forcefulness and cogency that were staggering. They were years in which it was discovered, according to assertions in the official press, that Rykov, head of the Soviet government, "tried to profit from the economic difficulties of Soviet power"; that the
leader of the Comintern, Bukharin, was found to be a "transmitter of liberal-bourgeois influences"; that their coconspirator had been the chairman of the central council of the trade unions, Tomsky, head of the organization that embraces the entire ruling class of the country.

The three persons just named did not emerge out of the blue. They were members of the Central Committee under Lenin, holding highly responsible positions at that time too. Each of them has behind him two to three decades of party membership. They made mistakes and were corrected by the party more than once. How is it that their "bourgeois-liberal" views have so very suddenly appeared—and at a time when the strength of the dictatorship and of socialism has increased so much that the leadership can pose point-blank the question of the elimination of classes in "the shortest possible time"?

It is not the personal side of the matter that interests us, of course. But in the form of things that seem "personal," the entire party regime, as it has taken shape in the thirteen years since the proletarian conquest of power, is laid bare before our eyes.

The system of bureaucratism has become a system of uninterrupted palace coups, which are now the only means by which it can maintain itself. A week before the split in the Central Committee burst to the surface and yesterday's irreproachable "Leninists" were proclaimed to be bourgeois liberals, renegades, traitors, etc.—to the accompaniment of the hooting of an unruly gang of young rogues, who had among them, however, more than a few venerable old men—a week before this happened the rumor that there were disagreements in the Central Committee was declared to be criminal slander invented by the Trotskyist Opposition. Such is the regime! Or rather, such is one of its most blatant features.

Right now the party is coming into the stretch in its preparations for the congress or, more precisely, the semblance of preparations for the semblance of a congress. One would expect that precisely the question of the Central Committee's policies—its "general line," its internal mode of rule, which is to say, the series of palace coups, coming as rude surprises that hit the party over the head and catch it unawares, not to mention other rude surprises like the "elimination of classes" within the framework of the five-year plan—would have been at the center of the precongress discussions. But it is just such a discussion that has been forbidden. Yes, completely forbidden!
Of course, there has not been, and cannot be, the slightest doubt that the apparatus is very attentively following the discussion or, rather, the semblance of discussion, and that behind the scenes it has put every possible measure into operation so as to preserve the domination of Stalin's militarized faction—or, more precisely, so as not to be compelled to use open and general repressive measures in relation to the party. This has been done before, but there was no mention of it. Now, in contrast, coercive measures against the party are being elevated to the level of principle and openly proclaimed from the most authoritative of the party's rostrums. This is unquestionably the latest word, the most recent achievement, of the party apparatus. Such a situation did not exist at the time of the Fifteenth Party Congress.

S. Kosior, secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee—not to be confused with Comrade V. Kosior, the Oppositionist who is now in exile—set the tone, of course, but not on his own initiative. The Kharkov Stalinist group has been playing the role of shock troops in the system of party Bonapartism for some time now. Whenever the party needs to be stunned with the latest word, which other local party secretaries have not yet made up their minds to say or are ashamed to say, the assignment is given to Kharkov. Manuilsky came from there; Kaganovich worked there; that is where the trusty Skrypnik is; there, more than a few baby Moseses have exploded onto the scene like so many rotten eggs; there, at this time, with the Moscow telegraph wire tied to his neck vertebrae as he plays the part of "leader," is the already mentioned S. Kosior, who from an oppositional poacher under Lenin became a bureaucratic gendarme under Stalin. In a report published by the entire press, Kosior stated that there are elements in the party so criminal as to dare to speak, in closed sessions of party cells, during discussions of party politics, of mistakes by the Central Committee in the implementation of collective farm policy. "We must really let them have it," Kosior declares, and his words are published throughout the party press. "Let them have it"—this coyly worded but vile formula takes in all forms of physical repression: expulsion from the party, dismissal from work, deprivation of a family's living quarters, penal exile, and finally, defamation of character as a result of slander purveyed by one of the local Yaroslavskys. Another member of the Central Committee, Postyshev, also a Ukrainian, has published an indictment in Pravda in the guise of an article—an indictment pieced together out of bits of speeches by certain individual party mem-
bers who, again, in closed sessions of party cells, "dared"—they
dared!—to speak of the Central Committee's mistakes. His
conclusion is the same as Kosior's: cut them off. And all this
on the eve of a congress ostensibly convened for the precise
purpose of evaluating the Central Committee.

The bureaucratic regime is well on its way to establishing
the principle of the infallibility of the leadership, which is the
necessary complement to its actual nonaccountability. Such
is the situation at the present time.

These facts did not fall out of the blue. They sum up the
second, post-Lenin chapter of the revolution, the chapter of
its gradual decline and degeneration. The first palace coup,
the result of a systematically organized conspiracy, was car­
rried off in 1923-24, after being carefully prepared during the
months when Lenin was struggling against death. Behind the
party's back six members of the Politburo organized a con­
spiracy against the seventh. They bound themselves by a
pledge of mutual discipline; they communicated by means of
coded telegrams with their agents and reliable groups in all
parts of the country. The official pseudonym collectively used
by the organizers of the conspiracy was the term "Leninist
old guard." It was announced that this group, and it alone,
was the continuator of the correct revolutionary line. It is
appropriate to recall at this time the people who constituted
this infallible "Leninist old guard" of 1923-24: Zinoviev, Ka­
menev, Stalin, Rykov, Bukharin, and Tomsky. Of these six liv­
ing embodiments of Leninism, two main ideologists of the old
guard—Zinoviev and Kamenev—two years later ended up
being exposed for "Trotskyism" and, two years later still, were
expelled from the party. Three others—Bukharin, Rykov, and
Tomsky—turned out to be "bourgeois liberals" and have in fact
been barred from all activity. Undoubtedly, after the congress
they will be removed formally as well. No confessions can
help them at this point. The cracks in the bureaucratic ap­
paratus will never be closed up; they can only get wider. Thus,
of those who composed the "Leninist old guard," Stalin alone
has not fallen under the wheel of the apparatus. And it is no
wonder: he is the one who is turning it.

At first, i.e., the day after the first coup (Lenin's illness and
Trotsky's exclusion), the principle of "infallibility" of the leader­
ship in a certain sense had a philosophical character in rela­
tion to the party: the "old guard," linked with Lenin by its
entire past, and now bound by the ties of unshakable ideologi­
cal solidarity, was allegedly able through its collective effort
to guarantee irreproachable leadership. Such was the doctrine of the apparatus regime at that stage. By the time of the Fifteenth Congress, infallibility had changed from a "historical and philosophical" principle into a backstage practical guide that was not yet being acknowledged openly. But by the Sixteenth Congress it has already been converted into an openly professed dogma. Although out of habit the infallibility of the Central Committee is still referred to, it would not occur to anyone to think of it as being any sort of stable collective, since no one takes the present members of the Politburo very seriously; they don't even do so themselves. What is really meant here is Stalin. This is not being camouflaged at all. On the contrary, it is being emphasized in every possible way. The year of his official coronation as the infallible leader accountable to no one was 1929. One of the capitulators gave a general formula for this new stage: *It is impossible to be loyal to the party without being loyal to the Central Committee: it is impossible to be loyal to the Central Committee without being loyal to Stalin.* This is the dogma of the Bonapartist party. The fact that Pyatakov who considered it possible in Lenin's time to be for the party while being a persistent opponent of Lenin, now construes the concept of the party to mean a *plebiscitic grouping around Stalin* (those who are for him are in the party and those who are against him are not)—this fact by itself adequately characterizes the course that has been taken by the official party over the past seven years. And not without reason was it said of this same Pyatakov, when he was still in the Opposition, languidly chewing over the scraps of old ideas: "Bonaparte sometimes made his prefects out of such 'has-beens.'"

All of history shows how difficult it is for people to arrive at a general conception of the events in which they themselves participate, especially if those events do not fit in easily with the old, accustomed, "automatic" ways of thinking. Because of this it often happens that honest and sensible people will become sincerely overwrought if someone simply refers out loud to what they are doing, or to what is occurring with their cooperation, and calls it by its right name. And what is occurring is an automatic process, one largely outside of conscious awareness, but no less real for that, in which the party is preparing the way for Bonapartism. Behind the fiction of preparations for the Sixteenth Congress—which is being convened according to Pyatakov's plebiscitary principle (whoever is for Stalin gets to go to the congress)—it is precisely this
reality that stands out so threateningly: the unthinking, mindless, automatic laying of the groundwork for Bonapartism.

No indignant cries and hypocritical howls about how the liberals and Mensheviks are saying "the same thing" will stop us from stating what is true, since only in this way is it possible to find the bases of support and the forces for countering and repelling the danger. The party has been stifled. It has only one right: to agree with Stalin. But this right is at the same time its duty. Moreover, the party has been called upon to exercise its dubious right after an interval of two and a half years. And how long will the next interval be? Today who can tell?

Not only every thoughtful Communist worker but also every party functionary who has not been completely Yaroslavsky-ized and Manuilsky-ized cannot help but ask: Why is it that as a result of the economic and cultural growth and the strengthening of the dictatorship and of socialism, the party regime is becoming more and more heavy-handed and unbearable? The apparatus people themselves will admit this in private conversation without a moment's hesitation; and how could they deny it? The overwhelming majority of them are not only the conveyors of the Stalinist regime but also its victims.

One of two things is true. Either the system of proletarian dictatorship has come into irreconcilable contradiction with the economic needs of the country, and the Bonapartist degeneration of the party regime is only a by-product of this fundamental contradiction—this is what the class enemies, with the Mensheviks in the forefront, believe, say, and trust their hopes to; or the party regime, which has its own logic and momentum, has entered into a state of acute contradiction with the revolutionary dictatorship, despite the fact that the latter retains its full vitality and is the only regime at all capable of protecting Russia from colonial servitude, guaranteeing the development of its productive forces, and opening before it broad socialist perspectives. This is what we, the Communist Left Opposition, believe. You must accept one of these two explanations. No one has proposed a third. And in the meantime, the progressive degeneration of the party regime demands to be explained.

The regime of the ruling party does not have definitive significance for the fate of the revolutionary dictatorship. Of course, the party is a "superstructural" factor. The processes that take place within it reduce themselves in the last analysis
to class relations that change under pressure from the productive forces. But the interrelations between superstructural elements of different kinds, and their relation to the class base, have an extremely complex dialectical character. The party regime is not in and of itself an automatic barometer of the processes taking place outside the party and independently of it.

There is no need to repeat that we have never been inclined to deny or belittle the significance of the objective factors that bring pressure to bear from without on the internal regime of the party. On the contrary, we have pointed them out repeatedly. What they all come down to, in the last analysis, is the isolation of the Soviet republic.

On the political level, there are two reasons for this prolonged isolation: the counterrevolutionary role of the social democracy, which came to the rescue of capitalist Europe after the war and is now shoring up its imperialist domination (the role of the MacDonald government with respect to India); and the opportunist and adventurist policies of the Comintern, which served as the immediate cause of a number of colossal defeats for the proletariat (Germany, Bulgaria, Estonia, China, Britain). The results of the Comintern's mistakes have each time become the source of further difficulties and, consequently, of the regime's further deterioration. But the very betrayals by the social democracy—notoriously an "objective factor" from the Communist point of view—pass by with relative impunity only because they are covered up by the parallel mistakes of the Communist leadership. Thus the "objective factors" themselves, in the sense of the pressure of hostile class forces upon the party, represent to a very great extent—one that cannot of course be measured mathematically—the present-day results of the centrist bureaucracy's erroneous policies of yesterday.

If the explanation for the systematic deterioration of the regime over the past seven years were simply that there had been an automatic rise in pressure from hostile class forces, that would imply a death sentence for the revolution. In fact, that is not the case. In addition to the pressure of hostile forces from without, which, moreover, have found support in the erroneous policies within the party, the regime is under direct and heavy pressure from an internal factor of immense and continually growing strength: namely the party and state bureaucracy. The bureaucracy has been transformed into a "self-sufficient" force; it has its own material interests, and de-
velops its outlook, corresponding to its own privileged position. Making use of the means and methods with which the dictatorship has armed it, the bureaucracy more and more subordinates the party regime, not to the interests of this dictatorship, but to its own interests, i.e., guaranteeing its privileged position, its power, and its lack of accountability. Of course, this phenomenon grew out of the dictatorship. But it is a derivative which is opposed by other derivatives within the dictatorship itself. It is not that the dictatorship has come into contradiction with the needs of the country's economic and cultural development; on the contrary, the Soviet regime, despite all the mistakes of the leadership, has shown in the most difficult circumstances and continues to show even now what inexhaustible sources of creativity are built into it. But there is no doubt that the bureaucratic degeneration of the dictatorship's apparatus is undermining the dictatorship itself; and as the economic zigzags of recent years have shown, this degeneration can actually bring the Soviet regime into contradiction with the economic development of the country.

Will the bureaucrat devour the dictatorship or will the dictatorship of the revolutionary class get the better of the bureaucrat? This is the problem which confronts us now—and on its resolution the fate of the revolution depends.

Four years ago it was said of Stalin that he had made himself a candidate for gravedigger of the party and the revolution. Much water has flowed under the bridge since that time. The deadlines have drawn nearer. The dangers have multiplied. Nevertheless, we are now further than at any time in recent years from being pessimistic in our forecast. Profound processes are taking place within the party, outside the realm of its formal procedures and demonstrations put on for show. The economic turns and the zigzags of the leadership, the unprecedented convulsions of the country's entire economic organism, the uninterrupted chain of palace coups, and finally the very blatancy of the transition to Bonapartist plebiscitary methods of running the party—all this gives rise to a deep-going process of differentiation in the party's very foundation, in the working-class vanguard, and in the proletariat as a whole. It is no accident that now more than ever the entire official press is filled with howls against "Trotskyism." Editorials, feature stories, economic reviews, prose and poetry, the correspondents' reports, and official resolutions—all these again condemn the already condemned, crush the already crushed, and bury the already buried "Trotskyism." And at
the same time, by way of preparing for the congress, four hundred and fifty Oppositionists were recently arrested in Moscow alone. This shows that the ideas of the Opposition live on. Ideas have tremendous power when they correspond to the real course of unfolding events. This is attested to by the entire history of Bolshevism, which the Opposition is continuing under new conditions. "You cannot seal up our ideas in a bottle," we told the Stalinist bureaucracy dozens of times. Now it is forced to the same conclusions.

The Sixteenth Congress will not decide anything. The problem will be decided by other factors: what the inexhaustible revolutionary resources of the proletariat are and what the potential is for activity by its vanguard—which is drawing ever closer to a great test. The Opposition is the vanguard of this vanguard. It accepted a series of organizational defeats as the price of making a number of appeals to the proletarian vanguard. History will say this price was not too high. The more clearly, distinctly, and loudly the Opposition presented its criticisms, forecasts, and proposals, the better it carried out its role. Ideological irreconcilability has been inscribed on our banner. At the same time the Opposition has never, not for even an instant, either in its theoretical criticism or in its practical activities, shifted from the policy line of winning over the party ideologically to a line of winning power against the party. When the Bonapartists tried to attribute plans for a civil war to us, we invariably fired these provocations back in their faces. Both of these guiding principles of the Opposition's activity remain in effect even now. Today, as in the past, we stand on the line of reform. We seek to aid the proletarian nucleus of the party to reform the regime in a struggle against the plebiscitary Bonapartist bureaucracy. Our aim: the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR as the most important factor for the international socialist revolution.

The Opposition has been tested in events of exceptional importance and on questions of unprecedented complexity. The Opposition has become an international factor and as such it is continually growing. That is why we are less pessimistic than ever before. The Sixteenth Congress will work at solving various problems, but it will not resolve the problem. We will listen attentively to the speeches of the delegates at the congress and carefully read its decisions. But even now we are looking ahead, beyond the Sixteenth Congress. Our politics continues to be the politics of the long view.
REPLY TO COMRADE K.\textsuperscript{218}

June 1930

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your letter of May 2 [published in Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 12-13]. There are no basic differences of opinion between us. In the Biulleten, especially number 11, this is explained, I hope, as fully as possible. Of course, as before, we favor a maximum rate of industrialization and collectivization. But insuring the highest rate possible in conditions of isolated development presupposes at each given moment not the statistically maximum but the economically optimum, i.e., most logical, most economically safe rate, which alone is capable of insuring a high rate in the future.

Not strategically, of course, but tactically, this meant at a given moment: "Don't get carried away, hold back!" I considered it necessary to shout these simple words at the top of my voice, although I did not doubt for a moment that the blinkered bureaucrats, who tomorrow will not so much hold back as leap back madly from the edge of the chasm they have come to, will today—accuse us of right-wing deviation. But that is wretched phrase-mongering! The fact that the Left Opposition, which for years has been demanding the speedup of industrialization and collectivization, was able to shout in time to the adventurist self-seekers and idlers of the bureaucracy "Hold back!" will be generally recognized.

Of course "holding back, slowing down collectivization" means restraining administrative collectivization, and not at all reducing real collective farm construction. But the rates for it must be economically based. The will to collectivize does not at all exclude economic pressure, which differs from administrative pressure in that it gives real advantages in place of threats from a militiaman. In a correctly constructed plan of collectivization, ideological activity is combined with economic...
pressure. But since this last operates with real quantities, it must be calculated exactly and reduced to a method that can insure the systematic growth of collectivization, with a weakening and not a strengthening of the administrative factor.

That the revolutionary power must and will strictly settle accounts with the kulaks who have risen in rebellion hardly needs saying. But if the kulaks, who yesterday were being patted on the head ("Get rich! Grow!"), are today threatened with de-kulakization, i.e., complete expropriation in a period of two or three years, that means they have been administratively driven to rebellion. It was against this de-kulakization that it was necessary to raise the cry "Hold back!"

As far as reducing expenditures is concerned, our platform remains in full force. Stalin, with Rykov and Kuibyshev, promised, if you remember, in the special manifesto of 1927 to reduce bureaucratic expenditures by three to four hundred million rubles. In fact, they have reduced nothing. Nobody has ever seen a bureaucracy reducing itself.

But the general demands of our program do not exclude the necessity for a decisive revision of all the supplementary industrial plans of the last year or two. Now the programs are being blown up as an inspiration of the general secretaries and the secretariats of the regions and districts. How are they covered economically? Firstly, by reducing the quality of the production; secondly, by inflation. Both hit the workers and the poor peasantry, and prepare a cruel collapse of industrialization. That is why the cry "Hold back!" was necessary here too.

That today's self-seekers establishing the maximum rates will tomorrow—when the economic processes, which are a mystery to them, hit them still harder in the face—describe an arc above our heads to pull us onto the old Ustrialov path—on that there is not the slightest dispute between us. By the way, you were perfectly correct to read our solidarity between the lines of an article by one of the Stalinist yellow-red professors (they're called professors because of their unenviable profession).

I embrace you and wish you the best of health.

Yours,

L. T.
NOTES OF A JOURNALIST

Published June 1930

Zinoviev and the Perils of Printing

In this year's number 5 issue of Bolshevik, Zinoviev once more "merges" with the party—by the only method now available to him. Zinoviev writes:

"In 1922, Trotsky predicted that 'the real expansion of socialist economy will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important European countries.' This prediction has not been confirmed, just as many other predictions of the author mentioned have not been. The real expansion of our socialist economy became possible before the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe; the real expansion is developing before our eyes."

The same Zinoviev, in the beginning of the same year 1922, accused Trotsky of "superindustrialization," that is, of proposing a too-rapid industrial expansion. How can this be reconciled?

The Opposition was accused of not believing in socialist construction and at the same time of wanting to rob the peasantry. If the former were true, why was it necessary to "rob" the peasantry? In reality, the Opposition was in favor of compelling the kulak and the upper layer of the peasantry in general to make sacrifices for socialist construction—in which the Opposition supposedly "did not believe." A fervent belief in socialist construction was displayed only by those who opposed "superindustrialization" and proclaimed the empty slogan "face toward the countryside." Zinoviev offered the peasantry, instead of clothing and a tractor, a smiling "face."

In 1930, as in 1922, Trotsky considers that "the real expansion of socialist economy will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important European countries." But it must be understood—and after all, this is not so difficult—that by socialist economy we really mean socialist
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economy and not the contradictory and transitional economy of NEP, and that by a real expansion we mean a development that will completely change the daily life and culture of the laboring masses, eliminating not only the "queues," wise Zinoviev, but also the contradiction between the city and the countryside. It is only in this sense that a Marxist can speak about a real expansion of socialist economy.

After fighting "Trotskyism" from 1923 to 1926, Zinoviev in July 1926 officially admitted that the basic core of the 1923 Opposition had been correct in its prognosis. And now, for the sake of merger with Yaroslavsky, Zinoviev once more rushes into all the old contradictions and warms over the old dishes.

It is worthwhile to recall, therefore, that this same Zinoviev both signed the platform of the Opposition and wrote a part of it dealing with this very question:

"When we say, in the words of Lenin, that for the construction of a socialist society in our country a victory of the proletarian revolution is necessary in one or more of the advanced capitalist countries, that the final victory of socialism in one country and above all a backward country is impossible, as Marx, Engels, and Lenin have all proven, the Stalin group makes the wholly false assertion that we 'do not believe' in socialism and in the building of socialism in the Soviet Union" [The Real Situation in Russia, p. 176].

Not badly stated, is it?

How explain these scurryings from falsification to repentance and from repentance to falsification? On this point the Opposition platform suggests an answer:

"In the same way now, the petty-bourgeois deviation within our own party cannot struggle against our Leninist views otherwise than by attributing to us things we never thought or said" [ibid., p. 175].

These last lines were not only signed by Zinoviev, but unless we are mistaken were written by him. Surely Joseph Gutenberg has not been a help to some people, especially when they have to "merge" with the other Joseph, who, to be sure, did not invent printing but very conscientiously works at destroying it.

Has France Entered a Period of Revolution?

The left turn in the Comintern began in 1928. In July, the "third period" was announced. A year later, Molotov declared that France, along with Germany and Poland, had entered
a period of "most tremendous revolutionary events." All this was deduced from the development of the strike movement. No data were cited; only two or three examples from the newspapers were given. We have dealt with the question of the dynamics of the French labor movement on the basis of facts and figures. The picture given by Molotov, prompted by the words of others (the role of prompters, we assume, was played by Manuilsky and Kuusinen) in no way coincided with reality. The strike wave of the last two years had a very limited character, even though it showed an upward trend compared with the preceding year, which was the lowest of the decade. This restrained development is all the more remarkable because France, during 1928-29, went through an undeniable industrial upturn, certainly evident in the metal industry where the strike movement was the weakest of all.

One of the reasons for the fact that the French workers did not utilize the favorable conjuncture is undoubtedly the extremely superficial character of the strike strategy of Monmousseau and the other pupils of Lozovsky. It became clear that they did not know the state of industry in their own country. As a result, they characterized the isolated, defensive economic strikes, primarily in the light industries, as offensive revolutionary political strikes.

This is the essence of the analysis we made of the "third period" in France. Up to now we have not seen a single article in which our analysis is submitted to criticism, although evidently a compelling need for such a criticism is felt. There is no other way to explain the appearance in Pravda of the very long article "On the Strike Strategy of Generalissimo Trotsky," which contains doggerel, quotations from Juvenal, and pointless jokes, but not a word about the factual analysis of the struggle of the French working class in the last decade and especially in the last two years. This article, obviously from the pen of one of the recent heroes of the "third period," is modestly signed "Radovoy (rank-and-filer)."

The author accuses Trotsky of seeing only the defensive strikes but not recognizing the strike offensive. Let us assume that Trotsky is guilty of that. But is this a reason to give up an aggressive struggle in the metal industry under the most favorable conditions and at the same time to designate small defensive strikes as an offensive?

The author accuses Trotsky of not distinguishing capitalism in the epoch of its rise from capitalism in the epoch of its decline. Let us assume that this is so. Let us forget the
debate that occurred in the Comintern at the time of its Third Congress, when there was still genuine discussion of ideas, over the relation between the crisis of capitalism as a system and its cyclical crises. Let us assume that Trotsky has forgotten all of this, and that Radovoy has absorbed all of it. But does this answer the question of whether France during the last two years has entered a period of decisive revolutionary events? This is precisely what the Comintern has proclaimed. Has this question any significance? It would seem that it does. But what does the author of the witty article say on this point? Not one word. France and its labor movement are completely ignored. As a substitute, Radovoy argues that Trotsky is "Mister Trotsky" who serves the bourgeoisie. Is that all? Yes, nothing more than that.

But, a well-intentioned reader may object, not much can be expected from young Radovoy, and he still has a chance to learn. After all, it is not he who formulated trade-union policy in France. For that we have serious revolutionary strategists, tested in struggle—for example, the general secretary of the Profintern, Lozovsky.

Right, we reply, and all this would be convincing if—if only Radovoy were not Lozovsky himself. The collection of cynical, light-minded arguments and sorry jokes cannot deceive us.

The leading general, under a modest pseudonym, is defending his own acts. He covers the calamities he inflicts on the labor movement with rhymes. He attacks the Left Opposition with brilliant vindictive irony: it can, don't you see, be completely seated on one sofa. Let Radovoy investigate. Are there any sofas in the jails that are filled with Oppositionists? Even if the Left Opposition were really as small as Lozovsky makes out, this would not frighten us at all. When at the beginning of the war the revolutionary internationalists of all of Europe met at Zimmerwald, they filled only a few stagecoaches. We were never afraid to remain in the minority. It is Lozovsky who was so afraid of being in the minority during the war that he defended in print the Longuetists,221 whom he tried in every way to unite with against us. During the October Revolution Lozovsky was afraid that the Bolshevik Party would be "isolated" from the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, and therefore he betrayed the party which he had temporarily joined, and united with its enemies in the most critical period. And now, after Lozovsky has joined the victorious Soviet power, his quantitative estimates are just as reliable as his qualitative ones.
Following the victory, for which he was not in the least guilty, Lozovsky, putting minus signs where he had previously marked pluses, declared in a triumphant manifesto at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern that the French Socialist Party "no longer exists." In spite of all our protests against this shameful light-mindedness, he held on to this assertion. When it became clear that the international social democracy nevertheless did exist, Lozovsky along with his teachers crawled on all fours through the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee and was in a bloc with the strikebreakers during the greatest strike of the British working class. With what triumph—a triumph over the Opposition—did Lozovsky at a Central Committee plenum read the telegram in which Citrine and Purcell, after they had crushed not only the general strike but also the strike of the coal miners, generously agreed to talk with the representatives of the Soviet trade unions' central council.

After the destruction of the Chinese revolution and the disintegration of the Chinese workers' organizations, Lozovsky at a plenum of the Central Committee (where he came again as a guest because Stalin had not yet decided to bring him in as a member) reported fantastic gains of the Profintern. He said that there were three million workers organized in the trade unions of China. Everyone gasped. But Lozovsky did not blink an eye. He operates just as lightly with millions of organized workers as he does with rhymes for coloring articles. That's why Lozovsky's witticism about the sofa that can seat the whole Opposition does not in the least overwhelm us. Undoubtedly there are plenty of sofas and other furnishings in the offices of the Profintern, but unfortunately there is an absence of ideas. And it is ideas that win, because it is ideas that convince the masses.

But why did Lozovsky use the name Radovoy? We hear a distrustful or doubting voice. There are two reasons: personal and political. Personally, Lozovsky prefers not to expose himself to blows. In sensitive moments of ideological conflict he prefers modest anonymity, just as in the sharp decisive hours of the revolutionary struggle he inclines to solitary deliberations. This is the personal reason. There is also a political reason. If Lozovsky had signed his name, everyone would say: Is it possible that in questions of the trade-union movement we really have no one better than this? But seeing the signature of Radovoy under the article, the well-intentioned reader can say: We must admit that Radovoy is a sorry scribbler, but nevertheless we still have Lozovsky.
Another New Talent

Only a few months have elapsed since Molotov sent the order throughout the Comintern that the ideological struggle against "Trotskyism" must be considered at an end. Well? The publications of the Comintern, beginning with the publications of the Soviet Communist Party, are once again devoting innumerable columns and pages to the struggle against "Trotskyism." Even the most honorable Pokrovsky, who is burdened with the labors of instructing the youth, has been moved to the front trenches. This corresponds approximately to the period in the imperialist war when Germany resorted to the mobilization of forty-five- and fifty-year-old reserves. This fact alone suggests serious fears about the condition of the Stalinist front. Fortunately, the nestor of Marxist historiography has not only grandchildren but also great-grandchildren. One of them is S. Novikov, author of an article about the autobiography of L. D. Trotsky. This young talent immediately established a record by showing that it is possible to fill one and a half printed pages without presenting a single fact or formulating a single idea. Such an exceptional gift could have been developed only under the guidance of an experienced master. And the question springs to mind: Was it not Manuilsky in the hours he could spare from the Comintern who took Novikov under his wing, this blessed babe of the "third period"? Or perhaps Manuilsky did not have to nourish this young talent. Perhaps Manuilsky simply made use of—his own 'talents. We will not try the reader's patience. Novikov is Manuilsky, the very same Manuilsky who in 1918 wrote that Trotsky saved Russian Bolshevism from national limitedness and made it a world ideological current. Now Manuilsky writes that Stalin has saved Bolshevism from Trotskyism and by that has definitively strengthened it as an ideological current of the solar system.

But are we not mistaken in identifying little Novikov with the great Manuilsky? No, we are not mistaken. We came to this conclusion neither lightly nor by guessing, but by zealous investigation. To be exact, we read five lines at the beginning of the article and five lines at the end. More than that, we hope, nobody will demand of us. But why should Manuilsky hide behind the signature of Novikov? somebody will ask. Isn't it clear that it is so people will think: If Novikov is so invincible, then how must Manuilsky himself be!

We will not repeat ourselves. Manuilsky's motives are the
same as Lozovsky's motives for turning into Radovoy. The reputations of these people need refurbishing, like shiny pants need special cleaning.

**Responsibility for the Turns Lies in — Trotskyism**

It is known that the Opposition is swerving to the "right," that it is against socialism and collectivization. It is equally known that the Opposition is for compulsory collectivization. And since the selection and the training of the apparatus, as is also well known, were during recent years in the hands of the Opposition, it then of course is responsible for the turns. At any rate this is all they write about in Pravda. If you don't like it, don't read it, but don't interfere with the "general line."

We have previously quoted from the official platform of the Opposition published in 1927 in regard to collectivization. But let us go further back to the period of War Communism, when civil war and famine necessitated a rigorous policy of grain requisitions. What was the Bolsheviks' perspective on collectivization in those severe years? In a speech about the peasant uprisings that were caused by the requisitioning of grain, Comrade Trotsky said on April 6, 1919:

"These uprisings gave us the possibility to develop our greatest ideological and organizational strength. But alongside of this, we know, the uprisings were also a sign of our weakness, because they drew into their wake not only the kulaks but also—we must not deceive ourselves on this score—a certain part of the middle and intermediate peasantry. This can be explained by the general reasons that I have given—by the backwardness of the peasantry itself. We must not, however, blame everything on backwardness. Marx said on one occasion that a peasant not only harbors prejudice but also uses judgment, and that one can appeal from the peasant's prejudice to his judgment in order to lead him toward a new order on the basis of experience. The peasantry should feel, from the experience of deeds, that in the working class, in its party, in its Soviet apparatus, it has a leader, a defender. The peasant should understand that requisitioning was forced upon us, should accept it as something unavoidable; he should know that we are going into the countryside to determine for whom requisitioning is easier and for whom it is more difficult, that we differentiate, and that we seek the closest friendly bonds with the middle peasants.

"This is necessary because until the working class in Western Europe has gained power, until our left flank can lean on
the proletarian dictatorship of Germany, France, and other countries, we are compelled to lean our right flank on the Russian middle peasant. But not only in this period; no, also after the decisive, inevitable, and historically destined victory of the working class throughout Europe, for us in our country there will remain the important and enormous task of the socialization of our agricultural economy, transforming it from a dispersed, backward peasant economy into a new collective communist economy. Can this greatest transition in world history be in any way completed against the wishes of the peasantry? In no way. Not measures of force will be needed, not measures of compulsion, but educational measures, measures of persuasion, of support, of example, of encouragement—these are the methods by which the organized and enlightened working class addresses the middle peasant" ["The Eastern Front," a speech in Samara, Collected Works, volume 17, pp. 119-20].

Yakovlev's "General Line"

Every self-respecting bureaucrat has a "general line," sometimes full of unexpected turns. Yakovlev's "general line" has always consisted in serving the top command but also winking at the Opposition. He ceased winking when he understood that it was a serious matter, and for a responsible post not only the hands but the heart as well are demanded. Yakovlev has become people's commissar of agriculture. In this capacity he presented the Sixteenth Congress with a thesis on the collectivization movement. One of the basic reasons for the upturn in the agricultural economy, the thesis declares, is the "crushing of counterrevolutionary Trotskyism." It will not hurt therefore to recall how the present leaders of collectivization recently dealt with the question of the agricultural economy, and in the struggle against Trotskyism at that.

Describing the dispersed and backward character of peasant economy, Yakovlev wrote at the end of 1927: "These data are quite sufficient to characterize the drama of the small and tiny economy. On the cultural and organizational level of peasant economy inherited from czarism we will never succeed in advancing socialist development in our country with the required speed" (On the Question of Socialist Reconstruction of Agricultural Economy, edited by Yakovlev, p. xxiv).

Two years ago, when 75 percent of the collectives still consisted of the poor, the present commissar of agriculture, Yakovlev, evaluated their socialist character in the following way:
"The question of the growth in the collectives of the communal rather than individual elements of capital, even at the present time, perhaps particularly at the present time, is still a question of struggle; *in many instances private individual accumulation hides under the communal form,*" etc. (ibid., p. xxxvii).

Defending, against the Opposition, the right of the kulak to live and breathe, Yakovlev wrote: "The quintessence of the task is the socialist transformation of the peasant economy into a cooperative socialist economy . . . precisely this small and tiny economy that the middle peasant economy really is at bottom. This is our basic and most difficult task. In solving this task we may in passing, through our general policy and economic policy, solve the task of *limiting the growth of kulak exploiting elements*—the task of an offensive against the kulak" (ibid., p. xlvi).

Thus Yakovlev made even the possibility of limiting the growth of the kulak elements dependent upon the solution of the "basic and most difficult task": the socialist transformation of peasant economy. As for the liquidation of the kulak as a class, Yakovlev did not even raise the question. This was two years ago.

In discussing the necessity for the gradual transition from commercial cooperation to productive cooperation, that is, to collective farms, Yakovlev wrote: "This is the only road of cooperative development that really secures—*naturally, not in one, two, three years, maybe not in one decade—the socialist reconstruction of all of peasant economy*" (ibid., p. xii). Let us note carefully "not in one, two, three years, maybe not in one decade."

*Collective farms and communes,*" Yakovlev wrote in the same work, "are at the present time and will for a *long time yet undoubtedly be only islets in the sea of peasant economy, since a precondition for their vitality is first of all a tremendous rise of culture*" (ibid., p. xxxvii).

Finally, in order to present the basis for the perspective of decades, Yakovlev emphasized that: "The creation of a mighty, rationally organized industry, capable of producing not only the means of consumption but also the means of production, imperative for the national economy—this is the *precondition for a real cooperative socialist plan*" (ibid., p. xliii).

This is how matters appeared in recent times when Yakovlev, as a member of the Central Control Commission, deported
the Opposition to the East because of its program calling for an assault on the privileges of the kulak and the bureaucracy and calling for accelerated collectivization. In upholding the official policy, the course toward the "mighty peasant," "against the conscienceless and spiteful criticism on the part of the Opposition"—the actual words used in the article—Yakovlev thought that the collective farms "will for a long time yet undoubtedly be only islets"—not even islands, but islets!—"in the sea of peasant economy," whose socialist reconstruction would require more than a decade. If two years ago Yakovlev proclaimed, in contrast to the Opposition, that even the simple limitation of the kulak can only be a passing result of socialist reconstruction of the whole peasant economy taking decades, then today's commissar of agriculture undertakes "to liquidate the kulak as a class" in the course of two or three sowing campaigns. Incidentally, this was yesterday; today Yakovlev expresses himself much more enigmatically.

And it is this type who, incapable of seriously thinking anything through to the end, still less capable of foreseeing anything, accuses the Opposition of "consciencelessness," and on the basis of this accusation arrests, exiles, and even shoots—two years ago, because the Opposition pushed them onto the road of collectivization and industrialization; today, because it restrains the collectivizers from adventurism.

Here it is, the essence of bureaucratic adventurism.
THE VALUABLE WORK OF F. DINGELSTEDT

June 1930

Comrade Dingelstedt's article printed below is not a finished work. We received the manuscript, unfortunately, as a third or fourth copy, with the errors and omissions unavoidable in such cases; for despite the fact that Marxism continues to be considered the official doctrine of the Soviet state, genuinely Marxist works, insofar as they are concerned with present-day questions, lead in the USSR, alas, an illegal existence and are distributed in manuscript form.

As we have already written (see number 6 [of Biulleten Op­pozitsii]), the author of the article, Comrade Dingelstedt, a member of the party since 1910, is one of the few "red professors" with a revolutionary past and with a deep hostility to that "as you please" spirit with which the greater part of that not very honorable body is inspired. Dingelstedt is the author of a work on agrarian relations in India, written by him in the British Museum while on scientific leave (F. Dingelstedt: The Agrarian Question in India, Priboi, 1928).

Comrade Dingelstedt has belonged to the Communist Left Opposition since the day it was founded. Removed by the apparatus from active political work, F. Dingelstedt was for several years rector of the Leningrad Forestry Institute. At the time of the great liquidation of the left wing of the party Comrade Dingelstedt was arrested and sent into exile, where he has remained since that time (in Kansk, Siberia).

The comrade who brought us the manuscript reports that according to his information it was a draft appeal to the Sixteenth Congress of the CPSU. This is not fully apparent from the manuscript itself. In view of the length of the work, or rather of the part which has reached us, we are compelled to print it in extracts. We must take on ourselves the responsibility for using an author's draft without the agreement of the author; the interest of the matter is above formal considerations. We do not doubt that readers will agree with us when they have got to know the valuable work of Comrade Dingelstedt.
THE NEW MASSES AS "DEFENDER" OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

June 10, 1930

Dear Friend:

I have received a copy of the New York magazine *New Masses* containing articles about my autobiography and about the suicide of Mayakovsky. I do not regret the fifteen minutes I have spent getting acquainted with the American left intelligentsia. Magazines like this are to be found in several countries. One of their important tasks is said to be the "defense" of the Soviet Union. This is a wholly praiseworthy endeavor, regardless of whether Messrs. "Defenders" fulfill it from inward conviction or—as is sometimes the case—from less lofty motives. But it would be foolish to exaggerate the importance of this defense. These groups, sufficiently varied in their composition, busy themselves on one side with the fringes of the bourgeoisie, on the other with the fringes of the proletariat, and offer no guarantee whatever as to their own future. As the majority of pacifists struggle against war only in times of peace, so these radical "defenders" of the Soviet Union, its titular "friends" from the bohemian ranks, will fulfill their mission only as long as this does not demand real courage and genuine devotion to the revolution. These qualities they do not possess. And where indeed should they get them? Their radicalism needs a protective coloration. For that reason it finds its chief expression in the "defense" of the Soviet Union—defense of a state possessing power, wealth, authority. It is a question of defending what exists and is already achieved. For such defense it is not at all necessary to be a revolutionary. You can quite well remain a mixture of anarchist and conservative. But at the same time you can seem revolutionary, deceiving others and, to some extent, yourself. We have seen this in the example of Barbusse and the French paper *Le Monde*. From the standpoint of time, their radicalism is chiefly directed toward the past. From the standpoint of space, it is directly in proportion to the square of the distance from the scene of action. In relation to their own country, these bold ones always were and always will be infinitely more
cautious and evasive than in relation to other countries—especially those in the East.

The best representative of this type, excelling the rest by many heads both in gifts and character, is undoubtedly Maxim Gorky. He sympathized for years with the Bolsheviks and considered their enemies his enemies. This did not prevent him from appearing in the camp of its enemies at the time of the proletarian revolution. After the victory of the revolution he long remained in the camp of its enemies. He reconciled himself to the Soviet republic when it became an unalterable fact for him—that is, when he could reconcile himself to it without departing from his essentially conservative outlook. There is irony in the fact that Gorky warred against Lenin at the greatest period of Lenin's creation but now, long afterward, gets along very peacefully with Stalin. What can we expect of the pencil-sized Gorkys?

The essence of these people from the left wing of bourgeois bohemia is that they are capable of defending the revolution only after it is accomplished and has demonstrated its permanence. In defending the yesterday of the revolution they adopt an attitude of conservative hostility to all those who are paving the road to its tomorrow. The future can only be prepared by revolutionary methods, methods as foreign to conservative bohemia as were the ideas and slogans of the dictatorship of the proletariat on the day before the October Revolution. These gentlemen remain, accordingly, true to themselves and to the social classes that created them and feed them. Furthermore, in spite of a formal veering to the left, to the "new masses" (!), their conservatism has really grown stronger, since they are leaning their backs against—not the October Revolution, no!—but against a great state as an "institution," independent of its guiding ideas and its policy. They were with Lenin and Trotsky—by no means all of them, by the way—after that they were with Zinoviev, after that with Bukharin and Rykov, now they are with Stalin. And tomorrow? Upon that they will express themselves when tomorrow has become yesterday. They have accepted every change in the governmental course as patriotic officials accept a change of uniform. There are always potential bureaucrats sitting around bohemia. These people are courtiers of the Soviet power, not soldiers of the proletarian revolution.

The workers' state, as a state, may have need of such characters for temporary goals, although I have always thought that the nearsighted epigones greatly exaggerated the weight
of these groups—just as they exaggerated the value of the "defense" of Purcell or the "friendship" of Chiang Kai-shek. As for these characters themselves, I am ready to acknowledge that it is better to be a courtier of the Soviet power than of the oil kings or the British secret service. But the proletarian revolution would not be the proletarian revolution if it allowed its ranks to be confused with this problematical, unreliable, fickle, and vacillating crew.

Their moral triviality assumes cynical and sometimes insufferable form when they, in the character of "friends of the family," interfere in the internal problems of communism. The aforementioned issue of the New Masses (a paradoxical name, by the way, for a bohemian publication!) is a case in point. These people, you see, think that my autobiography will serve the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, while the New Masses, Le Monde, and other publications of this kind are obviously necessary to the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. This aberration is easily explained. Playing around the fringes of two hostile classes and revolving continually on their own axes, the Barbusses of all countries naturally get mixed up as to where the bourgeoisie is and where the proletariat. Their criteria are simple. Since the work of the Left Opposition decisively criticizes the domestic policy of the Soviet Union and the world policy of the Comintern, and since the bourgeois newspapers exult in this criticism and try to make use of it—why, the conclusion is perfectly obvious: the courtiers are in the camp of the revolution, and we, the Communist Left, in the camp of its enemies! This is the usual depth of the political thinking to be found in bohemia.

The bourgeoisie would be stupid if it did not try to use the internal disagreements in the revolutionary camp. But were these questions first raised in my autobiography? Wasn't the expulsion from the party of the president of the Comintern, Zinoviev, and one of the presidents of the Soviet government, Kamenev, a gift to the bourgeoisie? Did not the deportation and subsequently the banishment of Trotsky give the bourgeois press of the whole world a welcome theme for agitation against the October Revolution? Was not the denunciation of the head of the government, Rykov, and the head of the Comintern, Bukharin, as "bourgeois liberals" used by the bourgeoisie and the social democracy? These facts, brought to the attention of the whole world, were far more helpful to the bourgeoisie than the theoretical reflections or historical explanations of Trotsky. But what interest has anarcho-conservative
bohemia in all this? It takes all the foregoing events, because they are stamped with the official stamp, as given and eternal once and for all. Criticism of the Stalin regime is impossible to them, not because the Stalinists are right, but because the Stalinists are today the government. I repeat: these are courtiers of the Soviet power, not revolutionaries.

For revolutionaries, the question is decided by the class line, the content of ideas, the theoretical position, the historical prognosis, and the political methods of each of the opposing sides. If you think, as we think—and as we have proven on a world scale through the experiences of the last six years—that the policies of the Stalinist faction are weakening the October Revolution, that they destroyed the Chinese revolution, that they are preparing the defeat of the Indian revolution, and that they are undermining the Comintern, then, and only then, our policy is justified. The bourgeoisie will pick up the fragments of our true and necessary criticism, of course! But does that change in the slightest degree the essence of a great historical problem? Hasn't revolutionary thought always developed by the road of ruthless internal struggle, at whose fire reaction always tried to warm its fingers?

I remark parenthetically, however, that all the bourgeois press, from the New York Times to the Austro-Marxist Arbeiter Zeitung, in its political estimate of the struggle of the Left Opposition with Stalinist centrism, stands incomparably closer to the centrists and never conceals it. You could publish a whole anthology of press clippings to prove this. Thus, in addition to all the rest, the "friends" and "defenders" of the revolution, having nothing in common either with the old or the new masses, crudely distort the genuine picture of the distribution of political sympathy and antipathy among the bourgeoisie and the social democrats.

Lying, by the way, is a necessary attribute of a courtier. In the article about Mayakovsky, I hit upon the name of Rakovsky as I turned the pages. I read eight or ten sentences, and although I am accustomed to almost anything, nevertheless what I read made me gasp. It is related here how Mayakovsky "hated war" ("hated war"—what a vulgar formulation of a revolutionary's relation to war!) and how, in contrast to that, Rakovsky at Zimmerwald "was going to take off his coat and punch Lenin and Zinoviev... in the jaw" for their revolutionary struggle against war. Rakovsky is named here for no purpose other than to spread this scandalous lie. It is necessary to spread it because Rakovsky is
in exile and it is necessary to justify his being there. And so the courtier becomes a contemptible slanderer. He spreads this stupid scandal instead of stating—once he has named Rakovsky in connection with the war—with what revolutionary courage Rakovsky struggled against war under a storm of persecution, slander, assault, and police prosecution. Precisely for that struggle, Rakovsky was thrown into prison by the Rumanian oligarchy and was saved from the fate of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg only by the Red Army.

That is enough. If the October Revolution had depended upon its future courtiers, it would never have appeared in the world. And if its fate depended upon their "defense," the revolution would be condemned to ruin. The proletarian vanguard can guarantee the future of the land of the Soviets and continuation along the road of world revolution only by a correct policy. We must work out that policy, establish it theoretically, and defend it tooth and nail against the whole world and, if necessary, against the very "highest" institutions that have raised themselves up (or rather have slid down) on the back of the October Revolution. But of those questions we need not speak in connection with the pseudorevolutionary courtiers from the ranks of petty-bourgeois bohemia. Of them enough has been said.

Yours,
L.D. Trotsky
Manuilsky is now sounding off about the "Bonapartist" tendencies of Trotsky. The cheap bohemian crowd of the New Masses and other publications of the same type have also seized on this theme. For them, Bonapartism is an expression of individual character traits, not a regime flowing from class relations, from the policy of veering between classes. Where must one's eyes be to discover Bonapartism in the Opposition now, when all the preparations for the Sixteenth Congress represent a repetition and rehearsal of Bonapartism on the plane of the party?

But we do not wish to raise general questions, but rather to contribute some historical data on the source of the spiritual inspiration of Manuilsky and his American and other pupils.

In 1923 a book by Oskar Blum [Russische Köpfe] appeared in Germany describing the personal characteristics of the leaders of the revolution. This book was the first to discover in Trotsky the signs of a "new Corsican." Before we evaluate the book, however, it is necessary to say a few words about the author.

In the period of the first revolution, Oskar Blum was considered a social democrat and a Marxist, a supporter of Plekhanov. In the years of reaction, he was suspected of having police connections. Arriving in Vienna from Riga, he asked Trotsky to help him reestablish his revolutionary credentials. On the basis of his own story, Trotsky came to the conclusion that Blum could not be tolerated in the revolutionary ranks. After the revolution of 1917, documents were found conclusively proving that Blum had worked for the police of Riga. Blum was arrested and afterward, through carelessness, he was released. Then he fled abroad, where he
published the book about the leaders of the revolution. The general character of the book can be sufficiently determined by the character of its author: it is a scurrilous libel.

A review of Blum's book was printed in the magazine of the Bureau of Party History, *Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, in November 1923, when the campaign of the epigones against Trotsky was already being widely promoted. Nevertheless, in that period the brains of the party and the Comintern were not yet filled with tons of gossip and slander and in general with all kinds of refuse, and the official publications were still in the habit of using the language they had used in Lenin's time. The writer of the article in *Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, not knowing that Blum had sufficient personal reasons to be dissatisfied with Trotsky, observed in bewilderment Blum's particular viciousness with respect to Trotsky.

"Therefore," he says in the review, "the author goes after Trotsky. He pulls out his whole baggage of the most impossible *lies, slanders, and charlatanism*. In the face, beard, lips, in everything, he anxiously looks for confirmation of his calumnious words. First of all—power. 'He [Trotsky] wanted the revolution,' the book states, 'for his own personal ends. Others spoke about the seizure of power because they considered the historical moment ripe for the transfer of power to the last powerless class. He spoke about the seizure of power because he considered himself ready to take possession of power' (page 83). In the building where 'Trotsky's ministry' was located, exemplary order and cleanliness prevailed. Aha! This is the secret of Trotsky's personal power. In Trotsky's military order and military style are seen—aha—the signs of the *new Corsican*. And a replica of the palace guard and bodyguard—true, not in gilded livery—is seen in the simple uniform of the Red Guard! . . . The book ends with a transparent insinuation: 'Material power is in his hands. What next?" (*Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, November 23, 1923, pp. 247-48).

Now take Manuilsky's article on Trotsky's autobiography. Take the review of the *New Masses* and the rest of the crawling press. In what way do they differ from Oskar Blum? In no way. What have they added to his revelations? Nothing. Their writings are a direct plagiarism from a person in the pay of the Riga police. Is it not because these gentlemen themselves have the psychology of people on a payroll, which is irreconcilable with the psychology of revolutionaries?

At any rate, the source of Manuilsky's inspiration is very obvious. This, however, is not the only instance. There is a
more important one that, by the way, has already been quoted by the Opposition, but we raise it again because it enjoys incontestable proof.

It is known that the whole campaign against "Trotskyism" began around the question of the peasantry: contrary to Lenin, Trotsky is supposed to have underestimated the peasantry in general and the middle peasant in particular. The epigones have forgotten the source of this legend. Nevertheless, it is rooted in the agitation carried on by the White Guards among the peasants during the civil war. Lenin took advantage of the first suitable occasion to dispel this legend. These are his own words:

"Izvestia of February 2 carried a letter from a peasant, G. Gulov, who asks a question about the attitude of our Workers' and Peasants' Government to the middle peasantry, and tells of rumors that Lenin and Trotsky are not getting on together, and that there are big differences between them on this very question of the middle peasant.

"Comrade Trotsky has already replied to that in his 'Letter to the Middle Peasants,' which appeared in Izvestia of February 7. In this letter Comrade Trotsky says that the rumors of differences between him and myself are the most monstrous and shameless lie, spread by the landowners and capitalists, or by their witting and unwitting accomplices. For my part, I entirely confirm Comrade Trotsky's statement. There are no differences between us, and as regards the middle peasants there are no differences either between Trotsky and myself, or in general in the Communist Party, of which we are both members.

"In his letter Comrade Trotsky has explained clearly and in detail why the Communist Party and the present Workers' and Peasants' Government, elected by the Soviets and belonging to that party, do not consider the middle peasants to be their enemies. I fully subscribe to what Comrade Trotsky has said" ["Reply to a Peasant's Question," February 14, 1919, Collected Works, volume 36].

This is the way the epigones and their officeholders, including the so-called Friends of the Soviet Union, simply repeat through the years what Lenin in 1919 called lies "spread by the landowners and capitalists, or by their witting and unwitting accomplices."

This is the sad state of affairs now. And not by accident. Centrism is not very inventive. It lacks ideas and has a short memory. When this intermediary, shaky, unprincipled current
leads a struggle against the revolutionary wing, it must necessarily resort to conclusions from the right wing. It has none of its own, and by its very nature cannot have. And because by the logic of the struggle centrism is compelled to deepen its accusations against "Trotskyism," it is thereby compelled to borrow from the more muddy sources. This road has reached the point of plagiarism by Manuilsky and Company from Oskar Blum, agent of the Okhrana. 230

What next?
Dear Comrades,

Your extensive letter, dated June 3, was received. Unfortunately, instead of dispelling misunderstandings, it increases them.

1. There is no "contrast" whatever between my last "Open Letter" and my last year's answer to your own open letter. All that separates them is several months of intense activity by the International Communist Left. At that time a certain amount of vagueness in your position could have appeared as episodic, and in part even unavoidable. Quite obviously, the conditions in which Comrade Bordiga, the authoritative leader of your faction, found himself might have explained for a while the dilatory character of your position (without, of course, reducing its harmful aspects). In replying to your "Open Letter," I took this very important, even if personal, circumstance fully into account. I am sufficiently acquainted with Comrade Bordiga, and value him highly enough, to understand the exceptional role he plays in the life of your faction. But, as you will undoubtedly grant yourselves, this consideration cannot cover all the others. Events are taking place, new questions are arising, and clear answers are needed. Today the conservative vagueness of your position is becoming a more and more dangerous symptom.

2. You say that in all this time you have not departed by an iota from the platform of 1925, which I had called an excellent document in many respects. But a platform is not created so as to "not depart from it," but rather to apply and develop it. The platform of 1925 was a good document for the year 1925. In the five years that have elapsed, great events have taken place. In the platform there is no answer whatever...
to them. To attempt replacing answers to questions which flow from the situation in 1930 by references to the 1925 platform is to uphold a policy of vagueness and evasiveness.

3. You explain your failure to participate in the Paris conference by the miscarriage in the mails of our letter of invitation. If nothing more were involved, it should have been openly stated so in the press. I found no such notice by your group in *La Verite*. Has it perhaps appeared in *Prometeo*? However, it's clear from your whole letter that it's not at all a case of a miscarriage in the mails.

4. You say that "ideological preparation for the conference was totally lacking." To me this assertion seems not only false but downright fantastic. In France the ideological preparation was especially intense and fruitful (*La Verite, La Lutte de classes*, pamphlets). In all countries last year there took place an intense ideological struggle which led to a differentiation from alleged "cothinkers." The break with Souvarine and Paz in France, Urbahns in Germany, Pollack's little group in Czechoslovakia, and others, was the most important element in the ideological preparation for the conference of genuine revolutionary communists. To ignore this most important work is to approach the problem not with a revolutionary but with a sectarian criterion.

5. Your conception of internationalism appears to me erroneous. In the final analysis, you take the International as a sum of national sections or as a product of the mutual influence of national sections. This is, at least, a one-sided, undialectical, and therefore wrong conception of the International. If the Communist Left throughout the world consisted of only five individuals, they would have nonetheless been obliged to build an international organization *simultaneously* with the building of one or more national organizations.

It is wrong to view a national organization as the foundation and the International as a roof. The interrelation here is of an entirely different type. Marx and Engels started the communist movement in 1847 with an international document and with the creation of an international organization. The same thing was repeated in the creation of the First International. The very same path was followed by the Zimmerwald Left in preparation for the Third International. Today this road is dictated far more imperiously than in the days of Marx. It is, of course, possible in the epoch of imperialism for a revolutionary proletarian tendency to arise in one or another
country, but it cannot thrive and develop in one isolated country; on the very next day after its formation it must seek or create international ties, an international platform, an international organization, because a guarantee of the correctness of the national policy can be found only along this road. A tendency which remains shut in nationally over a stretch of years condemns itself irrevocably to degeneration.

6. You refuse to answer the question as to the character of your differences with the International Opposition on the grounds that an international principled document is lacking. I consider such an approach to the question as purely formal, lifeless, not political and not revolutionary. A platform or program is something that comes as a result of extensive experiences from joint activities on the basis of a certain number of common ideas and methods. Your 1925 platform did not come into being on the very first day of your existence as a faction. The Russian Opposition created a platform in the fifth year of its struggle; and although this platform appeared two and a half years after yours did, it has also become outdated in many respects.

When, later on, the program of the Communist International was published, the Russian Opposition replied with a criticism of it. This critique, which was—in essence and not in form—the fruit of collective work, was published in several languages, as have been most of the documents of the Opposition in recent years. On this terrain there occurred a serious ideological struggle (in Germany, in the United States). Problems of trade-union policy, the "third period," the five-year plan, collectivization, the attitude of the Left Opposition toward the official parties, and so on—all these principled questions were submitted in the recent period to serious discussion and theoretical elaboration in the International Communist press. This is the only way of preparing the elaboration of a platform, or more accurately, of a program. When you declare that you haven't been offered a ready-made "programmatic document," and that consequently you are unable to answer questions concerning your differences with the International Left, you thereby disclose a sectarian conception of methods and means for arriving at an ideological unification; you demonstrate how isolated you are from the ideological life of the Communist Left.

7. The groups that united at the Paris conference did not at all aspire to mechanical monolithism, nor did they set it as their goal. But they are all united in the conviction that the living experience of the last few years assures their unity, at
least to the extent of enabling them to continue collaborating in an organized form on an international scale and in particular preparing a common platform with the international forces at their disposal. When I inquired how deep-going were your differences with the International Left, I did not expect a formalistic answer, but a political and revolutionary reply to the following effect: "Yes, we consider it possible to proceed to work together with the given groups, among whom we shall defend our own views on a number of questions."

But what was your answer? You declare that you will not participate in the International Secretariat until you receive a programmatic document. This means that others must, without your participation, work out a programmatic document, while you reserve the right of final inspection. How much further is it possible to go along the road of dilatoriness, evasion, and national isolation?

8. Equally formalistic is your statement that you find unacceptable the statutes of the French Communist League, which solidarize with the first four world congresses of the Communist International. In all likelihood, there is not a single French comrade who holds that everything in the decisions of the first four congresses is infallible and immutable. It is a question of the basic strategic line. If you refuse to rest on the foundations lodged by the first four congresses, then what is there left for you in general?

On the one hand, you refuse to accept the decisions of the first four congresses as the basis. On the other, you flatly reject or ignore the programmatic and tactical work of the International Left in recent years. What then do you propose instead? Can it be the very same platform of 1925? But with all its virtues this platform is only an episodic document which doesn't offer today an answer to a single one of the current problems.

9. Strangest of all is the impression produced by the section of your letter where you talk with indignation about "an attempt" to create a new Opposition in Italy. You speak of a "maneuver," of a new "experiment in confusion," and so forth. So far as I am able to judge, this refers to a new split inside the ruling centrist faction of the Italian Communist Party, with one of the groups striving to draw closer to the International Left. Wherein is this a "maneuver"? What's the "confusion" about? Whence does confusion emanate? The fact that a group, splitting from an opponent faction, is seeking to merge with us represents a serious gain. Naturally, the merger can take
place only on a principled basis, i.e., on the basis of the theory and practice of the International Left. The comrades who belong to the Italian Opposition have sent me personally letters and a number of documents. I replied fully and explicitly to the questions these comrades put to me. I will continue to do so in the future as well. For my part, I, too, put a number of questions to these comrades. In particular, to my query concerning their attitude to the Bordigists I received an answer that despite the existing differences of opinion, they consider collaboration both possible and necessary. Where is there any "maneuver" here?

On the one hand you consider that the International Opposition does not merit sufficient confidence for you to take part in its collective labors. On the other, you evidently deem that the International Opposition has no right to get in touch with Italian Communists who declare themselves in solidarity with it. Dear comrades, you lose all proportions and you go too far. This is the usual fate of shut-in, isolated groups.

Naturally, it may be considered unfortunate that relations and negotiations with the New Italian Opposition are going on without your participation. But the fault is yours. To take part in these negotiations you should have taken part in the entire activity of the International Opposition, that is, entered its ranks.

10. As concerns the Urbahns group, you request information about its entire activity so as to be able to take a definite position. And you recall in this connection that in the platform of the Russian Opposition the Urbahns group is mentioned as being ideologically close. I can only express my regret that up till now you have not deemed it your duty to arrive at a definitive opinion on a question that has agitated the entire International Opposition for many months, led to a split in Germany and later to the formation there of a united Left Opposition, completely severed from Urbahns. What is implied by your reference to the Russian platform? Yes, in its time we defended the Urbahns group (just as we defended Zinoviev's group) against Stalin. Yes, we once thought we could succeed in straightening out the political line of the entire Urbahns group.

But history did not come to a standstill. Neither in 1925 nor in 1927. After our platform was published, events of no small importance took place. The Zinovievists capitulated. The Leninbund's leadership began to evolve away from Marxism. Inasmuch as we do not cut political ties lightly, we tried
in dozens of articles and letters to get the Leninbund to change its policy. We did not succeed. A number of new events pushed the Urbahns group still further away. A considerable section of his own organization broke with Urbahns. Political evolution is chock-full of contradictions. Not infrequently it has carried, as it still will, yesterday's cothinkers or semi-cothinkers to opposite sides. The causes for the split between the International Opposition and the Leninbund were discussed publicly by the entire Oppositional press. I have personally said everything I had to say on this subject in a special pamphlet. I have nothing to add, all the more so because we are discussing here accomplished facts. You raise this question not in connection with the facts themselves but in connection with my letter. This shows once again the extent to which you ignore the actual political and theoretical life of the International Opposition.

With communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
CIRCULAR LETTER NUMBER ONE

June 21, 1930

To all sections of the International Left Opposition

Dear Comrades:

The lines of communication between the national sections of the Communist Left Opposition are, as before, extremely tenuous. The International Bulletin has still not appeared. And yet important tactical questions that must be dealt with continue to pile up, right to the present time. Individual correspondence with comrades is becoming less and less adequate for this purpose. At present, I can see no other course of action but to address myself to all the national sections with this letter in which I wish to reply to a number of questions that have been asked of me in various letters and, in addition, pose some questions of my own which, in my opinion, merit collective discussion.

1. The Opposition is wasting considerable time. This is particularly clear in the formation of the International Opposition. The last thing I have in mind by writing these lines is to accuse anyone personally. I want to speak about our errors and our defaults, for which we are all responsible, and which we absolutely must correct.

   The formal basis for an international unification of the Opposition was proposed almost a year ago. However, this unification has not yet been carried out in practice to this day. A preliminary conference was held in Paris in April. But in the two and a half months since then no practical results from this conference have been manifested.

   It was decided to publish an information bulletin. The first issue has not appeared to date. How can this be explained? Of course, we suffer from an acute lack of forces. But this
is not the main problem. And what about the Opposition's time and forces that are now being wasted in overcoming this dispersion of forces, in private correspondence about individual questions, in correcting errors resulting from a lack of information? All these forces would easily suffice to publish a weekly international bulletin. I am not even mentioning the fact that there are plenty of forces that are ignored and not utilized at all.

The main reason for this loss of months, almost a year, in the formation of the international organization is, in my opinion, the lack of understanding that can be observed among a number of comrades about the reciprocal relationship between national and international organizations of the proletariat. Among certain elements in the Opposition the struggle against bureaucratic centralism has revived a non-Marxist conception of the reciprocal relationship between the national sections and the international organization, according to which the national sections are the foundation and walls and the international organization is the roof to be added at the end. This point of view was expressed in a particularly naive manner by the Vienna Mahnrunf group, which refused to join any international organization whatsoever until the time that it could no longer grow on a national level as a result of its own efforts. On the basis of what program, what methods, under what banner this group aspires to grow nationally no one knows, and it seems that they themselves don't know. They must imagine that the workers should place their confidence in an unknown group with no principled character, and that after this the group will take care of its international character and thus its national character as well, for one without the other would be absurd.

The Italian Prometeo group comes very close to this point of view. Among some of the Belgian and French comrades there was a strong opposition to a "premature" international organization. Moreover, this opposition spawned the same erroneous views mentioned above. It is true that this point of view has not always found open theoretical expression. Most often it takes the form of a silent, semiconscious opposition, continual postponements, failure to carry out work, and a serious waste of time. It is necessary to put an end to this.

2. It is impossible to avoid mentioning here the fact that the April preliminary conference considered it possible not to publish any statement of principles (declaration, manifesto, or resolution). No national conference would have acted in such
a manner, for how can you fail to tell the workers why a conference took place? But as far as this international conference is concerned, the comrades found it possible to make this decision for purely technical reasons, and it is absolutely clear that an enormous error was committed in this regard. The most modest international document issued by the conference would have been a formidable weapon in the hands of every national section. It could have been published or distributed in printed form at workers' meetings, etc. Explaining the decision not to publish such a manifesto on the grounds of incidental, technical reasons is not right. The technical and incidental reasons would not have been able to prevail except as a consequence of insufficient attention to the principled side of the question.

3. The conference decided to publish a bulletin, twice a month if possible. However, as has already been said, after two and a half months not a single issue has appeared.*

It would not be correct to explain this fact by a lack of forces alone. On the whole, the bulletin demands very little in extra forces. Establishing an international theoretical and political organ is at present beyond our means. But it is not a question of this. The International Bulletin should be an organ for extensive international information and discussion. Three-quarters of the correspondence on tactical and theoretical questions now carried on among national groups and comrades on an individual basis should be contained within the bulletin. The minutes of the national sections would be the most important part of its contents. It would be sufficient to form a technical editorial staff for this task. And for this we have the necessary forces, especially in Paris, where in addition to the French organization there are Spanish, Hungarian, Italian, Jewish, and Indochinese groups. There are also several comrades of other nationalities. From these groups it would be quite possible to form an international editorial staff for the bulletin which would work under the general direction of the International Secretariat. The shortcomings and errors of a young editorial staff, inevitable at the beginning, would be corrected in time. In any case, if we had taken this action six months ago, we would now certainly have a good

*It seems possible to hope that the first issue will appear shortly. But this of course does not change anything, for there are no guarantees that the problem will be posed in the correct manner in the future.
weekly bulletin that would form the axis of the entire intellectual life of the International Opposition. The organizational form indicated above will not only guarantee the regular publication of the bulletin, but will also allow the editorial staff to attain independence—which is especially indispensable where an organ of international information and discussion is concerned.

We very often write (and with good reason) that the Comintern is letting revolutionary situations slip by. But for the Opposition to let time slip by is a sin of the same sort even if on a smaller scale. To avoid letting revolutionary situations slip by in the future, it is necessary to avoid letting everyday situations slip by. Let us not postpone indefinitely the steps that should be taken today.

4. Recently in the German section we have had sharp disputes that ended in the withdrawal of Comrades Neumann, Joko, and Grylewicz from the leadership. This action, like a number of actions that preceded it, really has the character of a genuine literary and bureaucratic intrigue of the classical type. The comrades mentioned above gave no hint of the principled reasons for their withdrawal. All efforts that were made to correct their mistaken action came to naught. Naturally, these comrades will now set about finding "principled" reasons for their action, that is to say, they will follow the same course as Paz, who started with literary quarrels, drew them out with theoretical mishmash, and ended up by defecting.

Of course, we should support the present leadership of the United German Opposition and direct all our efforts toward helping it carry out responsible work. But this is still not enough. We must draw some general conclusions from the things that have happened, conclusions of a principled as well as a practical nature.

It has already been written more than once that in the past not only Marxist, revolutionary elements have come into the Opposition, for principled reasons, but also individualist, petty-bourgeois, and lumpen elements who cannot tolerate discipline and are incapable of carrying out collective work. One could list many examples. Moreover, given the fact that for a number of years the Opposition has led an exclusively literary existence, it has cultivated within its ranks closed circles and literary arrogance characterized by inattention of these elements to workers' organizations. A continual state of opposition can and does breed conceit and grand airs, and also breeds people who always use the terms "masses," "proletariat," "masses," but
pay no attention to the individual representatives of the masses, even those in their own ranks, and do not try to draw them in and work with them on the basis of real party democracy.

At the same time the Opposition press has a tendency to raise itself above the Opposition and let itself be guided exclusively by the viewpoints of a few writers. This is a dangerous situation which must be confronted right from the beginning because it is one of the most dangerous sources of bureaucratism. The means of exerting firm control over the press and the means of reeducating Opposition writers in the spirit of proletarian collectivism could hardly be the same today in all countries. But if the existence of the problem is clearly seen and means are sought for combating it, steps can be taken.

For example, workers' press committees can be formed. These committees should meet periodically, have access to the correspondence addressed to the editors, listen to and analyze all the comments made to the editors, and when the committee requests, the editors should publish all the committee's resolutions. If these committees are properly organized, they can become an indispensable tool for the proletarian reeducation of the editors as well as the theoretical education of the workers who are members of the committee. I think that the Opposition journals would have done well in many cases if before printing their articles they had read them to workers in the "ranks," not in order to instruct the workers, but to learn from them how to write for workers. That is why it is necessary to listen attentively to their questions, comments, the development of their ideas, the examples they cite, etc.

5. The question of primary importance—the relationship between the Communist Left Opposition and the official party—does not always and everywhere have a clear and decisive solution in practice.

In the ranks of the Left Opposition, no one defends an orientation toward a second party.* But simply rejecting an incorrect position is not enough. It is necessary to actively struggle to attain a correct position; that is, set a clear, true course for the regeneration of the official party.

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*I should mention here that one year ago I allowed conditionally for the development of the Belgian and the United States Oppositions into parties. In those cases I made a wrong prognosis because of insufficient information.
The existing Communist parties were born as a result of events like the world war, the betrayal of the social democracy, the Russian Revolution, and the revolutionary crisis of postwar capitalist society. These are four monumental conditions, the combination of which made possible the rapid formation and development of the Comintern.

It is true that the effect of the conditions mentioned above has abated now. But to believe that these factors, and the traditions, ties, and mass organizations they have created, can without new, equivalent events be changed by speeches and articles testifies to a fatal literary subjectivism, that is, a complete lack of understanding of the dialectic of political development of the class, in the spirit of Souvarine.

There is no question that incorrect leadership has weakened and continues to weaken the Communist Party. But the unending crisis of capitalist society and the social democracy's politics of betrayal will increasingly push the workers toward the banner of communism. Only the fall of the Soviet republic, which would be the greatest catastrophe for the whole world proletariat, could create a fundamentally new situation. The Comintern would be reduced to debris, and proletarian revolutionaries would have to start all over again in many cases. But our objective is not the fall of Soviet power, as the hired bureaucratic swindlers claim, but its regeneration, its reinforcement, and its defense. And the very same thing is true for the official Communist Party.

As far as I can tell, our German comrades have had a perfectly correct position on this: they treat the official Communist Party as their party. During the elections (in Saxony, for example) they carry out an energetic campaign for the party slate. At the same time, on the basis of this collaboration, they conduct an implacable struggle against the leadership and its politics.

Comrade Roman Well235 writes me that some French comrades, while recognizing this tactic as correct for Germany, consider it inapplicable to France because the French Communist Party is weaker and is declining systematically. In my opinion, this manner of posing the question is false and politically dangerous. In France, all of the dimensions of the organization were and remain on a smaller scale than in Germany, but that does not constitute a fundamental difference. The French Communist Party polled more than a million votes in the legislative elections (on the basis of male suffrage alone); during the repression the workers took up very large
collections for l'Humanite; the circulation of the paper fluctuates around two hundred thousand, etc. Closing one's eyes to these facts and belittling their importance is self-deception and nothing else. The orientation of the French Opposition in its relationship to the Communist Party can and should be the same as the orientation of the Opposition in Germany. The only other road is that of Souvarine. There is no intermediate position for a political line. A middle road would bring only confusion.

The indisputably great successes of the French Opposition could have been even greater, that is, they would have had a more profound effect on the French workers, if at the time of the sharp repression directed against the party the Opposition had solidarized itself with the party more firmly, decisively, and aggressively before the government and in the eyes of the masses. This was not done and it was a serious error. The same goes for the election campaigns. It is not enough to renounce running candidates of our own in principle. It is necessary to show the Communist workers that we do everything in our power to assure the victory of the official candidates, that is, that we act as if they were our own candidates.

One of the Czechoslovakian comrades, Zvon, citing the call to the workers issued by the German Opposition ("You should help us correct the party's course . . .") expresses the opinion that the Czechoslovakian comrades instead will decide to take the following tone: "The workers are too little acquainted with us," he writes, "they have no reason to place confidence in us, and this is why we do not have the right to demand that they support us as 'saviors.'" Of course the essence of the matter does not lie in one or another turn of phrase. The orientation of the German comrades toward the party seems correct, as I have already said. But there is a basic political and psychological consideration contained in the formulation of the Czechoslovakian comrade. To say to the Communist workers in the name of a young group that has not yet had sufficient exposure (and this applies to the whole Opposition), "We are taking it upon ourselves to build a good party for you; follow us," means showing a lack of understanding of the objective situation as well as of the psychology of revolutionary workers. Especially the French workers, who have learned from their past, are less inclined than any to naively follow literary messianism, and they are right. A correct position might be formulated in the following manner: "Comrade workers, we wish to help you, that is to say, to fight side by side with
you in the ranks, employing our mutual forces to correct the errors, sweep out the worthless leaders, and regenerate the party." The worst possible position on this question is a position of equivocation, evasion, and reticence.

6. Our press gives information, perhaps less than it could, on the internal life of the Opposition organizations. Of course, not everything can be said openly; that is why it is so important to have a mutual exchange of information through the International Bulletin. Up till now, we have learned too little about what forms the participation of the Opposition took in the mass May Day demonstrations, what mistakes were made, what successes scored. The comrades' experience in participating in election campaigns also deserves more detailed explanation as well as criticism.

In fact we need honest self-criticism and at the same time criticism on an international scale. The Communist League in France carried out an audacious action—a street demonstration against the bloody repression in Indochina. As far as one can tell, the execution of this action gave rise to differences among the French comrades. The question is important enough for the whole International Opposition to be informed about the French comrades' experience and their disagreements. That is the only way the left wing can educate and temper itself.

7. The Opposition needs a democratic internal regime. The cadres can only be educated if all questions are debated by the whole Opposition, without fear of "lack of preparation," insufficiency on the plane of theory, etc. Revolutionaries grow as their tasks become greater. Questions of general revolutionary tactics and internal questions facing the Opposition should be the property of every member of the Opposition organization. Experience testifies clearly enough that decisions made in the corridors and deliberations in closed circles yield nothing, lead to nothing. Only keeping the ranks of the Opposition informed on all questions, including those in dispute, will immediately change the situation, introduce clarity, force each comrade to follow his line of thinking to its conclusion, and thereby push things forward.

Against literary arrogance, against the policy of narrow circles, for real democracy within the Opposition—these are our most important slogans.

With communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
AN INTOLERABLE SITUATION

June 21, 1930

To the Executive Committee of the Communist League of France

Dear Comrades:

At present none of the groups has received the decisions of the April international conference, not to mention the minutes. At least I am not aware of any formal text of the decisions concerning the International Secretariat and the bulletin.

Despite the fact that six weeks have gone by since the conference, the bulletin has not appeared. Does the editorial board for the bulletin exist? What is its composition? Who selected it? How is it carrying out its work, or more to the point—why is it not carrying out its work?

The situation as it presents itself is absolutely intolerable. The international work, that is, the most important work, is being completely neglected. With the elements present in Paris, it would be possible to create two or three editorial boards for the bulletin with completely separate personnel from the editorial boards of *La Verite* and *La Lutte de classes*. It is mostly a question of technical editors since the bulletin should be primarily an informational organ.

I propose the creation of an editorial board of five members chosen with the assistance of the national groups in Paris. The list of five candidates—or the different lists, if there are conflicting proposals—should be presented to the members of the International Secretariat, to which the editorial board should be responsible in all its work.

I certainly hope that this procedure will be entirely acceptable to the French comrades. Naturally, for my part I will be ready to consider any other proposal indicated by the situation. The only thing that is no longer tolerable, even for another week, is the loss of time.

Communist greetings,

T.
To the Executive Committee of the Communist League of France

Dear Comrades:

In number 39 of *La Verite* there was an announcement that the next issue of *La Lutte de classes* would contain an article by Sneevliet, one of the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International. This seemed all the more incredible to me since several months ago I came to an agreement with Comrades Naville and Gerard about the impossibility of collaborating with Sneevliet. I was obliged to send a telegram to the editorial board categorically rejecting this collaboration. In reply I received a communication saying that given the total inadequacy of the article in question, the editorial board had decided not to publish it even before receiving my telegram. Then, in reply to my letter, I received another letter from Comrade Naville stating that he agreed with my arguments and that Comrade Gerard had been against its publication from the beginning.

All of this really does not seem to be sufficient assurance for the future. One should have thought that it wasn't even necessary to raise the question of collaboration with Sneevliet among us. We do not break with the Communist centrists in order to enter into collaboration with the confusionists of the Two-and-a-Half International.

Nevertheless, out of prudence I obtained agreement in advance about the impossibility of collaborating with Sneevliet. But despite this, and despite the opposition of Comrade Gerard, who was party to this agreement, it was decided to publish this article and it has already been announced. This indicates that there is a bit too much capriciousness in the editing of our press and that its contributors are selected from unexpected and undesirable quarters. I am very happy to have persuaded Comrade Naville (moreover, for the second time on the same
question), but the readers of *La Verite* know nothing of this. Thus, I formally propose to the leadership that they run a notice to the effect that the article by Sneevliet was announced as the result of a misunderstanding, and that there cannot be any question of collaborating with the representatives of the Two-and-a-Half International.

You will agree, I hope, that such a declaration is absolutely necessary in order to discharge our common responsibility. And to insure the future.

With communist greetings,

T.
You say that R. M. should not "go beyond the limits within which he is capable of doing something." You repeat this phrase many times in your letter. For my part, I believe that every member of the organization can and must know, analyze, and criticize all the questions that form the content of our activity. There are no "limits" for anyone. That is the ABC of party democracy. Your formula is aristocratic and aloof. That is what has left you a minority in the Paris region [of the Communist League]. It is an altogether inevitable reaction on its part.

You have tried to eliminate M. from his post. You remain in the minority. That shows that you have proceeded with too much light-mindedness, without facing the mood of the organization. After the setback, you wanted to exclude M. from the Opposition! How could you do that? By a small coup d'état. I don't understand any of this.
CIRCULAR LETTER NUMBER TWO\textsuperscript{242}

June 29, 1930

To all sections of the International Left Opposition

Dear Comrades,

The Editorial Board of the Russian Biulleten Oppozitsii is forwarding to you herewith a survey of the situation of the Russian Opposition prepared by Comrade N. Markin.\textsuperscript{243} The basis for the survey is data of undisputable authenticity, received firsthand by the editors. The picture emerging on the basis of this information is truly ghastly. Fear of damaging the Soviet republic keeps some foreign comrades from undertaking resolute forms of protest. To the Opposition this by itself indicates the correct approach to the matter. The struggle against Stalin's atrocities against the Opposition does not at all require street demonstrations, the pasting up of proclamations, etc. Bourgeois public opinion, it goes without saying, is totally indifferent to the annihilation of the Bolsheviks, and we have no intention of directing our appeals to it. Our main efforts must be directed toward the Communist workers. It is necessary, by pressure from below, to create an intolerable situation for the official leadership of the Communist parties. And for this to happen what is needed is not synchronized, solemn protests but systematic work among the Communist workers. By this course, the struggle to save the Russian Oppositionists will be closely intertwined with the struggle for the liberation of the Communist parties from their demoralized leadership.

We firmly hope that all the sections of the ILO will carefully discuss a plan for the campaign and conduct it with the necessary energy.

With communist greetings,

L. Trotsky
HOW THE ILO IS DOING

1930

Dear Friends,

We have not yet received the text of the appeal to the Sixteenth Party Congress. Insofar as we can judge from the second-hand information in letters we have received, the appeal was written in a firm and dignified tone, the only tone that meets the needs of the present situation.

The organizations of our foreign cothinkers have entered into a period of growth and of an expansion of their activities. An impressive, serious group of Indochinese emigres has joined the Communist League in Paris. They organized a demonstration in front of the presidential palace, displaying a sign demanding the abrogation of the death penalty for thirty-nine Indochinese revolutionaries. The demonstration — small but well organized — caught the police unawares, lasted for half an hour, and provoked rabid articles in all the bourgeois press. Twelve comrades were arrested of whom eleven Indochinese face harsh prison sentences. The Communist League has decided that its weekly *La Verite* will be published twice a week from now on. In addition, it is putting out leaflets and newsletters in large quantities.

I have already informed you that a very serious group of cothinkers in the Italian party has joined us (apart from the Bordigists, who are maintaining a wait-and-see attitude, not making a decision to take this irrevocable step without Bordiga). The Italian cothinkers are publishing T.'s pamphlet on the "third period" in Italian. In Spain the first number of the newspaper *Contra la corriente* [Against the Stream] was expected to appear on the first of June. In Brazil an opposition publication in Portuguese has begun coming out. In Paris, besides *La Verite* and the solidly based monthly journal *La
Lutte de classes, three issues of a Jewish Opposition newspaper have appeared and it is now being distributed internationally (in the United States and Argentina). We have just recently established ties in Britain that are very promising. The Czechoslovak Oppositionists took part in the Communist Party's May Day demonstration with their own banner: "Long Live the Soviet United States of Europe." This was the only banner confiscated by the police.

Our cothinkers in the capitalist countries are distinguishing themselves as a high-quality, genuinely proletarian revolutionary current that seriously studies documents, thinks out questions, and is learning to stand on its own feet. There is every reason to believe that over the next few years we will take a very big step forward. It will become more and more difficult for the Communist parties to beat off the Opposition's attacks by resorting to idiotic slander about "the counterrevolution," etc. The road to the Soviet Communist Party can be opened through the Comintern. This, of course, does not mean that work inside the USSR takes on secondary importance. No, without the work inside the USSR the International Opposition would be seriously weakened. But because the mechanical obstacles to the Opposition's success do not exist abroad, political and organizational results of the Opposition's work are evidenced and, so to speak, bear fruit earlier in Europe than in the USSR.

The general conclusion: despite all the difficulties, the Opposition has every reason to look toward tomorrow with confidence.
The White Guard emigres are celebrating a new victory. Another Soviet agent, Agabekov, has just entered their camp; he is now under the special protection of the agents of Tar-dieu. The boasts of the Whites are not groundless; a responsible collaborator of the GPU has joined them. He is preparing or has already prepared a book in which he discloses the activity of the GPU in the East. The model for this kind of book had been furnished by Bessedovsky. The private and clandestine matters that are unavoidably bound up with the class struggle of the workers' government against its imperialist foes are interwoven with these gentlemen's inventions and calumnies, tailored according to the tastes of their masters.

The White press has already given a lively account of the great service rendered to the Rumanian Siguranza [secret police] by yesterday's Stalinist, Bessedovsky, through his revelations about the Soviet government. Agabekov begins by supplying the address of the Soviet agency abroad.

Coming straight from Moscow to Constantinople, he spent the next few months preparing his denunciation. So this is not the case of an official who had lived abroad a few years and then "broke away" from his country. No, this is the case of someone who had met the test in Moscow and only recently was named to a new post. He had met the test twice: from the point of view of his special work and from the point of view of the party line. Had he not, Agabekov would not have been named to a post made available only by the death of Blumkin. This is the irony of Stalin's lot: having killed Blumkin, he found no one to replace him except Agabekov.

Now we have received firsthand confirmation of this. Agabekov has told the press that Blumkin was shot because he...
was a supporter of "Trotskyism," and that he, Agabekov, was summoned to Moscow because he was a firm supporter of the general line. He was brought into the situation both because of his special work and because of "Trotskyism." Stalinist experts like Menzhinsky, Yagoda, Trilisser (wasn't Yaroslavsky included?) did not find the slightest political blemish on Agabekov.

After they checked up on him and gave him his official instructions, he was sent to Constantinople to replace Blumkin, who had recently been shot by Stalin. Immediately after his arrival, Agabekov began to write a book, or rather a report, for the agents of world imperialism on the secret activities of the GPU and the Comintern in the East. As soon as he completed his book, he took it to Paris and placed himself under the protection of Tardieu's agents.

Stalin's trustworthy diplomat Bessedovsky, before jumping over the embassy fence to offer his services to the Rumanian Siguranza, disposed of all the documents and matters belonging to Rakovsky. Not only that. He also had a hand in the expulsion of Rakovsky. Christian Georgievich Rakovsky was not sufficiently "reliable": first he would not admit that genuine Russian socialism could be built by way of the kulak, and then he denied that the kulak could be eliminated in two years by way of the GPU. "Unreliable" and "inconsistent" Rakovsky has been placed under conditions that prevent him from continuing his revolutionary work, which he had conducted uninterruptedly for forty years, and expose him to physical harm. Death to Rakovsky! The green light to the Bessedovskys!

Beginning in 1924 the practice was instituted in the GPU and soon after that in the army that Communists not only had to fulfill their obligations to the party but also had to agree in every detail with the Central Committee. Subsequently this procedure was extended to the party and supplemented with the proviso that the Central Committee must agree in every detail with Stalin. Stalinist monolithism seemed to be 100 percent guaranteed. But now a breach has developed; without the right to think, to doubt, or to reason, the monolithic Stalinists have begun to jump directly from the heights of responsible posts into the French, British, and Rumanian secret services. In full battle array provided by Stalin and Bukharin against the Trotskyists, the centrists drag behind them an immense reactionary tail that beats them over the head. The Bessedovskys and Agabekovs constitute only a part of this tail. Degenerate Thermidoreans abroad have completely exposed
themselves, for there is only a fence to separate them from their real master. And in the USSR? How many are there like Besse-
dovsky and Agabekov in every institution, in every region, in every district? Who can count them, when they themselves do the counting? Who will purge the party of them, when it is they who purge it of others? Who will perceive their "hesi-
tations," when they never hesitate until they have betrayed?

The Left Opposition would not be worthy of its name if it were incapable of drawing all the necessary conclusions from the Agabekov case and explaining them to the Communist workers. Every member of the Comintern must be made to confront the fact that Blumkin, the irreproachable soldier of the revolution, was shot by Stalin for "Trotskyism," and that Agabekov, the loyal Stalinist chosen to replace Blumkin, sold himself to the imperialist police.

The Agabekovs constitute an enormous layer of the Stalinist bureaucracy; they are a natural product of the Stalinist regime. Functionaries can close their eyes to these facts. The revolu-
tionary worker must discern the grave dangers that these symp-
toms indicate.
The Peasant's Balance Sheet

In his programmatic report to the conference of Marxist agronomists (December 27, 1929), Stalin spoke at length about the "Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition" view "that, in fact, the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasantry." It is probable that even to the respectful listeners, this invention seemed too crude. For the sake of clarity, however, we should quote these words more fully: "I have in mind the theory which alleges that the October Revolution brought the peasantry fewer benefits than the February revolution, that, in fact, the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasantry." The origin of this "theory" is attributed by Stalin to one of the Soviet statistical economists, Groman, a known former Menshevik, after which he adds: "But this theory was seized upon by the Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition and used against the party." Groman's theory about the February and October revolutions is quite unknown to us. But Groman is of no account here; he is brought in merely to cover up the traces.

How could the February revolution bring the peasantry more than October? What did the February revolution give the peasant outside of the superficial and therefore absolutely uncertain liquidation of the monarchy? The bureaucratic apparatus remained intact. The land was not given to the peasant. What it did give the peasant was the continuation of the war and the certainty of a continued growth of inflation. Perhaps Stalin knows of some other gifts of the February revolution to the peasant? They are unknown to us. The reason why the February revolution had to give way to October is that it completely deceived the peasant.

The alleged theory of the Opposition on the advantages of the February revolution over October is connected by Stalin to the theory regarding "the so-called scissors." By this he
completely betrays the source and aim of his chicanery. Stalin polemics, as I will soon show, against me. Only for convenience of his operation, for camouflaging his cruder distortions, he hides behind Groman and the anonymous "Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition" in general.

The real essence of the question lies in the following. At the Twelfth Congress of the party (in the spring of 1923), I demonstrated for the first time the threatening gap between industrial and agricultural prices. In my report this phenomenon was called the "price scissors" for the first time. I warned that the continuing lag in industry would keep opening these scissors and that they might break the threads connecting the proletariat and the peasantry.

In February 1927, at the plenum of the Central Committee, while considering the question of the policy on prices, I attempted for the thousand and first time to prove that general phrases like "face to the village" merely avoided the essence of the problem, and that from the standpoint of the alliance with the peasant the problem could be solved fundamentally by correlating the prices of agricultural and industrial products. The trouble with the peasant is that it is difficult for him to see far ahead. But he sees very well what is under his feet, he distinctly remembers yesterday, and he can draw the balance of his exchange of products with the city, which, at any given moment, is the balance sheet of the revolution to him.

The expropriation of the landowners liberated the peasant from paying a sum amounting to from five to six hundred million rubles. This is a clear and irrefutable gain for the peasantry through the October—and not the February—Revolution.

But along with this tremendous plus, the peasant distinctly discerns the minus that this same October Revolution has brought him. This minus consists of an excessive rise in prices of industrial products as compared with those prevailing before the war. It is understood that if capitalism had maintained itself in Russia, the price scissors undoubtedly would exist—this is an international phenomenon. But in the first place, the peasant does not know this. And in the second, nowhere did the scissors open to the extent that they did in the Soviet Union. The great losses of the peasantry due to rising prices are of a temporary nature, reflecting the period of "primitive accumulation" of state industry. It is as though the proletarian state borrows from the peasantry in order to repay him a hundredfold later on.
But all this relates to the sphere of theoretical considerations and historical predictions. The thoughts of the peasant, however, are empirical and based on facts as they appear at the moment. "The October Revolution liberated me from paying half a billion rubles in land rents," reflects the peasant. "I am thankful to the Bolsheviks. But state industry takes much more away from me than the capitalists took. Here is where there is something wrong with the Communists." In other words, the peasant draws the balance sheet of the October Revolution by combining its two fundamental stages: the agrarian-democratic ("Bolshevik") and the industrial-socialist ("Communist"). According to the first, a distinct and incontestable plus; according to the second, so far still a distinct minus, and to date a minus considerably greater than the plus. The negative balance of the October Revolution, which is the basis of all the misunderstandings between the peasant and the Soviet power, is in turn most intimately bound up with the isolated position of the Soviet Union in the world economy.

Almost three years after the old disputes, Stalin, to his misfortune, returns to the question. Because he is fated to repeat what others have already said, and at the same time is anxious about his own "independence," he is compelled to look back apprehensively at the yesterday of the "Trotskyist Opposition" and—cover up the traces. When the "scissors" between the city and the village were first brought up, Stalin completely failed to understand the question; for five years (1923-28) he saw the danger in industry going too far ahead instead of lagging behind. In order to cover this up somehow, he mumbles something incoherent in his report about "bourgeois prejudices [!!!] regarding the so-called scissors." Why is this a prejudice? Wherein is it bourgeois? But Stalin is under no obligation to answer these questions, for there is nobody who dares to ask them.

If the revolution in February had given land to the peasantry, the October Revolution with its price scissors could not have maintained itself for two years. To put it more correctly: the October Revolution could not have taken place if the revolution in February had been capable of solving the basic agrarian-democratic problems by liquidating private ownership of land.

We have already referred to the fact that in the first years after the October Revolution the peasant obstinately tried to contrast the Communists to the Bolsheviks. The latter he approved of—precisely because they made a revolution on the
land with a determination never before known. But the same peasant was dissatisfied with the Communists, who, having taken the factories and mills into their own hands, supplied commodities at high prices. In other words, the peasant wholeheartedly approved of the agrarian revolution of the Bolsheviks but manifested alarm, doubt, and sometimes even open hostility toward the first steps of the socialist revolution. Very soon, however, the peasant had to understand that Bolshevik and Communist were one and the same.

In February 1927, this question was raised by me at the plenum of the Central Committee in the following manner: The liquidation of the landowners gave us large credits with the peasants, political as well as economic. But these credits are not permanent and are not inexhaustible. The question is decided by the correlation of prices. Only the acceleration of industrialization on the one hand and the collectivization of peasant economy on the other can produce a more favorable correlation of prices for the countryside. Should the contrary be the case, the advantages of the agrarian revolution will be entirely concentrated in the hands of the kulak, while the scissors will hurt the peasant poor most painfully. The differentiation within the middle peasantry will be accelerated. There can be only one result: the crumbling of the dictatorship of the proletariat. "This year," I said, "only eight billion rubles' worth of commodities (in retail prices) will be released for the domestic market . . . the village will pay for its smaller half of the commodities about four billion rubles. Let us accept the retail industrial index as twice the prewar price figure, as Mikoyan has reported . . . The balance (drawn by the peasant): 'The agrarian-democratic revolution brought me, aside from everything else, five hundred million rubles a year (the liquidation of rents and the lowering of taxes). The socialist revolution has more than covered this gain by a two-billion-ruble deficit. It is clear that the balance is reduced to a deficit of one and a half billion.'"

Nobody objected by as much as a word at this session, but Yakovlev, now people's commissar of agriculture though at that time only a clerk for special statistical assignments, was given the job of refuting my figures come what may. Yakovlev did the best he could. With all the legitimate and illegitimate corrections and qualifications, Yakovlev was compelled the following day to admit that the balance sheet of the October Revolution for the countryside on the whole still showed a minus. Let us give an actual quotation:
"The gain from a reduction of direct taxes compared with the prewar days is equal to approximately six hundred and thirty million rubles. . . . In the last year the peasantry lost around a billion rubles as a consequence of its purchase of manufactured commodities not according to the index of the peasant income but according to the retail index of these commodities. The unfavorable balance is equal to about four hundred million rubles."

It is clear that Yakovlev's figures essentially confirmed my estimate: the peasant enjoyed a big gain through the democratic revolution made by the Bolsheviks but so far suffers a loss that overtakes the gain. I arrived at a deficit of about a billion and a half; Yakovlev at less than half a billion. I still think that my figure, which made no claim to be exact, was closer to reality than Yakovlev's. The difference between the two figures is considerable. But it does not change my basic conclusion. The enormous difficulties in the collection of grain were a confirmation of my estimate as the more disquieting one. It is really absurd to think that the grain strike of the upper layers of the countryside was caused by purely political motives, that is, by the hostility of the kulak toward the Soviet power. The kulak is incapable of such "idealism." If he did not put up grain for sale, it was because the exchange became disadvantageous as a result of the price scissors. That is why the kulak succeeded in bringing the middle peasant under his influence as well.

These estimates have a rough, that is, all-inclusive character. The component parts of the balance sheet can and should be separated in relation to the three basic sections of the peasantry: the kulaks, the middle peasants, and the poor peasants. However, in that period—the beginning of 1927—the official statistics, inspired by Yakovlev, ignored or deliberately minimized the differentiation within the countryside, and the policy of Stalin-Rykov-Bukharin was directed toward protecting the "mighty" peasant and fighting against the "shiftless" poor peasant. In this way, the negative balance was especially onerous to the lower sections of the peasantry.

Nevertheless, the reader will ask, Where did Stalin get his idea of contrasting the February and October revolutions? It is a legitimate question. Stalin, who is absolutely incapable of theoretical, that is, of abstract thought, vaguely understood in his own fashion the contrast I had made between the agrarian-democratic and industrial-socialist revolutions. He simply decided that the democratic revolution meant the February revolution.
We must pause at this point, because this old traditional failure of Stalin and his colleagues to understand the mutual relations between the democratic and socialist revolutions, at the base of their whole struggle against the theory of the permanent revolution, has already succeeded in doing great damage, particularly in China and India, and remains a source of fatal errors to this day. Stalin greeted the February 1917 revolution essentially as a left democrat, not as a revolutionary proletarian internationalist. His whole conduct up to the time Lenin arrived demonstrated this. The February revolution was and, as we see, continues to be a "democratic" revolution par excellence, according to Stalin. He was in favor of supporting the first Provisional Government, which was headed by the national-liberal landowner Prince Lvov and had as its war minister the national-conservative manufacturer Guchkov and as its minister of foreign affairs the liberal Miliukov.251

Explaining the necessity of supporting the bourgeois-landowning Provisional Government at a party conference, March 29, 1917, Stalin declared: "The power has been divided between two organs, neither of which has complete mastery. The roles have been divided. The Soviet has actually taken the initiative in revolutionary transformations; the Soviet is the revolutionary leader of the rebellious people, the organ which builds up the Provisional Government. The Provisional Government has actually taken the role of consolidator of the conquests of the revolutionary people. . . . Insofar as the Provisional Government consolidates the advances of the revolution—to that extent we should support it."

The "February" bourgeois, landowning, and thoroughly counterrevolutionary government was for Stalin not a class enemy but a collaborator with whom a division of labor had to be established. The workers and peasants would make the "conquests," the bourgeoisie would "consolidate" them. All of them together would make up the "democratic revolution." The formula of the Mensheviks was Stalin's formula. All this was said by Stalin a month after the February revolution, when the character of the Provisional Government should have been clear even to the blind, no longer on the basis of Marxist foresight but on the basis of political facts.

As the whole further course of events has demonstrated, Lenin in 1917 did not really convince Stalin but brushed him aside. The whole later struggle of Stalin against the permanent revolution was built upon a mechanical separation between the democratic revolution and the construction of socialism. Stalin has
not yet understood that the October Revolution was first a democratic revolution, and that only because of this was it able to realize the dictatorship of the proletariat. The balance between the democratic and socialist conquests of the October Revolution that I drew was simply adapted by Stalin to his own conception. Then he asks the question: "Is it true that the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasants?" After saying that thanks to the October Revolution "the peasants were liberated from the yoke of the landlords" (this was never heard of before, you see!), Stalin concludes: "How, after this, can it be asserted that the October Revolution brought no benefits to the peasants?"

How, after this, can it be asserted—we ask—that this "theorician" has even a grain of theoretical consciousness?

The unfavorable balance of the October Revolution for the countryside is, of course, temporary and transitory. The principal significance of the October Revolution for the peasant lies in the fact that it created the preconditions for the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. But this is a matter of the future. In 1927, collectivization was still completely taboo. So far as "total" collectivization is concerned, nobody even thought of it. Stalin, however, includes it in his considerations. "Today, after the accelerated development of the collective farm movement"—our theoretician transplants into the past what lies ahead—"the peasants are able . . . to produce much more than formerly with the same expenditure of labor." And again: "How, after all this, [!] can it be asserted that the October Revolution brought no gains to the peasantry? Is it not clear that those who utter such fictions obviously slander the party and the Soviet power?" The reference to "fictions" and "slander" is quite in place here, as may be seen. Yes, there are some people who "obviously slander" chronology and common sense.

Stalin, as we see, makes his "fictions" more profound by depicting matters as if the Opposition not only exaggerated the February revolution at the expense of October, but even denied the capacity of the October Revolution to improve the conditions of the peasant in the future. For what fools, may we ask, is this intended? We beg the pardon of the honorable professor Pokrovsky!

Repeatedly raising the problem of the economic scissors of the city and village since 1923, the Opposition pursued a quite definite aim, now incontestable by anyone: to compel the bureaucracy to understand that the struggle against the danger
of disunity must be conducted not with sugary slogans like "face to the village," etc., but through a faster tempo of industrial development and an energetic collectivization of the peasant economy. In other words, the problem of the scissors, as well as the problem of the peasants' balance of the October Revolution, was raised by us not in order to "discredit" the October Revolution—what is the very "terminology" worth—but in order to compel the self-contented and conservative bureaucracy by the spur of the Opposition to utilize those immeasurable economic possibilities that the October Revolution opened up.

Instead of the official kulak-bureaucratic course of 1923-28, which had its expression in the day-to-day legislative and administrative work, in the new theory, and above all in the persecution of the Opposition, the latter proposed, from 1923 on, a course toward accelerated industrialization and, from 1927 on, after the first successes in industry, the mechanization and collectivization of agriculture.

Let us go back to the platform of the Opposition, which Stalin conceals but from which he snatches his bits of wisdom: "The growth of private proprietorship in the countryside must be offset by a more rapid development of collective farming. It is necessary systematically and from year to year to subsidize the efforts of the poor peasants to organize in collectives" [The Real Situation in Russia, p. 68].

"A much larger sum ought to be appropriated for the creation of state and collective farms. Maximum concessions must be accorded to the newly organized collective farms and other forms of collectivization. People deprived of electoral rights cannot be members of the collective estates. The whole work of the cooperatives ought to be penetrated with a sense of the problem of transforming small-scale production into large-scale collective production. . . . The work of land distribution must be carried on wholly at the expense of the state, and the first thing to be taken care of must be the collective farms and the farms of the poor, with a maximum protection of their interests" [ibid., p. 71].

If the bureaucracy had not vacillated under the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie but had executed the program of the Opposition beginning in 1923, not only the proletarian but also the peasant balance of the revolution would have an infinitely more favorable character.

The problem of the smychka is the problem of the mutual
relations between the city and countryside. It is composed of two parts, or, more correctly, can be regarded from two angles: (a) the mutual relationship between industry and agriculture; (b) the mutual relationship between the proletariat and the peasantry. On the basis of the market, these relations, assuming the form of commodity exchange, find their expression in price fluctuations. The harmony between the prices of bread, cotton, beets, and so forth on the one hand, and cloth, kerosene, plows, and so forth on the other is the *decisive index* for evaluating the mutual relations between the city and the village, industry and agriculture, workers and peasants. The problem of the "scissors" of industrial and agricultural prices therefore remains, for the present period as well, the most important economic and social problem of the whole Soviet system. Now, how did the price scissors change between the last two congresses, that is, in the last two and a half years? Did they close, or, on the contrary, did they continue to open?

We look in vain for a reply to this central question in the ten-hour report of Stalin to the party congress. Presenting piles of departmental figures, making a bureaucratic reference book out of the principal report, Stalin did not even attempt to make one Marxist generalization from the isolated data, thoroughly undigested by him, which he got from the commissariats, secretariats, and other offices.

Are the scissors of industrial and agricultural prices closing? In other words, is the balance of the socialist revolution, as yet negative for the peasant, being reduced? In the market conditions—and we have not yet freed ourselves from them, and will not for a long time to come—the closing or the opening of the scissors is of decisive significance for an evaluation of the successes achieved and for checking up on the correctness or incorrectness of economic plans and methods. That there is not a word about this in Stalin's report is in itself an extremely alarming fact. Were the scissors closing, there would be plenty of specialists in Mikoyan's department who would, without difficulty, give this process statistical and graphic expression. Stalin would only have to demonstrate the diagram, that is, show the congress a scissors that would prove the blades were coming together. The whole economic section of the report would find its axis, but unfortunately the axis is not there. Stalin avoided the problem of the scissors.

The domestic scissors are not the final index. There are other, "higher" ones: the scissors of domestic and international prices. They measure the productivity of labor in the Soviet
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economy with the productivity of labor in the world capitalist
market. We received from the past, in this field as well as in
others, an enormous heritage of backwardness. In practice,
the task for the next few years is not immediately to "over-
take and outstrip"—we are unfortunately still very far from
this!—but through planning to close the scissors between do-
mestic and world prices, which can be accomplished only
through systematically approximating the labor productivity
in the USSR to the labor productivity in the advanced capitalist
countries. This in turn requires not statistically maximum but
economically favorable plans. The oftener the bureaucrats re-
peat the bold formula "to overtake and outstrip," the more
stubbornly they ignore exact comparative coefficients of so-
cialist and capitalist industry or, in other words, the problem
of the scissors of domestic and world prices. And on this ques-
tion also not a word is to be found in Stalin's report. The prob-
lem of the domestic scissors could have been considered liqui-
dated only under the conditions of the actual liquidation of the
market; the problem of the foreign scissors only with the liqui-
dation of world capitalism. Stalin, as we know, was preparing
at the time of his agricultural report to send NEP "to the devil." But he changed his mind within the six months that have elapsed. As is always the case with him, his unac-
accomplished intention to liquidate NEP is attributed by him in his congress
report to the "Trotskyists." The white and yellow threads sewing
up this operation are so indiscreetly exposed that the report
of this part of the speech does not dare to record the slightest
applause.

What happened to Stalin with regard to the market and
the NEP is what usually happens to empiricists. The radical
change that took place in his own mind under the influence
of external pressure, he took for a radical change in the whole
situation. Once the bureaucracy decided to enter into a decisive
conflict with the market and the kulak instead of passive adap-
tation to them, then they no longer existed in statistics and
the economy. Empiricism is most frequently the precondition
for subjectivism, and if it is bureaucratic empiricism, it in-
evitably becomes the precondition for periodic "turns." The
art of the "general" leadership consists in this case of con-
verting the turns into narrower turns and distributing them
equally among the underlings, known as executors. If in the
end the general turn is attributed to "Trotskyism," then the
problem is settled. But this is beside the point. The essence of
NEP, regardless of the radical change in the "essence" of Stalin's
thoughts about it, lies as before in the determination by the market of the economic interrelations between the city and village. If NEP remains, then the scissors of agricultural and industrial prices remain the most important criteria of the whole economic policy.

However, half a year before the congress we heard Stalin call the theory of the scissors a "bourgeois prejudice." This is the simplest way out of the situation. If you tell a village quack that the temperature curve is one of the most important indications of the health or illness of an organism, he will hardly believe you. But if he grasps some sage words and, to make matters worse, learns to present his quackery as "proletarian medicine," he will most certainly say that a thermometer is a bourgeois prejudice. If this quack has power in his hands he will, to avoid a scandal, smash the thermometer over a rock or, what is still worse, over somebody's head.

In 1925 the differentiation within the Soviet peasantry was declared a prejudice of panic-mongers. Yakovlev was sent to the central statistical department, where he gathered up all the thermometers to destroy them. But, unfortunately, changes in temperature do not cease because there are no thermometers. As a result, the appearance of hidden organic processes take the healers and those being healed unawares. That is what happened during the grain strike of the kulak, who unexpectedly emerged as the leading figure in the countryside and compelled Stalin, on February 15, 1928 (see Pravda of that date), to make a turn of 180 degrees. The price thermometer is of no less significance than the thermometer of differentiation within the peasantry.

After the Twelfth Congress of the party, where the term "scissors" was first used and explained, everybody came to understand its significance. In the three years that followed, the scissors were invariably illustrated at the plenums of the Central Committee, at conferences and congresses, as precisely the basic curve of the economic temperature of the country. But afterward, they gradually began to disappear from sight, and finally, at the end of 1929, Stalin declared them to be—"a bourgeois prejudice." Because the thermometer was smashed in time, Stalin did not have to present the Sixteenth Congress of the party with the economic temperature curve.

Marxist theory is the weapon of thought serving to clarify what has been, what is becoming, what lies ahead, and to determine what is to be done. Stalin's theory serves the bureaucracy. It serves to justify zigzags after the events, to conceal yester-
day's mistakes and consequently to prepare tomorrow's. The silence about the scissors occupies the central place in Stalin's report. This may appear paradoxical, because silence occupies neither space nor time. But it is nevertheless a fact: in the center of Stalin's report is a hole, consciously and premeditatedly bored.

Awaken, so that no harm shall come to the dictatorship through this hole!

**Ground Rent—Stalin Deepens Marx and Engels**

In the beginning of his struggle against the "general secretary," Bukharin declared in some connection that Stalin's chief ambition was to compel recognition of himself as a "theoretician." Bukharin knows Stalin well enough, on the one hand, and the ABC of communism, on the other, to understand the whole tragicomedy of this pretension. It was in the role of theoretician that Stalin spoke at the conference of Marxist agronomists. Among other things, *ground rent* did not come out unscathed.

Only recently (1925) Stalin was occupied with strengthening the peasant holdings for scores of years—that is, the actual and juridical liquidation of nationalization of the land. The people's commissar of agriculture of Georgia—not without Stalin's knowledge, of course—at that time introduced a legislative project for direct abolition of land nationalization. The Russian Commissariat of Agriculture was working in the same spirit. The Opposition sounded the alarm. In its platform it wrote: "The party ought to resist and crush all tendencies directed toward annulling or undermining the nationalization of the land—one of the foundation pillars of the dictatorship of the proletariat" [ibid., p. 70]. Just as in 1922 Stalin had to give up his assault on the monopoly of foreign trade, so in 1926 he had to give up his assault on the nationalization of the land, declaring that "he was misunderstood."

After the proclamation of the left course, Stalin not only became a defender of land nationalization but immediately accused the Opposition of not understanding the significance of the whole institution. Yesterday's negativism toward nationalization was suddenly tranformed into a fetishism. Marx's theory of ground rent acquired a new administrative task: to justify Stalin's complete collectivization.

A brief reference to theory is needed here. In his unfinished analysis of ground rent, Marx divided it into *absolute* and *differential*. Since the same human labor applied to different
pieces of land yields different results, the surplus yield of the more fertile piece will naturally be appropriated by the owner of that piece. This is *differential* rent. But no owner will make a free gift of even the poorest parcel of land to a tenant so long as there is a demand for it. In other words, from private ownership of land necessarily flows a certain minimum of ground rent, independent of the quality of the piece of land. This is what is called *absolute* rent. Thus the real amount of ground rent reduces itself theoretically to the sum of the absolute rent and the differential rent.

In accordance with this theory, liquidation of private ownership of land leads to the liquidation of absolute ground rent. Only that rent remains which is determined by the quality of the soil itself or, more correctly, by the application of human labor to pieces of land of varying quality. It is unnecessary to explain that differential rent is not some sort of fixed property of the pieces of land, but changes with the methods of cultivation. These brief reminders are needed in order to reveal the whole sorriness of Stalin's excursion into the theoretical realm of land nationalization.

Stalin begins by correcting and deepening Engels. This is not the first time. In 1926 Stalin explained to us that to Engels as well as to Marx the ABC law of the uneven development of capitalism was unknown, and precisely because of this they both rejected the theory of socialism in one country which, in opposition to them, was defended by Vollmar, the theoretical forefather of Stalin.

At first glance it may seem that Stalin is somewhat more guarded in approaching the question of land nationalization or, more precisely, the insufficient understanding of this problem by old man Engels. But in essence his approach is just as loose. He quotes, from Engels's work on the peasant question, the famous phrase that we will in no way violate the will of the small peasant; on the contrary, we will in every way help him "in order to facilitate his transition into associations," that is, to collective agriculture. "We will try to give him as much time as possible to reflect on it on his own plot of land." These excellent words, known to every literate Marxist, give a clear and simple formula for the relation of the proletarian dictatorship to the peasantry.

Confronted with the necessity of justifying complete collectivization on a frenzied scale, Stalin underlines the exceptional, even "at first sight exaggerated," circumspection of Engels with regard to leading the small peasants over onto the road of so-
cialist agriculture. What guided Engels in his "exaggerated" circumspection? Stalin replies: "Obviously he proceeded from the existence of private ownership of land, from the fact that the peasant has 'his little plot of land' which he will find it hard to part with. Such is the peasantry in the West. Such is the peasantry in capitalist countries, where private ownership of the land exists. Naturally, great circumspection is needed there. Can it be said that such a situation exists in our country, in the USSR? No, it cannot. It cannot be said because here we have no private ownership of land chaining the peasant to his individual farm."

Such are Stalin's reasonings. Can it be said that in these reasonings there is even a grain of sense? No, it cannot be said. Engels, it appears, had to be "circumspect" because in the bourgeois countries private ownership of land exists. But Stalin need not be because in the USSR we have established nationalization of the land. But did private ownership of land, along with the more archaic communal ownership, also exist in bourgeois Russia? We did not find nationalization of the land ready-made; we established it after the conquest of power. And Engels is speaking about the policy the proletarian party will adopt precisely after the conquest of power. What sense is there to Stalin's condescending explanation of Engels's circumspection? The old man, you see, was obliged to act in bourgeois countries where private ownership of land exists, while we hit on the idea of abolishing private ownership. But Engels recommends circumspection precisely after the conquest of power by the proletariat, consequently after the abolition of private ownership of the means of production.

By counterposing the Soviet peasant policy to Engels's advice, Stalin confuses the question in the most ridiculous manner. Engels promised to give the small peasant time to reflect, on his own plot of land, before he decides to enter the collective. In this transitional period of the peasant's "reflections,"the workers' state, according to Engels, must guard the small peasant against the usurers, the grain merchants, etc., that is, must limit the exploiting tendencies of the kulak. Soviet policy in relation to the main, that is, the nonexploiting, mass of the peasantry had precisely this dual character in spite of all its vacillations. The collectivization movement is today—in the thirteenth year after the conquest of power—actually only in its initial stages, despite all the statistical hubbub to the contrary. To the overwhelming mass of the peasants the dictatorship of the proletariat has thus given twelve years for reflection. Engels
hardly had in mind such a long period, and such a long period will hardly be needed in the advanced countries of the West where, with the high development of industry, it will be incomparably easier for the proletariat to show the peasants in action all the advantages of collective agriculture. If it is not until twelve years after the proletariat's conquest of power that we in the Soviet Union are undertaking a broad movement toward collectivization—a movement as yet very primitive in content and very unstable—this can be explained only by our poverty and backwardness, despite the fact that the land has been nationalized, something that presumably did not occur to Engels and which presumably the Western proletariat will not be faced with after the conquest of power. This counterposing of Russia to the West, and of Stalin to Engels, reeks with the idealization of national backwardness.

But Stalin does not stop at this; he immediately supplements economic incoherence with theoretical. How are we able, he asks his unfortunate audience, "in our country, where the land is nationalized, to demonstrate so easily [!!] their [collectives'] superiority over the small peasant farms? That is the great revolutionary significance of the Soviet agrarian laws which abolished absolute rent . . . and carried out the nationalization of the land." And Stalin reproachfully and at the same time smugly asks, "Why then is this new [! ?] argument not sufficiently utilized by our agrarian theoreticians in their struggle against all the various bourgeois theories?" And here Stalin makes reference—the Marxist agronomists are recommended not to exchange glances, not to blow their noses in confusion, and what is more, not to hide their heads under the table—to the third volume of Capital and to Marx's theory of ground rent. Oh grief and sorrow! To what heights this theoretician climbed before . . . splashing into the puddle with his "new argument."

According to Stalin, the Western peasant is tied to the land by nothing else than "absolute rent." And since we "abolished" that viper, by the same token there disappeared the enslaving "power of the land" over the peasant, so grippingly depicted by Gleb Uspensky in Russia and by Balzac and Zola in France.

First of all, let us establish that in the USSR absolute rent was not done away with but was state-ized, which is not one and the same thing. Newmark valued the national wealth of Russia in 1914 at 140 billion gold rubles, including in the first place the price of all the land, that is, the capitalized rent
of the whole country. If we should want to establish now the specific weight of the national wealth of the Soviet Union within the wealth of humanity, we would of course have to include the capitalized rent, absolute as well as differential.

All economic criteria, absolute rent included, reduce themselves to human labor. Under the conditions of a market economy, ground rent is determined by the quantity of products that the owner of the land can extract from the products of the labor applied to it. The owner of the land in the USSR is the state. By that, it is the bearer of the ground rent. As to the actual liquidation of absolute rent, we will be able to speak of that only after the socialization of the land all over the planet, that is, after the victory of the world revolution. But within national limits, if one may say so without insulting Stalin, not only socialism cannot be constructed, but even absolute rent cannot be done away with.

This interesting theoretical question has practical significance. Ground rent finds its expression on the world market in the price of agricultural products. Insofar as the Soviet government is an exporter of the latter—and with the intensification of agriculture grain exports will increase greatly—to that extent the Soviet state, armed with the monopoly of foreign trade, appears on the world market as owner of the land whose products it exports; thus in the price of these products the Soviet state realizes the ground rent concentrated in its hands. If the technique of our agriculture, as well as our foreign trade, were not inferior to that of the capitalist countries but on the same level, then precisely with us in the USSR absolute rent would appear in its clearest and most concentrated form. When in the future such a stage is reached, that moment will acquire the greatest significance for the planned direction of agriculture and export. If Stalin now brags of our "abolishing" absolute rent, instead of realizing it on the world market, then a temporary right to such bragging is given him by the present weakness of our agricultural export and the irrational character of our foreign trade, in which not only absolute ground rent is sunk without a trace but many other things as well. This side of the matter, which has no direct relation to the collectivization of peasant economy, nevertheless gives us one more example of that idealization of economic isolation and economic backwardness which is one of the basic features of our national-socialist philosopher.

Let us return to the question of collectivization. According to Stalin, the small Western peasant is tied to his parcel of
land by the chain of absolute rent. Every peasant's hen will laugh at his "new argument." Absolute rent is a purely capitalist category. Parcelized peasant economy can partake of absolute rent only under episodic circumstances of an exceptionally favorable market conjuncture, as existed, for instance, at the beginning of the war. The economic dictatorship of finance capital over the atomized village is expressed on the market in unequal exchange. In general, the peasantry the world over does not escape the "scissors" regime. In the prices of grain and agricultural products in general, the overwhelming mass of small peasants does not realize a wage, let alone rent.

But if absolute rent, which Stalin so triumphantly "abolished," says absolutely nothing to the mind or heart of the small peasant, differential rent, which Stalin so generously spared, has a great significance precisely for the Western peasant. The tenant farmer hangs on to his parcel all the more strongly, the more he and his father spent strength and means to raise its fertility. This applies, by the way, not only to the West but also to the East, for example to China with its regions of intensive cultivation. Thus certain elements of the conservatism of small ownership exist as a consequence not of the abstract category of absolute rent, but of the material conditions of the more intensive cultivation in a parcelized economy. If the Russian peasants break their ties to a given plot of land with comparative ease, it is not at all because Stalin's "new argument" liberated them from absolute rent, but for the very reason for which, prior to the October Revolution, periodic redivisions of the land took place in Russia. Our Narodniki idealized these redivisions as such. But they were only possible because of our nonintensive economy, the three-field system, the miserable working of the soil—that is, once again, because of the backwardness idealized by Stalin.

Will it be more difficult for the victorious proletariat of the West than it is for us to eliminate the peasant conservatism that flows from the more intensive cultivation in a small-ownership economy? By no means. For in the West, because of the incomparably higher state of industry and culture in general, the proletarian state will be able far more easily to give the peasant in transition to collective labor an evident and genuine compensation for his loss of the "differential rent" on his parcel of land. There can be no doubt that twelve years after the conquest of power the collectivization of agriculture in Germany, Britain, or America will be immeasurably higher and firmer than ours today.
Is it not strange that his "new argument" in favor of complete collectivization was discovered by Stalin twelve years after nationalization had taken place? Why then did he in 1923-28, in spite of the existence of nationalization, so stubbornly bank upon the powerful individual commodity producer and not upon the collectives? It is clear: nationalization of the land is a necessary, but altogether insufficient, condition for socialist agriculture. From the narrow economic point of view, that is, the point of view Stalin takes on the question, nationalization of the land is precisely of third-rate significance, because the cost of equipment necessary for rational, large-scale economy exceeds by many times the absolute rent.

Needless to say, nationalization of the land is a highly important, an indispensable political and juridical precondition for the socialist transformation of agriculture. But the direct economic significance of nationalization at any given moment is determined by the action of factors of a material-productive character. This is revealed with adequate clarity in the question of the peasant's balance of the October Revolution. The state, as owner of the land, concentrated in its hands the right to ground rent. Does it realize this ground rent from the present market in the prices of grain, lumber, etc.? Unfortunately, not yet. Does it realize it from the peasant? With the multiplicity of economic accounts between the state and the peasant, it is very difficult to answer this question. It can be said—and this will by no means be a paradox—that the "scissors" of agricultural and industrial prices contain the ground rent in a concealed form. With the concentration of land, industry, and transport in the hands of the state, the question of ground rent has for the peasant a bookkeeping significance, so to speak, not an economic one. But bookkeeping is a technique that doesn't much concern the peasant. He draws a wholesale balance of his relations with the city and the state.

It would be more correct to approach the same question from another side. Thanks to the nationalization of the land, factories, and mills, the liquidation of the foreign debts, and the planned economy, the workers' state was able in a short time to reach high rates of industrial development. This process undoubtedly creates the most important premise for collectivization. This premise, however, is not a juridical but a material-productive one; it expresses itself in a definite number of plows, binders, combines, tractors, grain elevators, agronomists, etc., etc. It is precisely from these real entities that the collectivization plan should proceed. That is when the plan will become
real. But to the real fruits of nationalization we cannot always add nationalization itself, like some sort of a reserve fund out of which all the excesses of the "complete" bureaucratic adventures can be covered. That would be the same as if someone, after depositing his capital in the bank, wanted to use both his capital and the interest on it at the same time.

Such is the conclusion in general. But the specific, individual conclusion may be formulated more simply: "Tomfool, Tomfool. It were better that you stayed in school" than to leave for distant theoretical excursions.

**Formulas of Marx and Audacity of Ignorance**

Between the first and third volumes of *Capital* there is a second. Our theoretician considers it his duty to engage in administrative abuse of the second volume too. Stalin must hastily conceal from criticism the present policy of forced collectivization. But since the necessary proofs are not to be found in the material conditions of the economy, he looks for them in authoritative books, and inevitably finds himself every time on the wrong page.

The advantages of large-scale economy over small-scale—agriculture included—are demonstrated by all of capitalist experience. The potential advantages of large-scale collective economy over atomized small economy were made clear even before Marx by the utopian socialists, and their arguments remain basically sound. In this sphere, the utopians were great realists. Their utopia began only with the question of the historical road toward collectivization. Here the correct road was pointed out by Marx's theory of the class struggle as well as his critique of capitalist economy.

*Capital* gives an analysis and a synthesis of the processes of capitalist economy. The second volume examines the immanent mechanism of the *growth* of capitalist economy. The algebraic formulas of this volume demonstrate how from one and the same creative protoplasm—abstract human labor—are crystallized the means of production, in the form of constant capital; wages, in the form of variable capital; and surplus value, which afterwards becomes a source for creating additional constant and variable capital. This in turn makes possible the acquisition of greater surplus value. Such is the spiral of expanded reproduction in its most general and abstract form.

In order to show how the different material elements of the economic process, commodities, find each other inside this
unregulated whole, or, more precisely, how constant and variable capital accomplish the necessary balance in the different branches of industry during the general growth of production, Marx divides the process of expanded reproduction into two interdependent parts: on the one hand, enterprises producing the means of production, and on the other, enterprises producing articles of consumption. The enterprises of the first category have to supply machines, raw materials, and auxiliary materials to themselves as well as to the enterprises of the second category. In turn, the enterprises of the second category have to supply articles of consumption for their own needs as well as the needs of the enterprises of the first category. Marx uncovers the general mechanism of the accomplishment of this proportionality which constitutes the basis of the dynamic balance under capitalism.*

The question of agriculture in its interrelation with industry is therefore on an altogether different plane. Stalin evidently simply confused the production of articles of consumption with agriculture. With Marx, however, those capitalist agricultural enterprises (and only capitalist) which produce raw materials automatically fall into the first category; enterprises producing articles of consumption are in the second category. In both cases, they fall into their category along with industrial enterprises. Insofar as agricultural production has peculiarities that oppose it to industry as a whole, the examination of these peculiarities begins only in the third volume.

Expanded reproduction occurs, in reality, not only at the expense of the surplus value created by the workers in industry itself and in capitalist agriculture, but also by way of the influx of fresh means from external sources: from the pre-capitalist village, the backward countries, the colonies, etc. The acquisition of surplus value from the village and the colonies is possible, in turn, either in the form of unequal exchange, or of forced exactions (mainly taxation), or finally in the form of credits (savings banks, loans, etc.). Historically, all these forms of exploitation combine in different proportions and play as important a role as the extraction of surplus value in its "pure" form; the deepening of capitalist

*The formulas of the second volume ignore the industrial and commercial crises that are part of the mechanism of the capitalist balance. These formulas aim to show how, with or without crises and despite crises, the balance is nevertheless attained.
exploitation always goes hand in hand with its broadening. But the formulas of Marx that concern us very carefully dissect the living process of development, separating capitalist reproduction from all precapitalist elements and from the transitional forms which accompany and feed it and at whose expense it expands. Marx's formulas construct a chemically pure capitalism which never existed and does not exist anywhere now. Precisely because of this, they reveal the basic tendencies of every capitalism, but precisely of capitalism and only capitalism.

To anyone with an understanding of Capital it is obvious that neither in the first, second, nor third volume can an answer be found to the question of how, when, and at what tempo the proletarian dictatorship can carry through the collectivization of agriculture. None of these questions, nor scores of others as well, have been solved in any books, and by their very essence could not have been solved.* In truth, Stalin in no way differs from the merchant who would seek in Marx's simplest formula M-C-M (money-commodity-money) guidance as to what and when to buy and sell to make the maximum profit. Stalin simply confuses theoretical generalization with practical prescription—not to speak of the fact that Marx's theoretical generalization deals with an entirely different problem.

Why then did Stalin need to bring in the formulas of extended reproduction, which he obviously does not understand? Stalin's own explanations on this are so inimitable that we must quote them word for word: "Indeed, the Marxist theory

*In the first years after the October Revolution it was necessary for us more than once to take issue with naive efforts to seek in Marx the answers to questions he could not even have posed. Lenin unfailingly supported me in this. I cite two examples which by chance were recorded in stenograms.

"We did not doubt," said Lenin, "that we should have to experiment, as Comrade Trotsky expressed it. We undertook a task which nobody in the world has ever attempted on so large a scale" [March 18, 1919, Collected Works, volume 29].

And some months later he said: "Comrade Trotsky was quite right in saying that this is not written in any of the books we might consider our guides, it does not follow from any socialist world outlook, it has not been determined by anybody's experience but will have to be determined by our own experience" [December 8, 1919, ibid., volume 30].
of reproduction teaches that modern [?] society cannot develop without accumulating from year to year, and accumulation is impossible unless there is expanded reproduction from year to year. This is clear and comprehensible." Clearer it cannot be. But this is not a teaching of Marxist theory; it is the common property of bourgeois political economy, its quintessence. "Accumulation" as a condition for the development of "modern society"—this is precisely the great idea that vulgar political economy cleansed of the elements of the labor theory of value which had already been embodied in classical political economy. The theory that Stalin so bombastically proposes "to take from the treasury of Marxism" is a commonplace, uniting not only Adam Smith and Bastiat but also the latter with the American president, Hoover. "Modern society"—not capitalist but "modern"—is used in order to extend Marx's formulas also to "modern" socialist society. "This is clear and comprehensible." And Stalin continues: "Our large-scale, centralized, socialist industry is developing according to the Marxist theory of expanded reproduction [!]; for [!] it is growing in volume from year to year, it has its accumulations and is advancing with giant strides."

Industry develops according to Marxist theory—immortal formula! In just the same way as oats grow dialectically according to Hegel. To a bureaucrat, theory is an administrative formula. But this is still not the heart of the matter. "The Marxist theory of reproduction" has to do with the capitalist mode of production. But Stalin is speaking of Soviet industry, which he considers socialist without reservations. Thus Stalin is saying that "socialist industry" develops according to the theory of capitalist reproduction. We see how incautiously Stalin slipped his hand into the "treasury of Marxism." If a theory of reproduction constructed on the laws of anarchic production covers two economic processes, one anarchic and one planned, then the planned economy, the socialist beginning, is reduced to zero. But even these are still only the blossoms—the berries are yet to come.

The finest gem drawn by Stalin from the treasury is the little word "for": socialist industry develops according to the theory of capitalist industry "for it is growing in volume from year to year, it has its accumulations and is advancing with giant strides." Poor theory! Unfortunate treasury! Wretched Marx! Does this mean that Marxist theory was created especially to prove the need for yearly advances and with giant strides at that? What then about the periods when capitalist industry
develops "at a snail's pace"? In those cases, apparently, Marx's theory is abrogated. But all capitalist production develops in cycles of boom and crisis; this means that it not only advances with giant strides, but it also marks time and retreats. It seems that Marx's concept is useless in regard to capitalist development, for the understanding of which it was created, but that it gives full answer on the nature of the "giant strides" of socialist industry. Aren't these miracles? Not limiting himself to enlightening Engels on land nationalization, but at the same time busy with himself with a basic correction of Marx, Stalin at any rate marches . . . with giant strides. And the formulas of Capital are crushed like nuts under his heavy feet.

But why did Stalin need all this? the puzzled reader will ask. Alas! we cannot jump over stages, especially when we can hardly keep up with our theoretician. A little patience and all will be revealed.

Immediately after the passage just dealt with, Stalin continues: "But our large-scale industry does not constitute the whole of the national economy. On the contrary, small peasant economy still predominates in it. Can we say that our small peasant economy is developing according to the principle of expanded reproduction? No, we cannot. . . . Our small peasant economy . . . is seldom able to achieve even simple reproduction. Can we advance our socialized industry at an accelerated rate while we have such an agricultural basis as small peasant economy? . . . No, we cannot." Later comes the conclusion: complete collectivization is necessary.

This passage is even better than the preceding one. From the somnolent banality of exposition every now and then fire-crackers of audacious ignorance explode. Does the agricultural economy, that is, simple commodity economy, develop according to the laws of capitalist economy? No, our theoretician replies in terror. It is clear: the village does not live according to Marx. This matter must be corrected. Stalin attempts, in his report, to reject the petty-bourgeois theories on the stability of peasant economy. Meanwhile, becoming entangled in the net of Marxist formulas, he gives these theories a most generalized expression. In reality, the theory of expanded reproduction, according to Marx, embraces capitalist economy as a whole—not only industry but agriculture as well—only in its pure form, that is, without precapitalist remnants. But Stalin, leaving aside for some reason artisans and handicrafts, poses the question: "Can we say that our small peasant economy is developing according to the principle of expanded reproduction?" "No," he replies, "we cannot."
In other words Stalin repeats, in a most generalized form, the assertions of the bourgeois economists that agriculture does not develop according to the "principle" of the Marxist theory of capitalist production. Wouldn't it be better, after this, to keep still? After all, the Marxist agronomists kept still listening to his shameful abuse of the teachings of Marx. Yet the softest of answers should have sounded thus: Get off the platform immediately, and do not dare to treat with problems you know nothing about!

But we shall not follow the example of the Marxist agronomists and keep still. Ignorance armed with power is just as dangerous as insanity armed with a razor.

The formulas of the second volume of Marx do not represent guiding "principles" of socialist construction, but objective generalization of capitalist processes. These formulas, abstracted from the peculiarities of agriculture, not only do not contradict its development but fully embrace it as capitalist agriculture.

The only thing that can be said about agriculture in the framework of the formulas of the second volume is that these formulas presuppose the existence of a quantity of agricultural raw materials and agricultural products for consumption, sufficient to insure expanded reproduction. But what should be the correlation between agriculture and industry: as in Britain or as in America? Both these types conform equally to Marxist formulas. Britain imports articles for consumption and raw materials. America exports them. There is no contradiction here with the formulas of expanded reproduction, which are in no way limited by national boundaries and are not adapted either to national capitalism or, even less, to socialism in one country.

If people should arrive at synthetic foods and synthetic forms of raw materials, agriculture would be completely negated, replaced by new branches of the chemical industry. What then would become of the formulas of expanded reproduction? They would retain all their validity to the extent that capitalist forms of production and distribution remained.

The agricultural economy of bourgeois Russia, with the tremendous predominance of the peasantry, not only met the needs of growing industry, but also created the possibility of large exports. These processes were accompanied by the strengthening of the kulak top and the weakening of the peasant bottom, their growing proletarianization. In this manner the agricultural economy on capitalist foundations developed, despite all its peculiarities, within the framework of the very for-
mulas with which Marx embraces capitalist economy as a whole—and only capitalist economy.

Stalin wishes to arrive at the conclusion that it is impossible to base socialist construction "on two different foundations: on the most large-scale and concentrated socialist industry, and the most disunited and backward small-commodity peasant economy." In reality he proves the exact opposite. If the formulas of expanded reproduction are applicable equally to capitalist and to socialist economy—to "modern society" in general—then it is absolutely incomprehensible why it is impossible to continue further development of the economy on the very same foundations of the contradictions between city and village, upon which capitalism reached an immeasurably higher level. In America the gigantic industrial trusts are developing even today side by side with an agricultural economy based on farmers. The farm economy created the basis of American industry. Our bureaucrats, by the way, with Stalin at their head, oriented themselves openly until only yesterday on American agriculture as the type, with the big farmer at the bottom, centralized industry at the top.

The ideal equivalent of exchange is the basic premise of the abstract formulas of the second volume. But the planned economy of the transition period, even though based upon the law of value, violates it at every step and fixes relationships of unequal exchange between different branches of the economy, and in the first instance between industry and agriculture. The decisive lever of compulsory accumulation and planned distribution is the government budget. With further inevitable development, its role will necessarily grow. Credit financing regulates the interrelations between the compulsory accumulation of the budget and the market processes, insofar as the latter remain in force. Neither budgetary financing nor planned or semiplanned credit financing, which insure the expansion of reproduction in the USSR, can in any way be embraced within the formulas of the second volume. For the whole force of these formulas lies in the fact that they disregard budgets and plans and tariffs and, in general, all forms of governmentally planned intervention, and that they bring out the necessary lawfulness in the play of the blind forces of the market, disciplined by the law of value. Were the internal Soviet market "freed" and the monopoly of foreign trade abolished, then the exchange between city and village would become incomparably more equal and accumulation in the village—kulak or farmer-capitalist accumulation, of course—would take its course, and
it would soon become evident that Marx's formulas apply also to agriculture. On that road, Russia would in a short time be transformed into a colony upon which the industrial development of other countries would lean.

In order to motivate complete collectivization, the school of Stalin (there is such a thing) has circulated crude comparisons between the rates of development in industry and in agriculture. As usual this operation is performed most grossly by Molotov. At the Moscow district conference of the party in February 1929, Molotov said: "In recent years agriculture has lagged noticeably behind industry in the rate of development... During the last three years industrial production increased in value by more than 50 percent and agricultural production by only some 7 percent."

To counterpose these rates of development is to show illiteracy in economics. What is called peasant economy includes in essence all branches of the economy. The development of industry has always, and in all countries, taken place at the cost of a reduced specific weight of the agricultural economy. It is sufficient to recall that metallurgical production in the United States is almost equal to the production of the farm economy, while in the USSR it is one-eighteenth of agricultural production. This shows that despite the high rates of development of the last years our industry has not yet emerged from infancy. To overcome the contradictions between city and village created by bourgeois development, Soviet industry must first surpass the village to a far higher degree than bourgeois Russia ever did.

The present rupture between agriculture and the state industry came about not because industry advanced too far ahead of the agricultural economy—the vanguard position of industry is a world historical fact and a necessary condition for progress—but because our industry is too weak, that is, has advanced too little to be able to raise agriculture to the necessary level. The aim, of course, is to eliminate the contradictions between city and village. But the roads and methods of this elimination have nothing in common with equalizing the rates of growth of agriculture and industry. The mechanization of agriculture and the industrialization of a whole number of its branches will be accompanied, on the contrary, by a reduction in the specific weight of agriculture as such. The rate at which we can accomplish this mechanization is determined by the productive power of our industry. What is decisive for collectivization is not the fact that the percentage
figures for metallurgy rose by a few score in the last years, but the fact that the metal available per capita is negligible. The growth of collectivization would be equivalent to the growth of the agricultural economy itself only insofar as the former is based on a technical revolution in agricultural production. But the tempo of such a revolution is limited by the present specific weight of industry. The tempo of collectivization has to be coordinated with the material resources—not with the abstract statistical tempos—of industry.

In the interest of theoretical clarity it should be added to what we have already said that the elimination of contradictions between city and village, that is, the raising of agricultural production to a scientific-industrial level, will mean not the triumph of Marx's formulas in agriculture, as Stalin imagines, but, on the contrary, the end of their triumph also in industry; for socialist expanded reproduction will take place not at all according to the formulas of Capital, the mainspring of which is the pursuit of profits. But all this is too complicated for Stalin and Molotov.

In conclusion, let us repeat that collectivization is a practical task of eliminating capitalism, not a theoretical task of its expansion. That is why Marx's formulas do not apply here in any way. The practical possibilities of collectivization are determined by the productive-technical resources available for large-scale agriculture, and by the degree of the peasantry's readiness to pass over from individual to collective economy. In the final analysis, this subjective readiness is determined by the very same material-productive factor: the peasant can be attracted to socialism only by the advantages of collective economy based on advanced technique. But instead of a tractor, Stalin wishes to present the peasant with the formulas of the second volume. But the peasant is honest, and he does not like to argue over what he does not understand.
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS
ON THE SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

July 25, 1930

Here in rough outline are some preliminary comments on the Sixteenth Congress, although my familiarity with the proceedings is still quite insufficient.

1. In the party, the plebiscite regime has been established conclusively. The bureaucracy, not daring to bring questions up for decision by the masses, is forced to find a "boss" in order to sustain its own monolithic unity — without which it would be doomed to collapse. The preparatory work within the party for Bonapartism has been completed.

2. In the realm of industrialization, the bureaucracy, to the crash and roar of ever so left-sounding phrases, has completely abandoned class criteria, Marxist criteria. The scissors between industrial and agricultural prices are proclaimed a bourgeois prejudice. Not a word is said about the scissors between domestic industrial prices and those on the world market. No matter that these are two vitally important measures for determining the relative weight of socialism both at home and abroad. Not a word about inflation either — that is, about the monetary system, which is a vital index of economic equilibrium or disequilibrium. Industrialization is proceeding with all the lights turned out, now as never before.

3. The raising of collectivization to the status of socialism means in fact the prohibition of any study of differentiation within or between collective farms. The countryside will again be painted over, by the statistics of Yakovlev, in a single, solid "socialist middle peasant's" color. Here too the lamps of Marxism are snuffed out.

4. The plebiscitary dictatorship in the Communist Party, now officially authorized, means the same kind of dictatorship in the Comintern, if only through the agency of proconsul
Molotov. A dictatorship by plebiscite cannot endure even simple doubts about the infallibility of the leadership, never mind opposition. In the USSR this means that the official party has been delivered into the hands of the government apparatus once and for all. In the capitalist countries this dooms the Communist parties to unending splits and sectarian-bureaucratic degeneration.

5. The very same kind of regime based on plebiscite is now carried over bodily into the trade-union organizations linked with the Communist parties. The Communist bureaucrats inside the trade unions cannot permit (or are not allowed to permit) contact with people who do not believe absolutely in the infallibility of the leadership endorsed by plebiscite.

6. One may live for a long time off the political capital of the victorious proletarian revolution, especially on the basis of economic successes assured by the revolution itself—as long as there is no big new crisis. But it is impossible to accumulate political capital by such methods. This means that the present regime and the policies connected with it are sure to be the source of ever new crises in the Comintern.

Conclusions:

Since the ranks of the party have been atomized completely, the only way to preserve the possibility, or increase the likelihood, of a development toward reform of the October Revolution and the party of Lenin is to build a properly functioning, centralized Bolshevik-Leninist organization, armed with sufficient technical means to systematically influence the body of opinion within the atomized party.

Of no less importance is the further development of a centralized international faction of the Left Opposition.

The most dangerous thing would be to lull oneself to sleep with false Manilov-like hopes that somehow everything will turn out right, all by itself. Any further semipassive policies would mean, besides everything else, the gradual physical destruction of our best cadres. A political offensive is the best defense. But here again, such an offensive requires proper organization, aimed at systematic work within the party.
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Published August 1930

The provisional character of the Sixteenth Congress is displayed more crudely than the most imaginative Oppositionist could have anticipated. What is the isolated episode of Uglanov worth? This bully, audacious when connected to the apparatus, a nonentity on his own, repented for the second time by unreservedly recognizing all the "tempos" and all the "periods." Shouldn't that have been enough? They laughed at him. Is that what you were asked? Are you a little child? Then acknowledge that Stalin is a born leader and endorse the fact.

Evidently Uglanov acknowledged it and, of course, endorsed it. Everything is now reduced to this. The five-year plan may vary; yesterday the rate was 9 percent, today it is 30 percent. The five-year plan may become a four- or three-year plan and, for collectivization, even a two-year plan. But that is not the question. Acknowledge Stalin's leadership. The congress was not convened around a program, ideas, methods, but around a person.

Stalin surrounds himself with a Central Committee, the Central Committee with district committees; and the district committees select the party. The congress is only a showplace for things that have been settled in advance. Taken as a whole, this is a preparation for Bonapartism within the framework of the party. Only a blind person or a tired official can fail to see and understand this. But to see and understand and to keep quiet is possible only for scoundrels. There are not a few of them among the capitulators.

Stalin's ten-hour report—what emptiness of bureaucratic thought!
The figures on the economic successes are not presented to instruct, but to dazzle and deceive the party. The successes are incontestable. It is not we who were skeptical. We foresaw them and fought for them when the motto of the party was "slow growth," when the Kaganoviches, in defense of the 9 percent rate of the five-year plan, called us demagogues, when the Yaroslavskys, in reply to criticism of the shameful minimal rate of the original five-year plan, threw volumes of production-control figures at the heads of the speakers, when the Molotovs jeered at the very idea of the possibility of a 20 percent growth after the end of the reconstruction period. The successes are incontestable. We foresaw them and fought for them for a long time.

In the first production-control figures of the 1925 plan, far from precise and very cautious, we could discern "the music of socialism in construction." What sarcasm this expression aroused among the philistines, the ignoramuses, the fools, the talentless geniuses of the all-powerful apparatus. Now that all the immense possibilities inherent in the October Revolution have blazed their way through the most obstinate difficulty, the narrow conservatism of the bureaucracy, the latter parades at its congress:

"We are the October Revolution! We are socialism! We are everything, for we are the state!" And then Stalin appears and explains: "The workers' state, that is me; and everyone and everything, that is also me." And because they have trampled on and destroyed the control of the masses, they need an arbitrary power, a boss, the crown of the hierarchy, the first among all—Stalin. That is why they rise and proclaim in chorus: "Yes, he is all of us." That is the music of the Sixteenth Congress.

The economic successes are considerable. But the difficulties and contradictions are greater still. About these, Stalin said nothing. Or rather, he said only enough to conceal the difficulties and minimize the contradictions.

Only the figures that describe the rate of growth were given; not one figure that describes the quality of production! It is as though one were to describe a person by giving the dimension of height without that of weight. The same was true of net costs. The whole economic system, and above all the effectiveness of its direction, is tested by the productivity of labor, and in the tributary economic forms of the market the productivity of labor is measured by production costs or net costs. To ignore this question is the same as to declare a per-
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son healthy on the basis of appearance, without listening to complaints or checking the heartbeat.

The interdependence between the city and the countryside is regulated by exchange; money is not yet a thing of the past. Stalin said nothing about the danger of inflation.

The relation between the prices of agricultural products and industrial products is one of the central problems not only of the economy, but of the whole social and political system based on the October Revolution. Are the "scissors" of agricultural and industrial prices opening or closing, the "scissors" whose one blade represents the worker and the other the peasant? Not a word about this in the report.

On the contrary, the dilemma "Who will prevail?" is now conclusively settled, according to the report, on the basis of the weakening of capitalist forces in the internal market. But this does not decide the question. The countryside has not yet said its last word. The contradictions of the countryside have not disappeared; they are being brought into the framework of the collective farms where they will soon show up. A good harvest will make them sharper. The drivelers and numskulls will surely say that we are against a good harvest. All the Rudzutaks257 were Mikoyaning, all the Mikoyans were Rudzutaking on this theme for many years until, in their ardor, they ran their heads against the kulaks' barns. It was then they proclaimed in Pravda that as a result of two good harvests the kulak had influenced the middle peasant and taught him to conduct a grain strike against the workers' state. The less the leadership is capable of foresight, the more the process of differentiation continues on its inevitable course. This process will encompass all the collective farms and deepen the inequalities between the collective farms and within them. And that is when the leadership, which is great on making predictions after the fact, will convince itself that the collective farms, lacking a solid material and cultural base, are subject to all the contradictions of a market economy. The majority of the bureaucratically created collective farms will become the arena of the class struggle. This means that the dilemma "Who will prevail?" will reassert itself in all its scope and on a higher plane.

But the conflict will not be limited to the field of agriculture. The internal forces of capitalism in the USSR draw their strength and significance from the forces of world capitalism. But Mikoyan, the child prodigy, will probably have to con-
vince himself that there really is "this world market to which we are subordinate, to which we are bound, from which we cannot escape" (Lenin at the Eleventh Congress). The dilemma "Who will prevail?" is in the final analysis the question of the relations between the USSR and world capitalism. This problem has been posed but not yet solved by history. The internal successes are of great importance because they make it possible to consolidate, to progress, to hold on while it is necessary to wait. But no more than that. The internal economic struggles are vanguard battles with an enemy the bulk of whose forces are beyond the border. The dilemma "Who will prevail?" not only on the military field, not only on the political field, but also and primarily on the economic field, is posed before us on a world scale—or more precisely, encircles us.

Military intervention is a danger. Economic intervention through low-priced commodities is an incomparably greater danger. The question of economic power and political stability leads in the final analysis to the question of labor productivity. In a market economy, labor productivity is expressed by net cost and selling price. The "scissors" between domestic prices and the prices on the world market are the most important measure of the relationship of forces between the advance of socialism and its capitalist encirclement. What has happened to the "scissors" in the last two and a half years? On this essential question there is no reply. Stalin does not give any accurate comparative coefficients, any Marxist formula, to define the dynamic interdependence between the domestic and the world economy. An engineer who runs an electric station must have a chart of the control apparatus so that he can follow all the fundamental processes of production and distribution of energy. Similarly, those who direct the economy of the Soviet state must have an up-to-date "chart" of the system of coefficients that characterize—not only the absolute growth of industry—but also the curve of net costs, the purchasing power of the chervonets, and the domestic and foreign "scissors." If not, the leadership is compelled to react blindly to economic disruption, until the safety mechanisms explode one after the other, fire breaks out, and the consumers are lost in the chaos.

Ten hours of empty bureaucratic thought will teach the party nothing. Quite the contrary, it will only lull it with the disgraceful melody of "national socialism."

The most threatening danger today, however, is not the "scissors" between domestic and foreign prices. The most threat-
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ening danger is the "scissors" between the party bureaucracy and the working class, the complete subjection and dispersion of the party. The monstrous show of "monolithism" is crowned by a small, very small, circumstance, but a very menacing one: the monolithism of two million cannot tolerate the slightest criticism of the leadership. On the thirteenth anniversary of the dictatorship, after all the economic and cultural successes, after the question "Who will prevail?" is claimed to have been conclusively settled, the party regime should be much more free and flexible than at the time of the civil war. But the ruling party, that is, the bureaucracy, does not tolerate a single critical remark by a worker or a single timid question by a student: "Is not the Central Committee responsible for the deviations?"

The entire press, raging in typical fashion, denounces a critical remark or a question as the most immediate threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The GPU bureaucracy is not to be outdone by the party bureaucracy, for its Yagodas and sub-Yagodas have ripened under the Stalinist sun. The Agabekovs stand guard for Stalinist monolithism up to the moment they desert to the class enemy.

One of the deported Oppositionists is hunted down for having corresponded with Trotsky, on the basis of the statute on espionage. This idea undoubtedly comes from the master himself. For his mastery consists only of such ideas. In his speech to the congress, Stalin said that the Left Opposition supplies information to the world bourgeois press. What information? The verbose speaker did not say. From the information it gets from our publications, however, the bourgeoisie can draw only one conclusion: that in spite of the Thermidorean lies of Stalin's agents, we Bolsheviks are an inseparable part of the Soviet republic, that we are its devoted soldiers, ready to defend it to the very end, and at the same time we are the left wing of the international proletarian vanguard. The world bourgeoisie and the social democracy understand this very well. That is why they enclose us in a hostile blockade, in which the Dovgalevskys, the Bessedovskys, and the Cachins collaborate with Tardieu, the Krestinskys come to an understanding with the ministers of Hindenburg, and the Sokolnikovs conspire with the Hendersons.258 This is the true alignment of forces on the great chessboard.

As for us, we ask: What information is needed by the world bourgeoisie after that furnished by the official Stalinist press agency, and primarily by Stalin himself? The president of the
Council of People's Commissars is said to be a saboteur. Yesterday's leaders of the Comintern are branded "agents of the bourgeoisie." For the amusement of children, they exhibit yesterday's directors of the trade unions and the Moscow organization, the same ones who had been purging the organizations of "Trotkyism" through the years. On top of this, the official press published a story about the desertion of "Trotksyists" from the ranks of the Red Army to Chiang Kai-shek. Is all this a joke? The world bourgeoisie knows the history of the Red Army well enough to ask, "If this is true, what does it mean?" At the same time, proven Bolsheviks, stalwart revolutionaries, are persecuted for having corresponded with Trotsky. Aren't these facts, furnished every day and every hour by the Stalinist apparatus, which tramples underfoot and drags in the mud the whole past of the party and the revolution solely for the purpose of forging a falsified biography for the provisional boss, sufficient for the bourgeoisie?

And to add to that, the Stalinist informers appear in a second edition. Bessedovsky, Krukov, Agabekov, who ceaselessly combated Trotskyism for seven years and who yesterday—literally yesterday—directed the purging of the cells, desert to the class enemy, furnishing the police services of imperialism with all the Soviet government secrets that they were given in confidence or that they learned of. What more information does the bourgeoisie need than that furnished constantly by the Stalinists of today and the Stalinists of yesterday, who supplement each other?

After Blumkin was shot, Stalin replaced him with Agabekov. That is a fact which sums up Stalin's policy in the party. At the same time, the revolutionaries who correspond with Trotsky are persecuted by the Agabekovs on the basis of the statute that is supposed to permit Stalin to perpetrate new assassinations. Whoever does not understand the symptomatic and threatening import of this fact is a hopeless idiot. Whoever understands this and keeps quiet is a scoundrel.

Neither repression nor threats will silence us. The stake of the struggle is too important: it is the fate of the October Revolution and the party of Lenin, not only the party of the Soviet Union but the international party of Lenin, which today has fallen under the direction of the sergeant Prishibeyev using the pseudonym of Molotov. At stake is the preservation of world communism. The struggle between Leninism and Stalinism is not decided. This is where the question "Who will prevail?" takes on its full amplitude.
Repression will not cause us to turn from our course. The bloodiest and most envenomed violence of Stalin will not separate us from the party and will not put us in opposition to the party, which Stalin is attempting to strangle. We will carry on our struggle with twofold, threefold, tenfold energy. Today we continue to serve the goals we served in the 1905 revolution, during the imperialist slaughter, in the 1917 revolution, during the civil war, in the first period of economic reconstruction, at the foundation of the Comintern, in the struggle for a bold tempo of socialist construction against the cowardice of the philistine epigones. Against national socialism, for the international revolution!
NOTES OF A JOURNALIST

Published August 1930

Two, or Not Even One?

One of the first sessions of the Sixteenth Party Congress was greeted by the commander of the Far Eastern army, Bluecher. This fact in itself has no political significance and would hardly deserve mention. Nor has it any significance for the party: if Bluecher, as a soldier, is very inferior to Budenny, in a party sense he is very little superior to him. Besides, Bluecher's speech of greetings was edited beforehand by Voroshilov and, therefore, very badly edited. The spirit of the flunkey who falls in line at command was consistent to the end. The speech had enraptured praise for Stalin and ardent greetings to Voroshilov, as well as several jabs aimed at the right wing, before whom Bluecher had stood at attention only the day before. Everything is in order. There was also an interesting admission: "In the period between the Fifteenth and Sixteenth congresses our party and Communist youth organization in the army carried out a successful struggle against counterrevolutionary Trotskyism." The Fifteenth Congress, it was said at the time, made a final reckoning of the "struggle against Trotskyism" and liquidated it completely. Now we hear from Bluecher that "a successful struggle against Trotskyism" was carried out in the army for the last two and a half years, between the Fifteenth and Sixteenth congresses. We must assume that at the Seventeenth Congress we will find out not a little of instructive value concerning the further course of this struggle, which is no sooner ended than it starts anew. Time will tell.

But we have paused at Bluecher's speech not because of this admission or its general tone, which can be expressed in three words: At your service! In this speech, or at any rate in the reports about it, there is one point that is of great significance—
not one that characterizes Bluecher but one that characterizes what now is being done in the party and with the party.

According to the report in Pravda of June 28, 1930, Bluecher declared: "We, the fighters of the Red Army, can proudly report to you that during these [Sino-Soviet] battles we did not have a single defection, not a single deserter to the enemy. The army showed high political and class devotion to socialist construction."

Every revolutionary can only welcome this information. Unfortunately, however, we have a second version that undermines our confidence in the whole report. In the journal Rabochy [The Worker], the daily organ of the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party, this quotation from Bluecher's speech is given as follows:

"We can proudly report to you that we had no defections nor a single deserter to the camp of our enemy. We have only two dismal, shameful stains: two qualified recruits who had served for nine months went over to the enemy. Both of them turned out to be Trotskyists."

The words we have emphasized are completely absent from the Pravda report. Were they spoken by Bluecher or not? If we are to judge by the text we have to conclude that these words were arbitrarily and incongruously inserted into the report after it was made, resulting in an obvious absurdity. At first it says that there was not "a single deserter," and then it is reported that there were two of them. Obviously there is something amiss here. If there was not a single one, where did the two come from? And if there really were two deserters, then how can one say "not a single one"? But let us assume that Bluecher was inconsistent; in the speech, unfortunately, there is more ardor than sense. But then why did the Pravda report omit such tempting information about two deserters? Why did Pravda conceal the counterrevolutionary intrigues of the "Trotskyists"? If Pravda did not conceal anything, if Bluecher did not say this, then how does it happen that these words appear on the same day in the Minsk Rabochy?

We know very well how all the information about the congress is edited. Not a single line leaves the confines of the congress without a visa from the editorial commission. This means that the story about the Trotskyist deserters could never have been invented in Minsk. It had to be sent from Moscow with the seal of the congress's editorial commission. But then why were these lines omitted from Pravda? That is the first question.
There is also a second question. "Two qualified recruits went over to the enemy," we are told by Bluecher or by somebody impersonating him. "Both of them turned out to be Trotskyists." These words are printed in bold face type in the Minsk journal. Naturally! But this doesn't make any sense. Between the Fifteenth and Sixteenth congresses, according to Bluecher, the army was completely purged of the remnants of Trotskyism. Why wasn't it purged of these two also? Evidently they were not known until the moment of their flight. How did Bluecher find out that they were "Trotskyists" after they had fled? "Both of them turned out (?) to be Trotskyists." What does he mean, "turned out"? How and in what way? Cloudy is the water; so cloudy that it looks as if it is stagnant. And it would appear that someone has fallen into it.

Finally, there is a third question. Why did the "Trotskyists" have to flee to the camp of the Chinese counterrevolution? At its head stands Chiang Kai-shek. He was never our ally. He was the ally of Stalin. He came to Stalin to conduct negotiations. A week before Chiang Kai-shek's bloody coup in April 1927, Stalin in the Hall of Columns vouched for Chiang Kai-shek's loyalty. Chiang Kai-shek's party belonged to the Comintern, with consultative vote. The Opposition fought this intransigently. Stalin and Rykov exchanged photographs with Chiang Kai-shek. Trotsky received a portrait of Chiang Kai-shek from a Comintern office with a request that he exchange one with Chiang Kai-shek. Trotsky refused and returned the portrait. Stalin taught that Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang was a substitute for soviets. The Opposition exposed the alliance between Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek as a betrayal of the revolution. Why then would the "Trotskyists" flee to the camp of Chiang Kai-shek? Would it not be better for you, my good sirs, to keep quiet about this?

We do not know who fell into this fit of babbling: Bluecher or the editor of his speech or both of them. But it is clear that somebody fell into a fit of babbling exceeding the outer limits of verisimilitude. That is why Pravda refused to print it. It was decided, and not without cause, that this was too stupid. But at the same time the editorial commission of the congress was reluctant to throw it out; maybe somebody would find some use for it. And really—such an enticing morsel. On the one hand, not a single deserter, which is such an excellent testimonial to the army; on the other hand, not one but two deserters, both of them "Trotskyists," and better still revealing a direct connection between the Opposition and Chiang
Kai-shek. A pity to throw it out; perhaps it will come in handy in Minsk.

In fitting conclusion, let us take a look at the composition of the editorial commission. It includes the former Social Revolutionary Berdnikov, who is ready for anything; Stalin's former secretary Nazaretian, who has quite a distinct and well-earned reputation; the former Menshevik Popov, who assists Berdnikov; the chief cook of the Bureau of Party History Saveliev; and Stalin's former secretary Tovstukha. This should be enough.

**Parable on the Cockroach**

Stalin, in his concluding remarks, said that Rykov, Bukharin, and Tomsky get frightened the minute they hear "a cockroach make a rustling sound somewhere, before it has even had time to crawl out of its hole." The reference apparently is to dissatisfied kulaks and middle peasants. Further on, the above-mentioned cockroach turns out to be "feeble and dying." This complicates the metaphor somewhat. That a feeble cockroach can make a rustling sound, we will grant; but as for a dying one—frankly speaking—we have our doubts. We are quite in accord with the moral that even live, healthy cockroaches should not be feared. But on the other hand, we assume that a cockroach should under no circumstances be called a raisin, as a certain "village father"—one of the "stewards" of our economy—has done, when a baked cockroach turned up in his bread, something that reflected poorly upon the general line. Moreover, some people—not just economic workers but "economists"—beginning in 1924 believed and taught others to believe that the kulak is in general a myth and that socialism can very well be reconciled with this "mighty middle peasant." In a word, for four years they ardently tried to turn this cockroach into a raisin of national socialism. This too ought to be avoided.

**A Self-Portrait**

The irreplaceable colleague Yaroslavsky, in the interests of self-criticism, read at the congress a description of a Communist given by some organization in a forsaken locality. "Consistent, politically literate, has no firm convictions of his own. Awaits what others will say." The report records "laughter." But if one stops to think about it, it is not a laughing matter at all. It is only too true. And perhaps this is the reason it is so ludicrous. The description hit the mark.
Yes, let's take Yaroslavsky. In 1923 he wrote panegyrics to Trotsky. In 1925 he wrote of his agreement with Zinoviev's "Leninism," which was directed wholly against Stalin. In 1927 he wrote that Bukharin expressed no deviations whatsoever and that he was educating the youth in the spirit of Leninism.

But can it be said that Yaroslavsky is inconsistent? No one will say that. He is quite consistent, even too consistent. Politically illiterate? No, of course not. At worst, semiliterate. Has he firm convictions? It appears that he has not. But why should convictions be firm? They are not made of metal. But how is it that Yaroslavsky, without firm convictions, maintains himself at the top? Very simple. He "awaits what others will say."

No, the congress should not have laughed. The description fits perfectly.

What Does Manuilsky Respect?

At the congress Manuilsky pointed the way, as is customary, for the world proletariat: "An open, audacious, Bolshevik struggle, irrespective of the individuals involved, against all forms of practical opportunism."

A Manuilsky who proceeds "irrespective of the individuals involved!" And what, strictly speaking, does he intend to show respect for from now on?
A LETTER TO HUNGARIAN COMRADES

August 1, 1930

Dear Comrades,

Your idea of uniting the leading proletarian elements of the Hungarian emigration in close relation with the revolutionary elements inside Hungary to counterpose Leninism to Stalinism and Bela Kunism—that idea flows from the total situation, and one can only welcome it.

The Hungarian revolution, like every unsuccessful revolution, has meant extensive emigration. Not for the first time in history has it happened that the task of emigres is to help prepare a new revolution.

What is needed for that? To examine the experience of the first Hungarian revolution. That means examining with merciless criticism the leadership of Bela Kun and Company. The strength of Bolshevism, which permitted it to carry out the October Revolution, lay in two things: a correct understanding of the role of the party, as a systematic selection of the most steadfast and most tempered class elements, and a correct policy on relations with the peasantry, in the first place, on the land question. Despite the fact that Bela Kun observed the October Revolution from close at hand, he did not understand its motive force and method; and when by the course of circumstances it turned out that he was raised to power, he light-mindedly proceeded to merge the Communists with the Left Social Democrats and, in the spirit of the Russian Mensheviks, completely turned his back on the peasantry on the land question. These two fatal mistakes predetermined the rapid collapse of the Hungarian revolution in the difficult conditions in which it took place.

It is possible to learn from mistakes. It is necessary to learn from defeats. But Bela Kun, Pogany (Pepper), Varga, and the
others did nothing about it. They supported all the mistakes, all the opportunist vacillations, all the adventurist racing about in all countries. In the Soviet Union, they participated actively in the struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists, in that persecution which was reflected in the attack of the new petty bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy on the workers. They supported the policy of Stalin and Martinov in China, which so inevitably led to the ruin of the Chinese revolution, the same policy with which Bela Kun had earlier undone the Hungarian revolution. They, Bela Kun, Pogany, Varga, and the others, supported the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee, that shameful capitulation of communism to strikebreakers, which for a number of years broke the back of the British Communist Party. Particularly fatal, perhaps, was the role of Bela Kun in Germany. At the time of the March days in 1921, he supported a revolutionary "uprising" when there were no objective preconditions for one. In 1923 he, together with Stalin, missed the revolutionary situation. In 1924 and 1925, when the revolutionary situation had already shown itself to be past, Bela Kun supported the course of armed uprising. In 1926 and 1927 he, together with Varga, came out as protagonists of the opportunist policy of Stalin and Bukharin, signifying capitulation to the social democracy. In February 1928, Kun, together with Stalin and Thaelmann, suddenly discovered in Germany an immediate revolutionary situation. During the last two years, the ill-starred policy of the "third period" weakened all the parties of the Comintern, and the Hungarian too. If today, when the world crisis poses for communism grandiose tasks, the sections of the Comintern show themselves immeasurably weaker than they might have been, then an important share of the blame for this falls heavily on the official leadership of the Hungarian party, which till now has been covering itself with the borrowed authority of the Hungarian revolution in spite of the fact that it, precisely, ruined it.

A struggle against Bela Kunism in Hungary means at the same time a struggle against that regime of absent and impudent officials who do more harm to the Comintern the more they go on. Without liberating itself from Bela Kunism, the Hungarian proletarian vanguard cannot unite into an efficient communist party.

It is perfectly natural if communists in emigration take on themselves the initiative for offering theoretical help and political solidarity to the revolutionists struggling inside Hungary.
Since 1924, i.e., since the beginning of the reaction in the USSR, Stalin and Molotov have made fashionable a contemptuous attitude toward revolutionary "emigres." This single fact is enough to measure the whole depth of the degeneration of the apparatus leaders! Marx and Engels in the old days said that the proletariat had no fatherland. In the epoch of imperialism this truth has a still deeper character. And if that is so, then it is possible to say honestly that for the proletarian revolutionist there is no emigration: in other words, emigration has a police but not a political meaning. In every country where there are workers and a bourgeoisie, the proletarian finds a place in the struggle.

Only for the petty-bourgeois nationalist can "emigration" constitute a break with political struggle: is it worth interfering in other people's business? For the internationalist the cause of the proletariat in every country is not someone else's, but one's own. The leading Hungarian workers are all the better able to help the revolutionary struggle inside Hungary, now and in the future, the closer they are tied to the revolutionary movement in the country in which fate has thrown them. It is working-class "emigres" precisely, educated by the Left Opposition, i.e., the Bolshevist-Leninists, who can constitute the best cadres of a renascent Hungarian communist party.

The organ to be set up by you has as its task to link up the advanced Hungarian workers scattered in different countries, not only in Europe but also in America. To link them up not in order to tear them out of the class struggle in those countries to which they have gone; on the contrary, to call on them to participate in the struggle, to teach them to make use of their emigre situation so as to broaden their outlook, to liberate themselves from nationalist limitations, to educate and temper themselves in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

With all my heart I wish you success!

With communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
PROPOSAL FOR AN OPEN LETTER

August 6, 1930

On the CP's turn: For several months now, I haven't followed French politics or even received l'Humanite. But the question you discuss is very important. If both the French party and the French Opposition or the circles that sympathize with the Opposition are going through a similar disorientation, we are the ones who will lose by it, because we are the weaker ones and we can make gains in each situation only through clarity and preciseness. It is very possible that this is the proper time for a tactical maneuver toward the CP membership. For example, an open letter to the Communists enumerating the new assertions made by the CP which coincide with our earlier criticisms, criticisms characterized a few months ago as "Menshevik," etc., by the same leaders. The open letter should lead to the conclusion that once again new experience has demonstrated that the communist workers of the CP can only gain from working in the same ranks with the communists of the Communist League.

Of course, the letter should summarize the differences that remain and are going to come up again. But the object of the letter should not be to present the differences but rather to show that there are important points of agreement that negate the arguments for excluding the International Opposition.

Given that the CP's new line has not yet been concretized, that is, has not yet revealed its Achilles' heel, it is of the greatest interest to us to carry our fight with the apparatus onto the terrain of the party regime. This proposal is a bit vague because, I repeat, I am not abreast of what is happening.

_Talk about this with other comrades._

L. T.
In the international press of the Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists), we advanced several months ago the absolutely simple and irrefutable idea that the Communist parties of the capitalist countries, in connection with the enormous growth of unemployment, should launch an agitational campaign for all-around extension and facilitation of industrial commodity credits to the Soviet Union. We proposed to give this slogan even more concrete forms: on the basis of its five-year plan (the present plan or a modified one—we shall not deal with this question now), the Soviet government declares that it can give the United States, Germany, Britain, Czechoslovakia, and others such and such quite definite orders for electro-technical units, agricultural machinery, and so forth, on the condition of credits for a definite number of years.

In this connection, the credit reliability of the Soviet government in the eyes of the capitalist world could be fully secured by the simultaneous growth of Soviet exports. Under the condition of large and well-apportioned industrial credits, the collective farms could really acquire a great economic significance in the near future, and the volume of agricultural exports could speedily increase. In the same way, with the receipt from abroad—on acceptable, that is, common capitalist conditions of credit—of additional industrial equipment, the export of oil, timber, and so forth could be considerably increased. With regard to Soviet exports, the conclusion of planned agreements for a number of years would also be possible.

The Soviet government is most directly interested in a detailed acquainting of workers' delegations, factory committees, and representatives of trade unions, on the one hand, and
representatives of capitalist governments and trusts, on the other, with the corresponding planned propositions—of course very strictly established technically and economically and therefore capable of raising in the eyes of the workers the authority of the Soviet government as well as warranting in the eyes of the capitalists the credits demanded. Whoever knows how the economic relations of the Soviet Union to the capitalist governments were established, or whoever knows even theoretically the ABC of the economic policy of the workers' government in capitalist encirclement, will not find anything contestable or dubious in the proposed plan. At the same time, the necessity and urgency of an energetic campaign in favor of such a plan will flow quite obviously from the present unemployment in capitalist countries, on the one hand, and from the acute need of foreign credits to the Soviet economy, on the other.

Nevertheless, with regard to our propositions, the Stalinist apparatus has given the signal: reject, expose, condemn. Why? There are two reasons. There is no doubt that many Soviet bureaucrats consider that an education of this sort will not help to obtain foreign credit but hinder it. Let their Sokolnikov negotiate quietly with Henderson, and let the communists rather keep still so as not to frighten the bourgeoisie and not to antagonize it. There is no doubt that this is precisely the idea that animates the Stalinist bureaucracy and above all Stalin himself, when they come forward against the campaign proposed by us. For the august national-socialist bureaucrats talk with great contempt among themselves about the foreign Communist parties, considering them incapable of any serious action. The apparatus crowd, the Stalinists, have learned to place confidence only in the governmental summits and plainly fear the direct intervention of the masses in "serious," "practical" matters. This is the basic reason for the absurd and malicious rebuff our proposal has met.

But there is also an additional reason. The Stalinists are in mortal fear of the growing influence of the Communist Left Opposition throughout the world, and therefore they consider it necessary to reply with slander and vilification to every word it pronounces. Such directions are invariably issued to the whole apparatus of the Comintern.

The central organ of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Rude Pravo [Red Truth], has fulfilled this command as best it could. In its issue of June 24, the campaign on behalf of the unemployed proposed by the Czech Left Opposition is sub-
jected to a criticism which can only be termed rabid. For all its fury, it strikes one with its impotence. We will analyze the objections and accusations of Rude Pravo line by line. Not because we are interested in the officials who substitute for the lack of ideas and arguments with coarse abuse, but because we want to help the advanced workers of Czechoslovakia orient themselves in this big and serious question.

Rude Pravo says that the Czech Communist Left Opposition demands that the Soviet government, "together with the Czechoslovak government, shall elaborate an economic plan for the solution of the crisis!!" The paper derides this idea, which really is absurd, but which was invented by the editors themselves. The Soviet government should arrive at an agreement with the capitalist trusts and the bourgeois governments (in the event the latter take it upon themselves to guarantee credits) about a definite system of orders and payment for them (but not at all a "plan for the solution of the crisis"). Each of the parties pursues its own aims. The Soviet government is interested in extending the resources of socialist construction, to assure in this way its high tempo, and to raise the living standards of the workers. The capitalists are interested in profits. The workers of Czechoslovakia, as well as of any other capitalist country suffering from unemployment, are interested in ameliorating unemployment. The worker communists and sympathizers pursue in this struggle also another, no less important, aim: to help the workers' state. But the goal of the struggle in itself can be understood by the broadest and most backward circles of workers, consequently also by those who look upon the Soviet Union with indifference.

As for a common plan "for the solution of the crisis," nobody even speaks about that. Only a socialist revolution can abolish the crisis. To permeate the workers with this idea is the elementary obligation of the Communist parties. But it does not at all flow from this that the workers should not advance immediate demands for the diminution of unemployment and the amelioration of its worst consequences. The reduction of the working day is one of the most important demands of this kind. Alongside of this are: the struggle against today's rapacious "rationalization," the demand for broader and more genuine protection of the unemployed at the expense of the capitalists and their government. Perhaps Rude Pravo is against these demands? The granting of industrial credits to the Soviet state would have as its consequence, not the liquidation of the crisis, but the amelioration of unemployment in a
number of branches of industry. This is precisely how we must pose the question, deceiving neither ourselves nor others.

Or perhaps *Rude Pravo* has the point of view that communists in general must not demand any measures capable of ameliorating the disastrous consequences of capitalism in relation to workers? Perhaps the slogan of the Czech Stalinists has become "the worse the better"? This was the point of view held by the anarchists in times long past. The Marxists never had anything in common with this position.

But here *Rude Pravo* advances the objection that, according to our plan, "the principled contradiction between the Soviet state and the capitalist world is to be replaced by their mutual cooperation." What this phrase signifies is hard to understand. If it has any sense at all, it can only be one: the Soviet state, in order to safeguard the principled contradictions, must avoid economic connections with the capitalist world, that is, must neither export and import nor seek credits and loans. But the whole policy of the Soviet government, from the first day of its existence, has had the directly opposite character. It has proved unalterably that in spite of the principled contradiction between two economic systems, cooperation between them is possible on the very broadest scale. The leaders of the Soviet state have more than once declared that even the principle of the monopoly of foreign trade presents advantages to the large-scale capitalist trusts, in the sense that it insures systematic orders for a number of years in advance. It cannot be denied that many Soviet diplomats and administrators have fallen over themselves in their advocacy of peaceful cooperation between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world and presented arguments incorrect in principle and out of place. But this is a question of a different kind. At any rate, principled contradictions of two economic systems that coexist for a comparatively long time are not destroyed and not weakened by the fact that they are compelled, in this transition period, to conclude large-scale economic transactions with each other, and sometimes even political agreements. Is it possible that there are still "communists" who have not yet understood this?

Further on, *Rude Pravo* improves on this: "The chief concern of the Soviets should be the elimination [?] of the capitalist crisis so that [!] the capitalist system, this blessing of humanity, should be further preserved." Every new phrase increases in senselessness, multiplies it, raises it to a higher degree. Does *Rude Pravo* mean that the Soviet republic, in order not to alleviate the capitalist crisis, should renounce the import
of foreign commodities, of American technique, of German and British commercial credits, etc.? Only by drawing these conclusions would the phrase quoted above have any sense. But we know that the Soviet government acts to the contrary. At this very moment, in London, Sokolnikov is negotiating economic relations with Britain, trying to obtain credits. In America, the president of Amtorg, Bogdanov, is engaged in a struggle against that part of the bourgeoisie which wants to break off economic relations with the Soviet Union, and, what is more, Bogdanov demands the extension of credits.

It is clear that Rude Pravo was overzealous. It no longer strikes at the Opposition, but at the workers' state. From the point of view of Rude Pravo, all the work of Soviet diplomacy and the Soviet commercial representatives appears to be work for the insurance of the capitalist system. This is not a new idea. The same point of view was held by the deceased Dutch author Gorter and the leaders of the so-called Communist Workers Party of Germany, that is, by people of a utopian and semianarchist frame of mind, who thought that the Soviet government should conduct its policy as if it existed not within capitalist encirclement but in space. In their time, these prejudices were crushingly refuted by Lenin. Now the views of Gorter are served up by the editors of the Czech Communist paper as profound arguments against the Communist Left Opposition.

These considerations take on a particularly ridiculous aspect because of the fact that the Soviet government, especially in recent times, has considered it necessary once more to repeat that it even agrees, within certain limits, to pay the old czarist debts—provided that new credits are made available to it. On the other hand, the Soviet government recruits unemployed miners in Germany. Is it not thereby saving German capitalism? Repeating empty phrases, the pseudo-Communist officials simply close their eyes to everything that is going on in the world. Our proposal has a double intent: first, we want the bonds between the Soviet and world economy, at present accidental, partial, and unsystematic, to be included by the Soviet government itself into the framework of an extensive plan (we are not considering this question here now); and second, to draw into the struggle for the international economic positions of the Soviet Union the vanguard of the world proletariat, and through it—also the millions of workers. The whole essence of the campaign proposed by us lies in the fact that it can bind with a new and firm knot the need of the Soviet
government for foreign products to the need of the unemployed for work, the need of the proletariat for the alleviation of unemployment.

Further on, *Rude Pravo* becomes ironical: "It is a pity that the Messrs. Trotskyists did not tell us on what principles the general Czechoslovak-Soviet plan for the solution of the crisis should be constructed: on capitalist principles—but by that, aid would be given to the victory of capitalism within Russia; or on socialist principles—this would mean that the Trotskyists believe in the readiness of the capitalists themselves to introduce socialism."

Human stupidity is truly inexhaustible, and the worst form of it is the stupidity of the self-contented bureaucrat.

On what principles could the economic relations of the Soviet Union with the world market be based? Of course, upon capitalist principles, that is, on the principles of buying and selling. This is how it has been up to now. It will be that way in the future as long as the workers of the other countries do not abolish capitalism. And they will not do that—let us observe parenthetically—until they carry out a merciless purge among their "leaders," chasing out the self-contented chatterers and replacing them with honest proletarian revolutionaries capable of observing, learning, and thinking. But this is another question. Here, we are concerned with economics.

But will not cooperation on capitalist principles lead, in reality, to the victory of capitalism in Russia? This would be so if Russia had no monopoly of foreign trade, supplemented by the dictatorship of the proletariat and the nationalization of land, factories, mills, and banks. Without a monopoly of foreign trade in the hands of the workers' state, the victory of capitalism would be inevitable. But does the Left Opposition propose to abolish the monopoly of foreign trade? It was Stalin, together with Sokolnikov, Rykov, Bukharin, and others, who tried to infringe on the monopoly in 1922. Together with Lenin, we fought for the monopoly of foreign trade and defended it. It is understood that the monopoly of foreign trade is not a foolproof remedy. Correct economic plans are necessary, correct leadership, a systematic lowering of the costs of production in the USSR to the costs of production of the world market. But this, again, is a question of a different kind. We, at any rate, have in view such plans for foreign orders and credits as flow from the internal needs and tasks of the Soviet economy and which are to serve the consolidation of its socialist elements.
Then it means—*Rude Pravo* becomes ironical—that the bourgeoisie will aid socialism! A fabulous argument! But why does it come into the world so late? The majority of the complicated machines in the Soviet factories are imported from abroad. The Soviet trusts have concluded scores of agreements with the world monopoly trusts for technical aid (machines, materials, plans, formulas, etc.). The enormous Dnieper hydroelectric station was constructed to a considerable degree with the aid of foreign technicians and with the participation of German and American firms. It would appear, then, that the bourgeoisie is helping to construct socialism. And at the same time, the Soviet government, by making purchases in foreign countries and alleviating the crisis, is saving capitalism. It would seem that the roles have changed. But they have not changed in reality, only in the head of the functionary of *Rude Pravo*. Alas, it is an altogether unreliable head!

How do matters really stand with the exchange of "services"? Of course, economic collaboration between the workers' state and the capitalist world gives rise to a number of contradictions. But these are contradictions of life, that is, they are not invented by the Left Opposition but are created by reality itself. The Soviet government considers that the capitalist machines it imports strengthen socialism to a greater degree than the gold paid for them strengthens capitalism. And that is true. On the other hand the bourgeoisie, in selling its machinery, is primarily concerned with its own profits. Some capitalists simply do not believe in the possibility of constructing socialism. Others do not even think of it. Finally, the bourgeoisie now finds itself under the lash of a crisis and it is worried about its own salvation. This circumstance should be utilized for the strengthening of communist positions among the unemployed.

Learning from us for the first time that the bourgeoisie, in spite of its will, helps to construct socialism, *Rude Pravo* exclaims: "In this case, the ultraleft Trotskyists are spreading worse illusions about world developments than the social fascists."

In this phrase, again, every word spells confusion. First of all, we appear as "ultralefts," when we never were such. The deceased Gorter, mentioned above, was an ultraleftist and that is what his present followers remain. In their opinion foreign trade, concessions, credits, loans, etc., mean the death of socialism. *Rude Pravo* repeats these arguments, only less literately. The whole article of *Rude Pravo* analyzed by us is
a sample of the most absurd ultraleftism directed against Leninism.

Further: What "illusions about world developments" are they talking about? Economic negotiations and agreements between two governments are based on peaceful relations, but they are far from a guarantee of such relations. When war flares up, all agreements are blown to perdition, even between two capitalist states. It is also clear that if the proletarian revolution should conquer, let us say, in Britain, the agreements of Stalin with MacDonald would be thrown away and replaced by a fraternal union of two proletarian states. However, in spite of the inevitability of wars and revolutions, the Soviet government has made and still makes economic agreements, sometimes for long terms; thus, some concessions are leased for ninety-nine years! The ultraleftists concluded from this that the Soviet government put off the proletarian revolution for ninety-nine years. We laughed at them. Now the officials of Rude Pravo have carried over this argument against—the "Trotskyists." But by the change of address, the argument has not become any wiser.

If Rude Pravo seriously considers it its duty to defend proletarian principles in the sphere of the international politics of the Soviet government, why was it silent when these were actually trampled underfoot by the present Stalinist leadership? Let us recall two examples out of many.

After the bloc of the Stalinists with the British strikebreakers—the trade-union leaders—had thoroughly revealed its reactionary character, Stalin and Bukharin explained to the presidium of the Comintern that the Anglo-Russian Committee could in no way be broken up because it would worsen the mutual relations between the USSR and Britain. Out of the hostility of Baldwin and Chamberlain, Stalin attempted to find cover for his friendship with Purcell. This disastrous policy, which undermined British communism for a number of years and did not serve the Soviet Union one particle, met, so far as we know, with the unalterable support of Rude Pravo. And where were these saviors of principles when the Soviet government adhered to the Kellogg Pact, committing at one and the same time a crime in principle and a stupidity in practice? The Kellogg Pact is an imperialist noose for the weaker states. And the Soviet government adhered to the pact as an instrument of peace. This, in reality, is a sowing of illusions, an inadmissible smearing over of contradictions, an outright deception of the workers in the spirit of the social democracy. Did Rude
Pravo protest? No, it merely joined in the chorus. What was the reason for the Soviet government's adherence to the Kellogg Pact? The absurd hope of Stalin that in this way he would secure recognition by the American government, credits, etc. The capitalists pocketed the Soviet adherence, very advantageous in fooling the American workers, and, of course, they gave nothing in exchange. Against such methods of struggle for capitalist credits, the Bolshevik-Leninists conduct an irreconcilable fight, while the officials of Rude Pravo join the chorus of their superiors. On the other hand, however, the plan of the campaign proposed by us does not contain even the shadow of a surrender of principles to the bourgeoisie or to the social democracy.

These are all the arguments of the central organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. They should arouse a feeling of shame in every serious communist for the political level to which the leadership of one of the largest sections of the Comintern has sunk.

But all these arguments probably pale before the concluding argument of the article. Rude Pravo declares that our whole proposition is a sort of snare and has as its aim to mask "the real attempt at a maneuver, to be precise: the responsibility for unemployment is to be thrown upon the Soviet Union, which does not give us sufficient orders . . . instead of compromising the worthless capitalist system, the industrial crisis is to serve to compromise the Soviet Union."

These lines seem incredible, but here too we are quoting verbatim. If Rude Pravo considers our plan erroneous, it has, of course, the full right to prove that such a mistake may help the class enemy. Every mistake in the revolutionary strategy of the proletariat is of advantage to the bourgeoisie to one degree or another. Every revolutionary can make a mistake and thus unwillingly help the bourgeoisie. A mistake should be criticized mercilessly. But to accuse proletarian revolutionaries of consciously constructing a plan with the aim of helping the bourgeoisie and compromising the Soviet Union can only be done by functionaries without honor and conscience. But it is not worth examining; all this is too stupid. It is only too obvious that it was done under command; the followers of the command are too miserable. But on the other hand, we must not forget for a minute that these gentlemen ceaselessly compromise the Soviet Union and the banner of communism.

So we Bolshevik-Leninists want to throw the responsibility
for capitalist unemployment upon the Soviet Union. What opinion has *Rude Pravo* of the intellectual abilities of the Czech workers? It goes without saying that not one of them could think that the Soviet Union is capable of placing orders to an extent that would liquidate unemployment in the capitalist world, or even in one large capitalist country. Any one of ten workers met on the streets of Prague would declare the very idea absurd that such inconceivable demands can be made upon the Soviet Union or that it can be compromised for "insufficient" orders. Why is all this? What is all this good for? Matters are just the other way around. The political aim of the campaign is to attract to the side of the Soviet Union those workers who are at present indifferent or even hostile to it. Insofar as the capitalist governments and parties, the social democratic included, counteract the campaign they will compromise themselves in the eyes of the workers. Their political loss will be all the greater, the more seriously and practically the communists carry on the campaign. No matter what the economic results may be, the political advantages, at any rate, are guaranteed. The workers drawn into the campaign around this current and pressing question of unemployment will, in the future also, come forward as the defenders of the USSR in the event of a war danger. Such methods of mobilization of the workers are far more substantial than the repetition of naked phrases about imminent intervention.

But we will not conceal from our comrade workers that we would by no means entrust the execution of such a campaign to the editors of *Rude Pravo*. These people are capable of ruining every action. They do not want to think; they are incapable of learning. But from this it does not follow that we should give up mass struggles in the interests of the Soviet Union, but merely that we must renounce the good-for-nothing leaders. Here we approach the general question: the regime of the Comintern, its policy, and the selection of its bureaucracy. We need a proletarian purge, a renewal of the apparatus, a renewal of the course, a renovation of the regime. This is precisely what the Communist Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) is fighting for. The most immediate aim of our struggle is the regeneration of the Communist International upon the basis of the theory and practice of Marx and Lenin.
Dear Comrade "N,"

1. [This section is a correction to a geographical error made in "The Chinese Question After the Sixth Congress." Canton was represented as a city in Kiangsu. This error has already been corrected in the Chinese translation of the essay, so it is unnecessary to translate this section of the letter. —Chinese translator]

2. Today I finally received a copy of Comrade Ch'en Tu-hsiu's letter of December 10, 1929. I feel that this letter is an extremely good document. Totally clear and correct attitudes are taken in answer to all the important questions; especially on the question of a democratic dictatorship, Comrade Tu-hsiu takes a completely correct stand. At the time you wrote to me explaining why you could not unite with Ch'en Tu-hsiu, your reason was that he still seemed to support the "democratic dictatorship" viewpoint. I feel this question to be a decisive one, because if you do not have a proletarian dictatorship leading the poor peasants, then it is the same as a democratic dictatorship, which in reality is only another name for a new Kuomintang policy, that's all! There can be no compromise on this question! But it is clear from the letter of December 10 that Comrade Ch'en's position is correct. Because of this, how can I explain and defend your position? What other differing opinions have you? None, I think, unless there are some unexpected difficulties. How can we get together on the question of a national assembly? What kind of role would the parliamentary system play in China? On fundamental questions we are in complete accord. As for the unexpected or more complicated questions, some are merely academic, while others are tactical questions. These questions will be decided as events unfold. Here, I must honestly tell you that your opinions on the national assembly and the parliamentary system cannot stand, in my view. It is true that Wo-men-ti hua says that this is Kautskyism, but there is no basis for this.
When we have such an outstanding revolutionary as Ch'en Tu-hsiu, who formally breaks with the party, is then thrown out of the party, and finally announces that his stand is 100 percent in accord with the International Opposition, how can we ignore him? Is it possible that you have many Communist Party members who are as experienced as Ch'en Tu-hsiu? He made many mistakes in the past, but he is already aware of them. To become aware of one's past mistakes is very valuable to revolutionaries and leaders. We have many young people in the Opposition who can and should learn from Comrade Ch'en Tu-hsiu!

3. You attack the Wo-men-ti hua group for incorrectly assessing the general political situation in China and denying the utility of slogans about striving for democracy. I have received a long letter from them, and it appears that the differences of principle about which you speak have all been eliminated. You wrote that they had revised the agenda of the conference. If this is so, they have revised it for the better and, moreover, are even closer to us. You attack them for their underhanded methods (such as bringing up old disputes and revising the agenda). Naturally, this problem carries its own meaning, but if they feel there are some mistakes, and everyone agrees to revise the agenda, that isn't such a terrible crime. Isn't it a fact that they are still doing all this revising in a Marxist spirit? The three other points that you raised (the most important being whether to work inside or outside the party) are really not questions of principle, for there has not been one Opposition section that has taken as its mission the creation of a second party. We must continue to look upon ourselves as factions within the party. Naturally, we must recruit new members into the Communist Party ranks, that is, into the Opposition. The correct mixture of work both inside and outside the party can only be attained through practical work. No matter what, our work outside the party must be of the following nature: comrades inside the party must look upon us as friends, not enemies. Let's look at the European experience. In that case, the Opposition in France and Germany has recently grown closer to the party, and yet there has been absolutely no lessening in the struggle between the party and the Opposition. This strategy has already obtained the very best results in France and is fast doing so in Germany.

4. Biulleten Oppozitsii, in its most recent issue, has given great space to the China question. It's too bad that, up to now, you have not sent any materials regarding China's
peasant (soviet) movement, in order that we might adopt a correct stand. It is very important that we collect all information and carefully research all facts; otherwise we just might kill our opportunity to affect the whole situation.

Isn't there still a chance that the peasant war will converge with the workers' movement? This is an extremely important question. Theoretically, it doesn't discard the possibility of making gains while underground. That is, under the influence of the peasant insurrection, the revolution in the cities can intensify and quickly move forward. If this comes about, then the peasant insurrection takes on a different objective meaning. Naturally, our fundamental mission is to improve upon the ordinary peasant insurrection and, at the same time, to fuse with it. In addition, we must explain to the workers the true nature of peasant insurrections and what might be obtained through them in the future. Furthermore, we must devise a means to raise the workers' spirits through these insurrections. At the same time, we must visibly support the insurrectionists in their demands and programs, while opposing the landlords, officials, and bourgeoisie in their rumors, slanders, and repression. It is upon this foundation, and only this foundation, that we can expose the tricks of the Comintern organizations. They say that "soviet regimes" have been established in China—without a proletarian dictatorship! It has even reached the point where the workers refuse to actively participate in the movement. I expect that the "International" [International Left Opposition] will soon issue a manifesto on this question to inform China's Communist Party members.

5. It seems to be a fine time for me to send you a copy of *The Permanent Revolution*. You should receive it soon.

6. I am afraid that the address I have for Ch'en Tu-hsiu is no good. Please send him my regards, and tell him that I was very happy to read his letter of last December 10. I firmly hope we can work together in the future.

A warm handshake,

Trotsky

September 1, 1930

Dear Comrades,

I have already received your letter of July 27 (from the Shih-yueh she). I will only answer very simply, because the International Left Opposition is at this time planning to dis-
cuss the problems of China's present situation in a special manifesto. So I will merely repeat what has been written to the other groups.

1. It is the policy of the International Opposition not to side with any particular group of the Chinese Left Opposition against any other group. The reason being: nothing in any of our materials suggests the existence of serious differences requiring continued disunity.

2. In light of this, no single group of the Chinese Left Opposition can consider itself the sole representative of the International Left Opposition and attack any other group.

3. The same goes for Comrade Ch'en Tu-hsiu's group. Not long ago I received an English translation of Comrade Ch'en's open letter of December 10, 1929. Comrade Ch'en expressed views on fundamental issues which were in total agreement with our general stand. Realizing this, I fail to understand why some of our Chinese comrades still call Comrade Ch'en's group "rightist." At the same time, none of the other groups have furnished us with any documentary proof of this charge.

4. Because of this, we feel it is necessary that these four groups publicly unite in a sincere fashion, basing themselves on commonly held principles. Recently, the International Opposition has advised these groups on the basic points that should be incorporated in the party platform to be drafted by the platform committee, and on the methods of organizing for unification.

5. As for the question of the national assembly, I have already discussed that in previous articles. It seems that some of our Chinese comrades seek to "split hairs" with us over this question. If we struggle amongst ourselves over this question and its concomitant problems (personally, I don't think this will happen), then this dispute will certainly manifest itself throughout the drafting of a party platform. Only after we have received alternate analyses can the International Opposition gauge the depth of this dispute. However, we sincerely hope that the analyses we do receive are not written in a contentious way; rather, they should be written in such a way as to enable the Chinese Left Opposition to unify on a firm foundation of commonly held principles.

Communist greetings,
Trotsky

P. S. I am sending you two copies of this letter; forward one to Comrade Ch'en Tu-hsiu, as I do not know his address.
GREETINGS TO LA VERITE

August 25, 1930

The Communist Left Opposition can, it seems to me, look with unconcealed satisfaction on the past year, although its work was basically preparatory in character. The first year has been a year of ideological demarcation. First place in this work, that is, basically in the regeneration of communist thinking, goes, undoubtedly, to France, and in France—to *La Verite*. In any case, no one today will succeed in covering with the banner of the Communist Left that kind of ideological confusion that often remained in opposition to official communism only because it was in essence still inferior to it.

Allow me in this letter of greeting to bring up one question, the internationalism of *La Verite* and of the Communist League.

The opportunists reproach the Left Opposition for building simultaneously its international and national organizations, treating them both as the two sides of one and the same work. The Brandlerites, who represent in themselves the purest residue of prewar social democracy, accuse the International and French Left Opposition of owing their formation to the platform of the Russian Opposition. Thereby they show—without speaking of the rest—they absolutely don't understand the basis on which the Russian Opposition was formed. It would not be amiss to recall it here.

The internal discussion in the Soviet Communist Party did not lead to a system of groups until the events in Germany in the fall of 1923. The economic and political processes in the USSR were molecular in character and had a comparatively slow tempo. The events of 1923 in Germany gave the measure of the differences on the scale of that gigantic class struggle. It was then and on that basis that the Russian Opposition was formed.
The struggle over the kulaks and inner-party democracy in 1925-26 was serious. But here, too, the argument over the organic processes proceeded at a comparatively slow tempo. However, 1926 brought the general strike in Britain and posed squarely the fundamental tactical problems of the Western European workers‘ movement. The year 1927 put the whole Comintern strategy to the test in the catastrophe of the Chinese revolution. Precisely these events gave final shape to the Russian Left Opposition. Its development would not have been possible without the close relations of the Russian Left with critical, oppositionist elements and groups in different countries and, what is more important, without the gigantic struggles of the world proletariat and the problems they posed thereafter.

With changes and variations here and there, that is the way all the other sections of the International Left grew and developed.

The idea imputed to the Communist Left, that for Communist parties in all countries one and the same task and, apparently, one and the same method are entailed, is really the reverse of our true position. Proletarian internationalism, in thought and action, in our epoch flows not from the similarity or homogeneity of conditions in different countries but from their in-severable interconnections, despite the profound differences between them. To be precise, it was the old social democracy which thought that all countries developed along the same high road, some in front and some in the rear, and so it was sufficient to exchange their respective national experiences from time to time at congresses. This conception, consciously or unconsciously, led to socialism in one country and was completely reconciled with national defense, that is, social-patriotism.

We, the International Left, consider world economy and world politics not as the simple sum of national parts. On the contrary, we consider national economy and national politics only as highly distinctive parts of an organic world totality.

In this sense we are irreconcilably opposed to the Right Opposition groups, social democratic (Brandler, POPist) and syndicalist types alike. The Monatte group is national-syndicalist and for that reason alone reformist. In the epoch of imperialism it is no more possible to pose revolutionary problems within the framework of nations than it is to play chess on one square of the board.

The deepest differences separate our internationalism from
the official internationalism of the Comintern, which is under-
mining its own foundations by establishing for the USSR the
special privilege of "national socialism." This question has
been sufficiently elucidated already.

We have to ask ourselves, however, whether the work of the
Communist League, like that of the Left Opposition in general,
would have been possible within the framework of a single
party. Without the slightest hesitation we answer: Certainly,
it would have been possible. If we look at the history of Rus-
sian Bolshevism, it presents from a certain point of view the
picture of constant—sometimes very keen—struggle between
groups and factions. Despite the deep differences separating us
from the ruling faction we were fully prepared to struggle for
our ideas inside a single party; we had sufficient confidence
in the strength of our ideas for that. On another side, the then-
dominant faction, for example in France, would never have
thought of expelling the Communist Left if it had not been
ordered to do so. Conditions in the French communist movement
and the development of communism never in any sense or in
any way called for or justified a split in the Communist Party.
That was carried out on Moscow's orders and was exclusively
provoked by the struggle waged by the Stalin faction for its
own protection. The plebiscitary regime, definitively confirmed
by the Sixteenth Congress, could be maintained only by frag-
menting, pillorying, and crushing to dust all ideological cur-
rents and all ideas in general. However absurd the argument
that the Communist International is nothing but a weapon
for the defense of Russia's national interests, it is nevertheless
absolutely clear that the ruling faction in the Comintern is
only a bureaucratic servant of Stalin's autocracy. None of the
present sections of the Comintern can become a genuine prole-
tarian party without a radical change in the course and regime
of the Soviet Communist Party. This problem, prerequisite for
the solution of all the others, calls for great centralization. The
indissoluble international liaison of all the Left Opposition
groups is conditioned almost entirely by the need to concentrate
their forces to change the regime in the Communist
International.

It is understood, there is another way: it consists of turning
one's back on the Comintern and setting about building another
party, elsewhere. But that would be liquidationism in the
true sense of the word. The Comintern is the product of titanic
factors: the imperialist war, the open betrayal of the Second
International, the October Revolution, and the Marxist-Leninist
tradition of struggle against opportunism. That explains why, despite the criminal policies of the leadership, the masses, after pulling out many, many times, return to the Comintern. It is possible to think, for example, that the German workers will give the German Communist Party more votes in the coming election than they gave in the past. If Thaelmann, Remmele, and Company do all they can to weaken communism, on the other hand, the collapse of capitalism, the unprecedented commercial-industrial crisis, the decomposition of the parliamentary system, the baseness of the social democracy do everything they can to strengthen communism. And, very fortunately, these factors are more powerful than Thaelmann and Remmele, together with their patron, Stalin.

Breaking with the Comintern means entering the field of adventurism, trying to build new parties arbitrarily and artificially instead of freeing the Communist parties, which have emerged from history, from the vise of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Meanwhile, this single task, international in nature, has already made the organization of the International Left Opposition on a centralized basis indispensable.

However, do we not risk ignoring national peculiarities and tasks, of simplifying policies and bureaucratizing methods? Only those who have no confidence in the ideological content of the Left Opposition can pose the question in these terms. To think that each national group is capable, with its own forces, of posing and resolving national problems from an international standpoint, and at the same time to be afraid that an international organization—which includes all these sections—is incapable of taking into account the national peculiarities, is to make a mockery of Marxist thinking.

The Stalinist bureaucracy and Molotov's stupid commandship are not at all the consequences of international centralization but of the national-socialist transformation of the Russian bureaucracy, which systematically subjects all the other sections to its will. The struggle for national "autonomy" (waged by Brandler, Lovestone, Louis Sellier, and others) is basically of the same kind as the struggle for trade-union "autonomy"; both reflect the tendency of reformist elements to evade tight control—which can be exercised only through definite ideas and a definite organization, necessarily centralized and international. That is why it is not at all by chance that Louis Sellier, who profits by the phrygian cap, and Pierre Monatte, who profits by the Amiens Charter, find themselves closely united in the struggle against revolutionary communism.
Greetings to La Verite

The mechanical centralization operating today in the Comintern has no international content; on the other hand, it increasingly serves as the most convenient way to sacrifice the interests of the vanguard of the world proletariat to the demands of the plebiscitary Stalinist faction which rests on the basis of "national socialism." Reaction against this is inevitable. It has begun. It has only just begun. It will bring in its train not a few more blows, expulsions, splits, and final separations.

The right wing is retreating from the Comintern to prewar forms of the workers' movement, whose instability was strikingly revealed by the imperialist war and the October Revolution.

The Left Opposition is also, as is well known, a reaction against the national-socialist bureaucracy, but it does not look back; it looks forward. It represents in itself not a retreat from Bolshevism but the latest further development of Bolshevism in the course of the struggle against its degenerate epigones.

The apparatus will not prevail. Ideas will prevail—if they correctly express the course of development. The apparatus is able to enjoy independent power only to the extent that in the past it was based on ideas that had conquered the masses. The inertia of the apparatus can be very great, especially if it is armed with considerable financial resources and means of repression. But despite all this, the apparatus will not prevail; ideas will prevail—on condition that they are correct.

During the first year of La Verite's existence, its guiding ideas passed the test in the Opposition camp. The groups of parasites and dilettantes who disdainfully denied La Verite the right to exist have disappeared from the political scene or are in their death agonies. Stagnating, conservative groups are compelled, under La Verite's pressure, to reorganize themselves, to look for a new political orientation, and to check their baggage. That is true not only for France but also for Germany, Belgium, Italy, and other countries. That has made La Verite—to a well-known degree—an international organ of the Opposition. La Verite has exerted an influence on advanced communist elements not only in Europe but also in Asia and America. The little weekly organ around which, at the beginning, was gathered a small group sharing the same ideas has become a weapon for international activity. Ideas are powerful when they reflect faithfully the objective course of development. Today, La Verite has sunk deep roots in the soil of France; the group that began it is surrounded by a
double circle of friends in the ranks of both the party and the unions.

We are celebrating the first anniversary of *La Verite* but it would be incorrect not to say a word about *La Lutte de classes*. It has long been established that the more revolutionary a proletarian faction the deeper is its interest in theory. It is not by chance that the Communist Left in France has been able to build up a Marxist theoretical organ which has already shown itself to be necessary for the proletariat and which will prove to be of invaluable service to the proletarian revolution in the future.

*La Verite* is entering its second year. We have to look ahead. More remains to be done than has been. *La Verite* today is the organ of an ideological current; it has to become an organ of mass action. The goal is not very near. The main tasks still lie ahead of us. But now there can no longer be any doubt that the seeds sown in the past twelve months will begin to yield the desired shoots in the second year.
NOTES OF A JOURNALIST

Published September 1930

Prognoses That Have Been Confirmed

At the Tenth Plenum of the ECCI, i.e., a year ago, it was mentioned that humanity had entered "with both feet" into the revolutionary zone. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party it turned out:

"The development of the economic crisis is leading [!] in individual [!!] countries to its further development—into a political crisis" (from Molotov's report).

However, the economic crisis came only a year and a half after the Sixth World Congress, only a few months after the Tenth Plenum; but this crisis, we are told, is only "leading to further development." How fortunate that there exist the words "further development" which can be used to plug the holes in some prognosis or other.

"The intensification [!] of elements [!!] of a new [!!!] revolutionary upsurge is an indisputable fact" maneuvers Molotov, the very one in whose word of honor the Tenth Plenum believed. "This puts the work of the Communist parties and the Comintern on a completely new footing. All this calls for an adaptation of the work of the Communist parties to the new [!] problems of the revolutionary struggle."

However, the Sixth Congress with its supplementary Tenth Plenum had already brought the Communist parties onto the rails of the third period and of revolutionary upsurge. How does it come about, then, that all that is required is to begin adapting "to the new problems of the revolutionary struggle"? Isn't it possible to explain it a little more precisely? Are the parties turning to the left or the right? Going forward or going back? Or are they simply turning on their own axes?

"In the period 1928-29, the upsurge took place only in the United States of North America, France, Sweden, Belgium, and Holland . . ." (Molotov).
However, just in the middle of 1929, France stood "in the front ranks of the revolutionary upsurge." How does it suddenly turn out then that it underwent not a revolutionary but—industrial-commercial upsurge? It does not become any easier from hour to hour.

Manuilsky at the Sixteenth Congress posed "the problem of the uneven development of the revolutionary processes in different capitalist countries, the problem of the advanced countries lagging behind the rate of development of these processes in such secondary countries as Spain or in such colonial countries as India."

However, the resolution of the Tenth Plenum of the ECCI bore witness that Germany, France, and Poland occupy the first place in the approaching revolutionary upsurge. The first two countries in any event cannot be called insignificant or colonial.

Manuilsky goes further and states directly, "In the advanced capitalist countries the sweep of the revolutionary movement has not yet assumed open revolutionary forms."

But how did things stand at the Tenth Plenum of the ECCI? Finally, the resolution of the Sixteenth Congress modestly and vaguely announces "the opening of the end of relative capitalist stability."

This means that the whole Tenth Plenum has gone awry. But, alas, the disasters and devastations that it caused in the ranks and at the top have not gone awry.

And these "leaders" are astonished that the number of members in the sections of the Comintern is declining and the circulation of the press falling.

That is the same as if the director of some collective farm in the Moscow region sowed in December and harvested in April, and was astonished that he had a "disproportion" between his "influence" (in the offices of the collective farm and in the regional committee) and the quantity of grain in the silos.

Molotov is this kind of director of this kind of administrative collective—called the "Third International."

The Wind Turns About

Molotov says of the decisions of the Sixth World Congress: "In them there is given a fundamental analysis of world development and its perspectives, which received full [!] confirmation [!!!] in the events that followed."

This is all the more comforting because the only world
reporter to the Sixth Congress, Bukharin, was declared within a few months to be a bourgeois liberal.

The theses of the Sixth Congress, from the report of the "bourgeois liberal," announced "the growing Bolshevization of the party, the amassing of experience, internal consolidation, the overcoming of internal struggle, the overcoming of the Trotskyist opposition in the Comintern."

"The overcoming of internal struggle" sounds especially good in this triumphant melody. But Molotov conceals from us what took place after the Sixth Congress, i.e., after the happily achieved Bolshevization:

"Of the list of members and candidate members of the ECCI after the Sixth Congress, seven members are now outside the ranks of communism, having joined the camp of the renegades."

It transpires that, every time, it is necessary to begin from the beginning. The wind of "Bolshevization" turns about. And it further transpires that in the struggle against the "Trotskyist opposition" tomorrow's renegades did not occupy the last place. In a strange way, it was just they who played the leading role.

**Stalin and Roy**

"It is clear," said Molotov at the Sixteenth Congress, "that it is not such people as Roy, who defended the policy of a bloc with the national bourgeoisie and has now gone over to the camp of the right-wing renegades, who could create a communist party in India."

The bloc with the national bourgeoisie, which is the basis of Stalin and Molotov's tactics in China, is written into the program of the Comintern. Or can it be that it was Roy who wrote the program? Or did the present leader of the Comintern simply forget the program? Or is he intending to re-examine it?

The petty-bourgeois Indian democrat Roy considers, as is well known, that for the sake of the Indian revolution communists should construct neither a communist nor a proletarian party, but a popular-revolutionary party above classes, an Indian Kuomintang. Roy was expelled from the Comintern as a right-winger. Generally speaking, there is no place for proponents of a Kuomintang in a proletarian International. But the point is that Roy did not introduce his great idea about the incapacity of the party of the proletariat to lead a popular, that is, workers' and peasants', revolution
into the Comintern—he got it from the Comintern. As early as 1927 Roy's idea enjoyed official acceptance. The following extract from the leading organ of the Comintern on Roy's views on the tasks of the revolution in India appeared in April 1927:

"Comrade Roy's book is devoted to the most central question of contemporary revolutionary politics in India—the question of the organization of a popular party representing the interests of the workers, the peasants, and the petty bourgeoisie. The necessity of such an organization flows from the present conditions of the national revolutionary movement in India."

And further:

"Hence the task of the proletariat is to organize all these petty-bourgeois classes and layers into a single popular-revolutionary party and lead it to the assault on imperialism. We recommend this book to the reader who wants to form a definite and clear conception of the contemporary state of the national revolutionary movement in India, for it gives the Leninist interpretation of contemporary revolutionary politics in India" (Kommunistichesky Internatsional, number 15, April 15, 1927, pp. 50 and 52).

And how could the Comintern organ say otherwise? Roy's idea was in fact the idea of Stalin.

On May 18, 1927, Stalin answered a question from the students of the Chinese university in Moscow on the leading revolutionary party in China thus:

"We have said and we still say that the Kuomintang is a party of a bloc of several oppressed classes.... When I said in 1925 of the Kuomintang that it was the party of the worker-peasant bloc, I did not at all have in mind the characteristics of the actual [?] state of affairs in the Kuomintang, the characteristics of those classes which in fact adhered to the Kuomintang in 1925. When I spoke of the Kuomintang, I had in mind the Kuomintang only as a model of a special type of popular-revolutionary party in the oppressed countries of the East, especially in such countries as China and India, as a special type of popular-revolutionary party which has to rely on the support of a revolutionary bloc of workers and the petty bourgeoisie of town and countryside."

And Stalin finished off his answer with the assertion that the Kuomintang must still in the future be "a special type of popular-revolutionary party in the countries of the East." The ridiculous, not to say unscrupulous, excuse that in 1925 Stalin was not speaking of the Kuomintang as it is, but of the Kuo-
mintang as it ought to be, not of a fact but of an idea, is explained by the fact that Stalin had to justify himself to Chinese students after Chiang Kai-shek's coup, when it was already shown by experience that the Kuomintang contains not only oppressed classes, but also their oppressors. Stalin, however, did not hesitate. He merely separated the pure idea of the Kuomintang from the vile fact and asserted that this is the "type of popular-revolutionary party" for the countries of the East in general. This also meant the "Kuomintangization" of India.

Roy is nothing but a worthy disciple of Stalin.

**On Straw in General and Lozovsky in Particular**

Here is what Lozovsky said about France at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party:

"... in France several trade unions... have set up a so-called unitary opposition with its own platform and with its own evaluation of the present situation and the immediate perspectives."

What is the most remarkable thing?

"The most remarkable thing about this 'Unitary Opposition' consists in the fact that it is a bloc of the right wing and the Trotskyists, and that this platform is also the platform of Trotsky's organ in France, *La Verite*, at the head of which is Rosmer, the faithful follower of Trotskyism. The 'Unitary Opposition' is a creation of Trotskyists and shameless right-wingers. That is how the 'left Bolshevik' line of Trotsky and Company looks in practice. An organized opposition exists only in France."

"The most remarkable thing" is that in the above there is about 49 percent truth. The Left Opposition is in fact having great success in the French trade-union movement. But then there comes the other 51 percent, for in fact the Unitary Opposition, which follows the banner of the Communist Left, wages an irreconcilable struggle against the right-wing, semi-reformist opposition which covers itself with slogans of trade-union autonomy (Monatte, Chambellant) or directly supports the "Workers and Peasants Party" of Sellier and Company. There are no points of contact, whether political or organizational, between these two oppositions.

What in the world is "characteristic"?

"It is characteristic"—according to Lozovsky—"that wherever the Trotskyists have even the slightest influence, they come out together with the Amsterdamers against the Communists."
It is "characteristic" that there is not even 1 percent truth here.

Is there not perhaps something else "characteristic"?

"The Trotskyists assert that at a time of crisis economic struggle is impossible."

Who are these "Trotskyists"? Where did they assert this? When? But let us not hold up the inspired Lozovsky:

"The 'left' Trotskyist Neurath found nothing better than . . . ." etc. But doesn't Neurath belong to the Right Opposition in Czechoslovakia? Well.

What is Lozovsky short of?

"What we are short of in the independent revolutionary trade unions and trade-union oppositions is the ability to attract new layers of workers into struggle, to bind them with strong bonds to our organizations, to implant ourselves in the factories" (from the same speech).

In a word, everything would be fine for Lozovsky except that he is short of a few trifles: the ability to attract the masses, to organize them, and to penetrate into the factories.

Lozovsky is short of something else too, but from modesty he did not tell us.

Can you imagine a revolutionary straw man in action? And moreover in the role of a leader? You can't imagine it? That means you haven't seen or heard Lozovsky. Here is an imitable passage from the same speech of his to the Sixteenth Congress, with our modest additions in brackets:

"The main thing now is to free the workers' movement of the colonial and semicolonial countries from the slightest influence of the bourgeoisie [even from the 'slightest'!], to introduce a sharp differentiation between the classes [just try and hide it!], to raise a wave of proletarian distrust in politicos of the type of Gandhi, Nehru, Patel,281 Wang Ching-wei, etc. [but who has been raising a wave of trust in them?]. The most important thing [aren't there too many 'most important things'?] is not to let the Menshevik-Trotskyist ideas of Roy [but isn't Roy a disciple of Stalin and Lozovsky?] and Ch'en Tu-hsiu [it was Lozovsky who gave him his Menshevik ideas!] get a hold among the working masses, but to organize the masses in the bold Bolshevik way [but isn't that just 'what we are short of']?, realizing that the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry [precisely!] is a step on the road to the socialist revolution."

Straw is a very useful thing on a farm. But as a leader—well, need more be said?
Manuilsky Faced with a Problem

Not being able to hold his tongue, Manuilsky unexpectedly declared at the Sixteenth Congress, "The question of the nature of social fascism is a problem which has not yet been sufficiently worked out in the Communist International."

There you are! From the beginning they announced, confirmed, asserted, canonized, and cretinized, and now they are going to "work out" the question still more. Who, then, will deal with the "working out"? We have to propose Radek. Apart from him there is no one. Everyone else has taken off.

What is Social Fascism?

Radek must serve his novitiate. Toward this end he is writing verbose articles in Pravda on "the essence of social fascism." As Khemnitzer's philosopher once asked: "What is this, a rope?" And since the trouble is that the readers of the numerous articles on "social fascism" disastrously forget all the excellent arguments of the previous investigators, it is up to Radek to begin from the beginning. To begin from the beginning means to declare that Trotsky stands on the other side of the barricades. It is possible that Radek had to insert this sentence on the special request of the editorial board, as a moral honorarium for the publication of his article.

But all the same, what is the essence of social fascism? And how does it differ from true fascism? It appears that the difference (who would have thought it?) lies in the fact that social fascism is also "for carrying out the fascist policy, but in a democratic way." Radek explains in long words why nothing remained for the German bourgeoisie but to carry out the fascistic policy through parliament "with an outward retention of democracy." So what is the point? Up until now Marxists have assumed that democracy is the outward disguise of the class dictatorship—one of its possible disguises. The political function of the contemporary social democracy is the creation of just such a democratic disguise. In no other way is it different from fascism which, with other methods, other ideology, in part also with another social base, organizes, insures, and protects the same dictatorship of imperialist capital.

But—Radek argues—it is possible to maintain decaying capitalism only with fascist measures. In the long run this is entirely correct. From this, however, does not flow the identity of social democracy and fascism, but merely the fact that the social democracy is obliged in the long run to clear the road
for fascism, while the latter, coming to take its place, does not deny itself the pleasure of battering a considerable number of social democratic heads. Such objections, however, are declared by Radek in his article to be an "apology for the social democracy." This terrible revolutionary apparently thinks that to cover the bloody tracks of imperialism with the brush of democracy is a higher and more eminent mission than to defend the imperialist coffers with blackjack in hand.

Radek cannot deny that the social democracy clings to parliamentarism with all its feeble power, for all the sources of its influence and welfare are bound up with this artificial machine. But, protests the inventive Radek, "it is nowhere said that fascism requires the formal dispersal of parliament." Is that really the case? But it was precisely the political party that was called fascist that for the first time, in Italy, destroyed the parliamentary machine in the name of the praetorian guard of bourgeois class rule. This, it turns out, has no importance. The phenomenon of fascism is one thing and its essence is another. Radek finds that the destruction of parliamentarism does not require fascism, if this destruction is taken as a thing in itself. "What is this, a rope?"

But since he feels that this does not come off so smoothly, Radek adds with still greater ingenuity: "Even Italian fascism did not disperse the parliament right away [!]." What is true is true. And yet it did disperse it, without sparing even the social democracy, the finest flower in the parliamentary bouquet. According to Radek, it looks as though the social fascists dispersed the Italian parliament, only not right away but after reflection. We are afraid that Radek's theory does not quite explain to the Italian workers why the social fascists are now living in exile. The German workers, too, will not easily grasp who it really is in Germany that wants to disperse parliament: the fascists or the social democrats?

All of Radek's arguments, like those of his teachers, can be reduced to the fact that the social democracy in no way represents ideal democracy (i.e., evidently not the kind of democracy that Radek had rosy dreams about after his conciliatory embraces with Yaroslavsky). The profound and fertile theory of social fascism is not built on the foundation of a materialist analysis of the particular, specific function of the social democracy, but upon the basis of an abstract democratic criterion that is peculiar to the opportunists even when they want to or have to occupy a position on the most ex-
treme wing of the most extreme barricade (during which time they turn their backs and their weapons the wrong way).

There is no class contradiction between the social democracy and fascism. Both fascism and the social democracy are bourgeois parties; not bourgeois in the general sense, but the sort that preserve a decaying capitalism that is ever less able to tolerate democratic forms or any fixed form of legality. This is precisely why the social democracy, notwithstanding the ebbs and flows of its fortunes, is condemned to extinction, giving way to one of two polar opposites: either fascism or communism.

The difference between blonds and brunets is not so great, at any rate substantially less than the difference between humans and apes. Anatomically and physiologically, blonds and brunets belong to one and the same species, may belong to one and the same nationality, one and the same family, and, finally, both may be one and the same scoundrel. Yet skin and hair color has a significance not only for state passports but in life generally. Radek, however, in order to earn the hearty applause of Yaroslavsky, wants to prove that the brunet is at bottom a blond, only with darker skin and black hair.

There are good theories in the world that serve to explain facts. But so far as the theory of social fascism is concerned, the only needs it serves are those of capitulators serving their novitiates.
Dear Comrades,

I received your letter of August 30 including your comments on my circular letter. The reason for my late reply is that your letter was sent to Bratislava to be translated into German. If you can write from Budapest in German, that would speed up our correspondence. But if that would entail difficulties for you, write in Hungarian and I will continue to send your letters to be translated.

I am very glad to learn, both from what two French comrades had to say and from your letters, that an organization of young worker communists exists in Hungary that upholds the point of view of the Left Opposition. I will be quite happy to keep in touch with you in the future.

As far as I can judge from your description, there are various tendencies in the ranks of the Hungarian Opposition, which are inevitably bound to go off in different directions; and the sooner this happens, the better.

In Hungary there is not thus far, apparently, an independent organization of the Right Opposition (like the Brandlerites in Germany, the Lovestone group in America, the Neurath group in Czechoslovakia, etc.). The right-wing elements, it seems, still cover themselves with the overall banner of the Opposition. This is a danger.

On the other hand, there are in the ranks of the Opposition more than a few ultralefts and just plain muddleheads, who combine right-wing views with ultraleft ones, those like Korsch or Urbahns in Germany, the Prague group around Artur Pollack, etc.

To draw a line between ourselves and such elements is absolutely necessary. This can be done only on the basis of prin-
ciplined issues both on the Hungarian level and internationally. It will be absolutely necessary for you to acquaint yourselves more closely with the discussion that has gone on among us Bolshevik-Leninists, on the one hand, and among the rights and ultralefts, on the other. Hungarian comrades in emigration will presumably translate the most important documents of this discussion for you, or at least excerpts from the documents, so that you can be fully abreast of these matters and can take an active part in all the work of the International Opposition.

The need to draw lines of principle does not at all mean, of course, that one must expel every worker who goes astray on one question or another or who hesitates or vacillates. On the contrary, we should argue for our views in the most comradely and patient way, giving the members of the organization or sympathizers a chance to think over each question on their own and to arrive at the correct conclusions independently, even if that means hesitation and vacillation. This is especially true for an organization made up of young people. It is necessary to break with those elements who already have a fully formed view of the world which is opposed to ours and who only try to take advantage of the membership of the Opposition to spread views hostile to Marxism and Leninism.

You write that the official Hungarian party is a tiny sect, but you add at the same time that your organization is a still tinier sect. It seems to me that you wrongly apply the term sect to yourselves. A weak organization is not yet a sect. If it follows correct methods, it will sooner or later win influence within the working class. Sect is a term I would use only for an organization of the kind that is forever doomed, by virtue of its mistaken methodology, to remain on the sidelines of life and of the working-class struggle.

You are absolutely right when you say that you must independently take up the work that the official party cannot or will not carry out. It would be senseless to ask permission of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which expels and persecutes the Bolshevik-Leninists. It goes without saying that now and in the future you will have to struggle independently to win the masses over to the banner of communism. But it does not follow from this at all that a second party and a fourth international are needed. Even if the official party in Hungary were much weaker than our organization, that would still not decide the question, for, as you have written quite correctly, this question has to be decided on an international scale. Of course
in every single country the Opposition's methods of action will be decided by national conditions and above all by the relation of forces between the Opposition and the official party in the given country.

I am sending you herewith a copy of my letter dated today and addressed to the conference of the German Opposition, for the letter deals precisely with the question of the attitude of the Opposition toward the official party in a country where millions of workers follow the party.

Some Hungarian Oppositionists argue, according to what you have said, that an immediate transition from feudalism to socialism is inconceivable and that therefore the Soviet republic can never lead to socialism but only to capitalism. This way of posing the question is wrong through and through. In Russia on the eve of the revolution it was not feudal but capitalist relations that played the dominant role; otherwise where would the proletariat have come from which proved to be so capable of taking and holding state power?

Equally incorrect is the argument that NEP would inevitably lead to capitalism. This question cannot, in general, be decided a priori: everything depends on the relation of forces. The proletariat of the most advanced countries, when it takes power, will probably permit market relations to continue for a rather long transitional period, gradually giving them an ever more regulated form and in this way finally eliminating the forms of commodity exchange in the economy.

In order for state capitalism in the true sense of the term to become established in Russia, power would have to pass into the hands of the bourgeoisie. Without a civil war that is inconceivable. Can such a civil war occur? It is entirely possible. The policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy have greatly weakened the proletariat's position, reduced its revolutionary spirit, and at the same time, through a whole series of mistaken and even senseless actions, driven the petty bourgeoisie into a terrible state of embitterment. In the event of a civil war, which side would prove victorious? This can never be stated beforehand. But we would have to do everything possible to assure that victory fell to the proletarian side. There can be no doubt that if the bourgeoisie—the domestic variety aided by its foreign counterpart—tried to regain for itself all that was taken away in October 1917, the proletariat, repressed as it is by the Stalinist apparatus, would awaken with mighty revolutionary energy. In a struggle of this kind to defend the gains of October, the Stalinist apparatus would be likely to lose its predominance
as well. To make it easier for the Soviet proletariat to resolve its problems is the duty of the International Left Opposition and, first of all, of the Russian Opposition.

Only one thing is sure: the Soviet Union will not build a socialist society without the victory of the proletariat in the West, in the advanced countries. But since the existence of the Soviet Union makes that victory easier, the struggle for the revival and strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union is one of the most important tasks of the Communist Opposition.

I firmly shake your hand, and send you warmest communist greetings, and wish you success.

Yours,
L. Trotsky
THE INTERNAL SITUATION
OF THE FRENCH LEAGUE

September 25, 1930

To the Executive Committee of the French League

Dear Comrades,

I have received a letter dated the twenty-ninth from Comrade Naville in which he says, referring to the comrades of the EC:

"They are unanimous in thinking that it is absolutely necessary that I contact you about international questions that are of particular importance in Paris. As far as the League's situation is concerned, they thought that although it would be useful for me to go over the situation with you, it is on the other hand indispensable that the political questions be presented and settled out in the open at a national conference of the French Opposition. At present we are oriented toward the preparations for this conference."

Unfortunately Comrade Naville explains the decision of the EC instead of citing it. This always impairs accuracy. But if the explanation is correct, comrades, I cannot hide my astonishment from you. On Comrade Naville's initiative, as I understand it, you have found it necessary to inform me that questions arising in the French League can only be settled by the French League (its conference, its executive committee, etc.). That means that you suppose I am capable of asserting that I can solve questions in private which can only be resolved out in the open by a national conference. This supposition or, if you will, this suspicion so openly contradicts all elementary ideas about organizational life that I cannot but repeat my astonishment and my regret at not having received the full text of your decision.

For a long time I have carried on correspondence with Comrade Naville on the April international conference and I found that it was necessary to dwell at length upon the impermissibility of resolving questions in the corridors instead of formally presenting them to the body in question.

The question I emphasized most sharply during Comrade
Naville's most recent visit was not the international question, precisely because personal "contact" could not accomplish much in this area. The question which preoccupied me in connection with Comrade Naville's visit (aside from the personal desire to see him here) was that of attempting through an absolutely private and personal intervention to aid in lessening the internal crisis, which flows from differences in methods, but which can lead to very serious personal conflicts and frictions. This was not, I repeat, a case of my infringing upon the rights of the League in any way. It is the conference which should speak on all questions that are placed before it. But, comrades, there is also the way the conference is prepared and the way questions are put before it. If there is a serious but not irresolvable conflict, if there is goodwill on both sides for avoiding the most discouraging and demoralizing forms of personal struggle, one can always obtain results that are altogether preliminary and provisional, but of great importance. This was the task I set myself for the encounter in question.

I can testify that I found there was no question of Comrade Molinier's goodwill. Unfortunately I cannot say as much about Comrade Naville.

Your resolution and Comrade Naville's attitude during this last period might really give the impression that I intervened in this conflict on my own initiative. Even though I believe that such an initiative would not in any way be reprehensible, I must underline the fact that I only intervened in this question on the initiative of the French comrades, Comrade Naville above all. He was the one who sent me a letter with three signatures (Naville, Gourget, Gerard), which informed me in general terms about the conflict. Even my first impression, based almost entirely on my rather abundant correspondence with Comrade Naville, was not only extremely painful, but allowed me to anticipate the altogether disastrous consequences the conflict could have for the young organization. For me it was not a question of the political fate of a single comrade who faced expulsion (an important enough question in itself). It was a question of the methods of the leadership of the organization, which I found far more dangerous than the evil, real or imaginary, that they were supposed to counteract. I did not hide my preliminary, summary opinion from Comrade Naville, but being called upon to intervene by Comrade Naville I found it my duty to obtain more complete information on the matter, that is, to establish contact with Comrade Molinier regarding these questions. I must emphasize that this whole
episode, including Comrade Molinier's journey, was the result of Comrade Naville's initiative, since Comrade Molinier had never written anything to me about the conflict before then and did not ask for my intervention, and that I invited him on my own initiative, just as I had Comrade Naville before him.

Even if Comrade Naville subsequently found my intervention to be an intrusion (which of course does not mean to me that I would call a halt to activity I had already begun in order to serve the League), he had no reason to initiate your resolution because I don't believe that by inviting me to intervene he himself envisaged infringing in this way on the rights and duties of the League.

Comrade Naville writes: "At the present time, the internal crisis in the League is somewhat localized." No, on the contrary, it is in the process of being internationalized. I have been able to verify this at every step during the past month. In the last few days I have been able to verify it once again, in the Hungarian episode, the Landau letter, etc. Since you believe that these questions should be settled out in the open at the national conference, I will have no other choice but to follow your lead and present to the members of the League my opinion on the whole complex of questions, just as I am following Comrade Naville's lead in addressing myself to you for this explanation.

As for the situation of our international organization, we have elaborated proposals here that I see as a minimum of necessary reforms for bettering the compromise situation that has existed since the month of April. Of course I would be more than happy to discuss this question again with Comrade Naville, but I ask you to analyze our proposals in your official capacity as the Executive Committee and to communicate your opinion to us, so that later the necessary course of action can be undertaken in an energetic and cooperative fashion before all the sections in order to activate and normalize our international work.

In regard to Comrade Landau's letter and the position taken by Comrade Naville on somewhat analogous questions on the internal conflict in Germany—I feel it is necessary that representation in the bureau (?) or the provisional secretariat (?) not be one-sided. If Comrade Naville represents the point of view of the majority of the EC, I feel it is necessary that there be representation from the Russian Opposition. Naturally both can present themselves as representatives of the International Opposition and act in full accord.
The situation of the Stalin faction in the USSR and the Comintern, which is becoming more and more critical (its ideological base is completely undermined and is shown to be so more clearly each day), and the indubitable successes of the Communist Left Opposition are forcing the Stalinists to continually sharpen their struggle against us. This struggle takes on and will take on different forms, which can be reduced to three principal kinds: (a) physical attack; (b) slander; and (c) provocation.

**Physical attack** leads in the USSR to legal assassinations of Bolshevik-Leninists (Blumkin, Silov, Rabinovich) by the GPU, that is, by the Agabekovs, or the Yagodas, who differ not a whit from the Agabekovs. In China and Greece the assassinations are perpetrated in ambush. In the other countries they have not yet gone to the point of murder—they content themselves in the meantime with raids and beatings (as, for example, in Leipzig).

**Slander** in its turn takes different forms, preserving invariably its vile character. Thus Bluecher, on Stalin's order, spoke of two "Trotskyists" who deserted the Red Army in the Far East. The Soviet newspapers write about sabotage on the railroads by "Trotskyists" and of the train wrecks they arranged. News stories of this kind, fabricated under the immediate direction of Stalin (in this field he is particularly skillful) are systematically put into circulation. Their purpose is clear: to prepare new bloody attacks against the committed revolutionaries who refuse to betray the October Revolution.

In Europe this slander takes on a more circumspect and general character: "counterrevolutionary," "against the defense of the USSR," "support of the social democracy," etc. Dividing, poisoning, and weakening the proletarian vanguard, the Stalinists are trying to prevent a conciliation between the Left Oppo-
sition and the proletarian base of the party, because such a conciliation, which is essential for the success of communism, would inflict a telling blow to the Stalinist apparatus. This once again confirms the fact that the Stalin regime has become the principal obstacle in the development of the USSR and the Comintern.

The third form of the struggle—provocation—is made much easier by the fact that it takes place among members of the same party. The GPU floods Opposition cells, groups, deportation colonies, etc., with its agents, who afterwards confess or instigate confessions from others. These same GPU agents attribute to the Opposition real or imagined "Wrangel officers," deserters, and railroad wreckers, thereby preparing the basis for the bloody attacks.

Undoubtedly as the International Opposition grows the methods of provocation will be applied on an ever wider scale against the other national sections; this is the source of gravest danger. Stalin has already shown that in the struggle against the Left Opposition he will stop at nothing—not even at a bloc with the bourgeois diplomats and police. The conditions of Trotsky's expulsion to Turkey speak for themselves. Stalin's and Thaelmann's agreement with the Social Democratic government barring Trotsky's entry into Germany, Cachin's conference with Bessedovsky and Dovgalevsky on the same subject, Stalin's bloc with the German publisher of Kerensky's slanderous book, the scandalous character of the expulsion of our friend Andres Nin, the leader of the Spanish communists, to reactionary Estonia—all are but a small part of the many exploits of this sort.

The Italian Stalinists revealed in the press the secret names of the Oppositionists, thus exposing them to attack by the police. There is no need to add that the Agabekovs, who swarm within the GPU, brought up in the struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists, are quite capable of betraying the Oppositionists into the hands of the capitalist police; at any rate, they will not be chastised by Stalin for doing that.

The Opposition is thus exposed more and more to the simultaneous and sometimes joint blows of Stalin's agents and the bourgeois police, and often it is not easy to distinguish who delivers the blow. For example, quite recently two agents provocateurs, posing as Oppositionists, tried to penetrate the central body of the Opposition, and it is difficult to determine whether they are in the pay of the Polish Okhrana, the French police, or Stalin's agency. Similar cases are certain to multiply.
Physical Attack, Slander, and Provocation

Our Leipzig comrades showed remarkable discretion in refusing to give the Social Democratic police, summoned by neighbors, the names of those who attacked the house of Comrade Buchner. We look for a verdict on the crimes of Stalin's agents, not from the Social Democratic police, but from the Communist workers. But it is altogether evident that if attacks and provocations become more frequent, they will, by the inescapable logic of the struggle and independently of us, be publicized, not to speak of the possibility that a new Agabekov, deserting to the capitalist camp, may disclose to the press the Stalinist plots against the Opposition, as Bessedovsky recounted his negotiations with Cachin. It is unnecessary to point out what damage is done in the end to the interests of the USSR and the prestige of the Comintern by the poison that activities of this sort introduce into the working-class movement.

What ought to be the attitude of the Opposition in the face of physical attack, slander, and provocation?

1. We should be guided in our policy, not by blind revenge toward Stalin's secret police, but by a political goal: to compromise criminal methods and their authors in the eyes of the Communist workers.

2. We should carefully avoid all steps which could, even though by fault of the Stalinists, introduce, directly or indirectly, prejudice against the USSR or the Comintern. And not for one minute do we identify either the USSR or the Comintern with the Stalinist faction.

3. While we do everything in our power to prevent the Stalinist atrocities from being used by the class enemy against the proletarian revolution, it is indispensable, nevertheless, to communicate to the Communist ranks, by word of mouth, by circular letters, and by intervention at party meetings, all facts about attacks, slander, and provocation that have been verified.

4. After each new case capable of awakening the revolutionary conscience of the Communist workers, it is indispensable to explain again and again and to repeat that the Communist Left Opposition wishes only an open and comradely ideological struggle in the interest of the proletarian revolution, and that the Opposition tirelessly calls upon the party members to establish honest methods of ideological struggle, without which the education of true revolutionaries is impossible.

5. During the election of delegates to conferences, of members to local and central bodies of the Opposition, of editors, etc., the candidates' past performance must be carefully probed in order to prevent the infiltration of agents provocateurs.
One of the best forms of control is inquiry among the workers who have been in prolonged contact with the given person.

6. In cases where Opposition organizations learn of a new attack or provocation prepared by an agent of Stalin, it will be necessary to warn, in writing, the leading organs of the official Communist Party, telling them that before the eyes of the Communist workers we hurl back upon the leaders themselves the responsibility for the crimes that are being prepared.

7. All cases of the character mentioned above must be immediately communicated to the International Secretariat, with exact information of the circumstances, the names of the participants, etc. That will permit us to conduct a campaign on an international scale.

We have no doubt—and all the past experience of the revolutionary movement proves it—that if all our sections show firmness, perseverance, and vigilance in the struggle, all the poisonous methods of Stalinism will be turned against Stalinism itself, and will serve to strengthen the position of the Bolshevik-Leninists.
To all sections of the International Opposition

Dear Comrades:

The growth of our ranks, the strengthening of our organizations, the adherence of new national sections, place new tasks before us and impose new obligations on us.

Up to now our work had an essentially critical and propagandist character. We have subjected and still subject to criticism the sorry experiments in policy of the centrist bureaucrats and their direction of the Comintern. This aspect of our activity should not only be continued with the same emphasis in the future, but should be broadened and deepened. At the same time the Left Opposition should participate more actively in struggles of the proletariat, formulating on each occasion its evaluation of the situation and the slogans that flow from it.

It is quite evident that this task requires a far closer international consolidation of the Opposition ranks. That is why the International Secretariat considers preparation of the world conference one of its most important tasks.

We consider the convoking of a European conference to be especially pressing. In the framework of the world as a whole, Europe represents not only a geographic unit but also an economic and political unit! It is unnecessary to recall that the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe is based on this fact. It is precisely now that the problem of Europe as such is posed in a particularly acute form. The knot of the problem is Germany, its fate, its ultimate development. Recent elections in Germany have revealed with unprecedented acuteness that the extremely unstable equilibrium of forces in German society can develop in the next period into the proletarian revolution or into the fascist counterrevolution. In either case, Europe—Europe above all—will be drawn into the whirlpool of great events. The International Opposition must work out a consistent analysis of the situation in Germany, in Europe, and in the entire world, and raise for the different countries
well-coordinated slogans, flowing from a uniform general conception.

That is why we think the convoking of a preparatory European conference at the very beginning of next year is indispensable. The two or two and a half remaining months should be used for the most serious and detailed preparation for this conference.

The conference of our German section now taking place [October 11-12] will certainly furnish us with the most important material for the evaluation of the political situation and the tasks of the Opposition. The preparation for the conference of the French Communist League will be made in the same spirit. Its resolutions will be communicated in time to all the sections. The theses sent by the editors of the Russian Biulleten Oppozitsii on "The Turn in the Communist International and the Situation in Germany" should be considered a document intended for discussion in all the sections in their preparatory work for the conference. We intend to devote number 3 of the International Bulletin principally to questions concerning the European conference. We invite all the sections to send us immediately documents and other material that clarify their position and their work in the domain of current tasks, and also to declare their positions on any documents already sent and on those which they may send later containing amendments, counterproposals, and additions.

It is self-evident that we are concerned with a conference of organizations that stand on a common basis of principle, tested by experience in struggle and international discussion. It would be absolute nonsense to return at this conference to questions already settled (one or two parties, the class character of the USSR, the class content of the Chinese revolution, etc.), since the line of demarcation inside the Opposition has already been established in these fields. Only that which is acquired through struggle is solid and durable. The task of the conference does not consist in reopening to question acquired positions, but, on the contrary, in formulating clearly and precisely the ideas and methods common to us, and in making them the cornerstone of the Opposition program. In this manner the European conference will mark a great step forward—preparation for the most important task of the world conference—a program obligatory for all the sections.

We hope that our initiative will meet with your approval and your support. However, we ask you to send us, as soon as possible, your definite reply on the subject of the desirability and importance of holding the conference in January 1931.291
NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. "The Three Factions in the Comintern." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Marilyn Vogt. Unsigned. This is the fragment of a letter, undated, located in a file marked "1930" in the Harvard archives. Internal evidence points to a probable date of early 1930 or late 1929. It appears to be a reply to a letter asking Trotsky's opinion on a variety of questions, with Trotsky numbering his answers to correspond to a series of numbered questions. Points 1 and 2 are missing in the typed manuscript at Harvard, and point 14, in which Trotsky said he could not answer the question without a full analysis and that he was preparing such for publication as a pamphlet, was crossed out, evidently by Trotsky. Most of the letter deals with the factional situation in the Communist International and its affiliated parties at the end of 1929, after the Stalinist faction had crushed its former ally, the right wing (or Right Opposition) led by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky in the Soviet Union, and had expelled their supporters in other countries (see Writings 29).

2. Centrism was Trotsky's term for tendencies in the radical movement that stand or oscillate between reformism, which is the position of the labor bureaucracy and the labor aristocracy, and Marxism, which represents the historic interests of the working class. Until around 1935 Trotsky saw Stalinist centrism as a special variety: "bureaucratic centrism," sometimes "centrism" for short. After 1935 he felt that this term was inadequate to describe the continuing degeneration of Stalinism. Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) became a social democrat in 1898, joined the Bolshevik faction in 1904, was coopted to its Central Committee in 1912, and in 1917 was elected to it for the first time. In 1917 he favored a conciliatory attitude to the Provisional Government before Lenin returned and reoriented the Bolsheviks toward winning power. He was elected commissar of nationalities in the first Soviet government, and general secretary of the Communist Party in 1922. Lenin called in 1923 for his removal from the post of general secretary because he was using it to bureaucratize the party and state apparatuses. After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin gradually eliminated his major opponents, starting with Trotsky, until he became virtual dictator of the party and the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The chief concepts associated with his name are "socialism in one country," "social fascism," and "peaceful coexistence."
3. The **Left Opposition** (Bolshevik-Leninists) was formed in 1923 as a faction of the Soviet CP; the International Left Opposition was to be formed in April 1930 as a faction of the Comintern. The Stalinists called the members of the Left Opposition "Trotskyites" or "Trotskyists," a term that Trotsky disliked and usually put in quotation marks when he had to use it. The ILO's first international conference was held in Paris in February 1933. When the ILO decided later that year to work for the creation of a new International, it also changed its name to the International Communist League. The founding conference of the Fourth International was held in Paris in September 1938. Resolutions, theses, and reports adopted by the early international conferences of the Fourth International and its predecessors have been collected in *Documents of the Fourth International: The Formative Years (1933-40)* (Pathfinder Press, 1973).

4. **G. Bessedovsky** was a Russian Stalinist functionary in charge of the Soviet embassy in Paris, which he helped to purge of Left Oppositionists, including Christian Rakovsky, in 1927. At the end of 1929 he defected from the embassy and wrote a series of lurid anti-Soviet articles. **N. Ustrialov** was a Russian professor and economist who opposed the October Revolution and emigrated, but returned and went to work for the Soviet government because he believed it would inevitably be compelled to restore capitalism gradually. He supported Stalin's measures against Trotsky as a step in this direction.

5. Thermidor 1794 was the month, according to the calendar initiated by the French Revolution, when the radical Jacobins headed by Robespierre were overthrown by the right wing within the revolutionary camp. Trotsky called the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy Thermidorean because he believed that its policies were preparing the way for a capitalistic counterrevolution. Until 1935, Trotsky used the analogy of Thermidor to denote an actual shift of power from one class to another, that is, the triumph of bourgeois counterrevolution in the USSR. Then he modified his theory, using the Thermidor analogy thereafter to designate a reactionary development which occurred "on the social foundation of the revolution" and which therefore did not alter the class character of the state (see "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism" in *Writings 34-35.*

6. **Bolshevism** was the tendency in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party organized by Lenin in 1903 as a faction opposing the Mensheviks, led by Julius Martov. The Bolsheviks became a separate party in 1912, and in 1918, after leading the Soviet revolution to victory, changed their name to Communist Party (Bolshevik). In 1925 the party was officially called the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik); in 1952 it became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Trotsky considered the Left Opposition to be the continuator, after Lenin's death, of authentic Bolshevism. "Old Bolsheviks" were those who joined before 1917, that is, members of the party's "old guard." Although it was an honorific designation, Lenin sometimes
used it disparagingly for party veterans who hadn't learned or re-learned anything for a long time.

7. The **Tenth Congress** of the Soviet CP was held in March 1921 at a time of great social tension, one example of which was the Kronstadt uprising against the Soviet government. Oppositional tendencies had arisen inside the CP itself, and Lenin was sufficiently worried about the fate of the party to propose for the first time a temporary ban against factions within the CP. The passage of this ban did not prevent Stalin and his collaborators from organizing a secret faction, nor did it prevent Lenin himself from deciding to form a group to fight against Stalinism inside the party at the end of 1922.

8. The **Comintern** (Communist International or Third International) was organized under Lenin's leadership as the revolutionary successor to the Second International. In Lenin's time its world congresses were held once a year—the first four from 1919 to 1922. Trotsky regarded the theses of these four congresses as the programmatic cornerstone of the Left Opposition and the Fourth International. The Fifth Congress, controlled by a bloc of Stalin with Zinoviev and Kamenev, was held in 1924, the Sixth not until 1928, and the Seventh not until 1935. Trotsky called the Seventh the "liquidation congress" (see Writings 35-36), and it was in fact the last before Stalin announced the Comintern's dissolution in 1943 as a gesture to his imperialist allies. Gregory Zinoviev (1883-1936), an Old Bolshevik, was president of the Comintern, 1919-26. With Kamenev, he was an ally of Stalin in the crusade against "Trotskyism," launched at the end of 1922 or beginning of 1923. In conflict with Stalin in 1925, he led the Leningrad Opposition and formed a bloc with the Left Opposition (the United Opposition) against Stalin, 1926-27. Expelled from the party in 1927, he capitulated to Stalin and was readmitted. Expelled again in 1932, he recanted once more, but was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in 1935, and was framed up in the first Moscow trial in 1936 and executed.

9. Social democracy was the designation of various socialist and labor parties constituting the Second International. Until 1914, when most social democratic parties supported the war, it was synonymous with revolutionary socialism or Marxism. Thereafter it was used by revolutionaries to designate opportunist betrayers of Marxism. **Independent social democracy** refers to centrist groups that broke away from the official parties during and after World War I, but later fell apart, with some of their members returning to the social democracy and others becoming communists.

10. *La Verite* (Truth) was started in August 1929 as a weekly paper of the French Left Opposition. *Biulleten Oppozitsii* (Bulletin of the Opposition) was the Russian-language journal started by Trotsky in July 1929. Although a monthly publication date could not be maintained, it was published in Paris until 1931, then shifted to Berlin until 1933, when the Nazis banned it. Thereafter it was published in Paris until 1934, in Zurich until 1935, in Paris again
until 1939, and in New York until 1941, when it ceased publication. A complete set in four volumes, with all of Trotsky's articles identified, has been published by Monad Press, 1973 (distributed by Pathfinder Press).

11. The October Revolution was the second to occur in Russia in 1917. An earlier revolution (in February, according to the old Russian calendar) had overthrown czarism and brought a capitalist Provisional Government to power. In October, the Soviets (councils) of workers, peasants, and soldiers, led by the Bolsheviks, overthrew the Provisional Government and established the first workers' state. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924) restored Marxism as the theory and practice of revolution in the imperialist epoch after it had been debased by the opportunists, revisionists, and fatalists of the Second International. He initiated the political tendency that became known as Bolshevism, the first to show how to build the kind of party needed to lead a working-class revolution. He was the first Marxist to fully understand and explain the central importance of colonial and national struggles. He served as the first head of state of the Soviet republic and founded the Communist International, helping to elaborate its principles, strategy, and tactics. He prepared a fight against the bureaucratization of the Soviet CP and state, but died before he could carry it out.

12. The Tenth Plenum of the ECCI (Executive Committee of the Communist International), held in July 1929, in addition to pronouncing the Left Opposition liquidated, began the serious implementation of the "third period" line introduced the previous year at the Sixth World Congress, where the Comintern's program, submitted by Bukharin and Stalin, had been adopted. Trotsky's criticism of the draft program in 1928 is contained in The Third International After Lenin (Pathfinder Press, 1972). Pravda (Truth) was the official Bolshevik paper starting in 1912; it became a daily in 1917, and a mouthpiece of Stalinism after Lenin's death.

13. The declaration of Rakovsky and others was a statement by Rakovsky, V. Kosior, and M. Okudzhava written in August 1929 during a crisis that shook the Left Opposition after several of its leading adherents capitulated to Stalin on the ground that his recently proclaimed "left turn" meant the Opposition was no longer needed. It appeared in Biuletien Oppozitsii, number 6, October 1929, along with an open letter by Trotsky, dated September 25, 1929, associating himself with it (see Writings 29). Christian G. Rakovsky (1873-1941), a leading revolutionary in the Balkans before World War I, became chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet in 1918 and later served as ambassador to London and Paris. An early leader of the Left Opposition, he was deported to Central Asia in 1928, where he suffered illness, medical neglect, and isolation. Rakovsky held out as an Oppositionist until 1934, but his capitulation to Stalinism did not save him. In 1938 he was one of the major defendants in the third Moscow trial, where he "confessed," was convicted and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.
14. Hugo Urbahns (1890-1946), a leader of the German CP in the 1920s, was expelled by the Stalinists in 1927 because as a supporter of Zinoviev he had defended the Russian United Opposition. In 1928, along with Arkady Maslow and Ruth Fischer, he helped found the Leninbund, which collaborated with the Left Opposition until 1930. Ernst Thaellmann (1886-1945), after the expulsion of the Maslow-Fischer-Urbahns trio, became the unchallenged leader of the German CP, its presidential candidate, and a supporter of the Comintern's third period policies which led to Hitler's victory. He was arrested by the Nazis in 1933 and executed in 1945.

15. "Some Results of the Sino-Soviet Conflict." The Militant, weekly paper of the Communist League of America (Left Opposition), February 8, 1930. In 1929 the Soviet government and the Chinese Kuomintang government headed by Chiang Kai-shek almost went to war when the latter tried to abrogate 1924 treaties providing for joint operation of the Chinese Eastern Railroad, a portion of the original Trans-Siberian Railroad, in Manchuria. A number of armed clashes did take place before Chiang backed down. Trotsky strongly believed that it was in the interests of the Chinese and world revolutions for the railroad to remain in Soviet hands until it could be turned over to a government that was representative of the Chinese people. This led him to engage in very sharp polemics against those Oppositionists and near-Oppositionists who favored Chiang's victory or were neutral, because in his opinion their positions led to abandonment of the Marxist theory of the state and of the characterization of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers' state (see his pamphlet "Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition," September 7, 1929, Writings 29).

16. Robert Louzon (1882- ) was a syndicalist who belonged briefly to the French CP in the 1920s and left it with Pierre Monatte to found La Revolution proletarienne in 1924 and the Syndicalist League in 1926. Trotsky's polemics against their abandonment of communism late in 1929 and early in 1930 will be found in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions (Pathfinder Press, 1969).

17. The Menshevik policy of Stalin-Martinov refers to the Comintern policy that led to the crushing of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. The Menshevik tendency originated in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1903 and later became a separate party opposed to the Bolsheviks and the October Revolution on the ground that the revolution had to be led by the bourgeoisie. Although Stalin was never a member of the Mensheviks, he applied the same rationale to China in the mid-twenties. Alexander Martinov (1865-1935) was a right-wing Menshevik before 1917 and did not join the CP until 1923. He was a chief architect of the theory of "the bloc of four classes" (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, peasantry, and proletariat) in China, which sought to justify the Stalinist strategy of subordinating the workers to the "progressive" bourgeoisie.

18. Chiang Kai-shek (1887- ) was the right-wing military
leader of the bourgeois nationalist Kuomintang of China during the revolution of 1925-27. The Communists entered the Kuomintang on the orders of the Comintern leadership in 1923, and the Stalinists hailed Chiang as a great revolutionary until April 1927, when he conducted a massacre of the Shanghai Communists and trade unionists. He ruled China until overthrown by the CP in 1949.

19. Feng Yu-hsiang (1880-1948), the "Christian general," was a warlord who controlled much of Northwest China after 1926. He cultivated a reputation as a radical opponent of imperialism, accepting Soviet aid from 1925 and visiting Moscow in 1926-27. He joined the Kuomintang in August 1926, while Stalin was still in alliance with Chiang Kai-shek. In June 1927 he came out in support of Chiang against the CP, severing his ties with Moscow.

20. The Kellogg Pact of 1928 was an agreement engineered by U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg calling for the renunciation of war. Originally signed by fifteen countries, it was ratified by a total of sixty-three, including the Soviet Union. Trotsky held that by signing the pact the Stalinists had made unprincipled concessions to bourgeois pacifism.

21. Chu Teh (1886- ) joined the Chinese CP in 1922. He had been an officer in a South China warlord army, and became a commander in a Kuomintang army in 1927. After the break with Chiang Kai-shek, he led a CP-controlled military unit that merged with Mao Tse-tung's forces in the spring of 1928. He commanded CP forces in the Sino-Japanese war and in the 1946-49 civil war with Chiang Kai-shek. Now in semiretirement, he still holds posts in the Chinese government.

22. "Jakob Blumkin Shot by the Stalinists," Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 9, February-March 1930. Unsigned. Translated for this volume by Jim Burnett. Excerpts from this article, dated one day later, signed by Trotsky and rewritten in the first person as a letter to Alfred Rosmer, were translated in The Militant, March 1, 1930, under the title "Opposition Serves the Bolshevik Revolution."

23. Jakob Blumkin (1899-1929) was a Left Social Revolutionary terrorist who became a Communist and a GPU official, working for a time in Trotsky's secretariat, where he helped edit Trotsky's How the Revolution Armed Itself, volume 1. He was the first Russian supporter of the Left Opposition to visit Trotsky in exile in Turkey. Bringing back a letter from Trotsky to the Opposition, he was betrayed to the GPU and shot in December 1929. Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) became a revolutionary in 1896 and a collaborator of Lenin on Iskra in 1902. He broke with Lenin the next year over the nature of the revolutionary party and aligned himself with the Mensheviks. He broke with them the following year and tried during the next decade to reunite the factions. In the 1905 revolution, he was the leader of the St. Petersburg Soviet and developed the theory of permanent revolution. In 1915 he wrote the Zimmerwald manifesto
against the war. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917, was elected to its Central Committee, and organized the insurrection that made the new Soviet state possible. His first government post was commissar of foreign affairs. Then as commissar of war he organized the Red Army and led it to victory through three years of civil war and imperialist intervention. He formed the Left Opposition in 1923 and fought for the next decade to return the Soviet Union and the Comintern to Leninist internationalism and proletarian democracy. Defeated by the Stalin faction, he was expelled from the CP and the Comintern, and exiled to Turkey in 1929. In 1933 he ceased his efforts to reform the Comintern and called for the creation of a new International. He viewed his work on behalf of the Fourth International as the most important of his career. The name of Constantinople was officially changed to Istanbul in 1930, but many people continued to use the old name for some time thereafter.

24. GPU was one of the abbreviated names for the Soviet political police; other names were Cheka, NKVD, MVD, KGB, etc., but GPU is often used in their place.

25. Felix Dzerzhinsky (1877-1926), a founder of the Polish Social Democratic Party, was active in the Polish and Russian revolutionary movements. After the Russian Revolution he headed the Cheka from its formation in December 1917, and the Supreme Council of National Economy from 1924.

26. The Politburo was, in Lenin's time, a subordinate body of the Central Committee of the Russian CP. The first Politburo, elected in 1919, consisted of Lenin, Trotsky, Kamenev, Krestinsky, and Stalin. After the Sixteenth Congress, when both the Central Committee and the Politburo had become rubber stamps for Stalin, the Politburo consisted of Stalin, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Kirov, Kosior, Kuibyshev, Molotov, Rudzutak, Rykov, and Voroshilov. In December 1930 Rykov was removed and replaced by Ordzhonikidze.

27. Vyacheslav Menzhinsky (1874-1934) succeeded Dzerzhinsky as head of the Soviet secret police in 1926, but he was only nominally in charge.

28. Henry Yagoda (1891-1938) was Stalin's chief lieutenant in the GPU. After supervising the organization of the 1936 Moscow trial, he was put on trial himself in 1938, convicted, and executed.

29. Nikolai Bukharin (1888-1938), president of the Comintern, 1926-29, was an Old Bolshevik who represented the right wing of the CP in an alliance with Stalin against the left wing. The Stalinist drive against the leaders of the Right Opposition began shortly after the Fifteenth Congress expelled the Left Opposition at the end of 1927; by the end of 1929 the leaders of the Right Opposition capitulated to Stalin. Bukharin's charge about Stalin's control over the Politburo was made in 1929, a few months before he was removed from it. Despite his capitulation, Bukharin was executed after the third Moscow trial.

30. Karl Radek (1885-1939) was an outstanding revolutionary
in Poland and Germany before World War I and a leader of the Comintern. He was both an early Left Oppositionist and one of the earliest to capitulate to Stalin after his expulsion and deportation. He was readmitted to the party in 1930 and served as a propagandist for Stalin until he was framed up in the second Moscow trial and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

31. The Left SRs were a faction that split away from the Social Revolutionary Party (SRs) in 1917 and briefly served in a coalition with the Bolsheviks in the new Soviet government. But they soon moved into opposition "from the left," organizing an insurrection against the Soviet government in 1918 after it had voted to accept the German conditions for ending the war. Wilhelm Mirbach (1871-1918), appointed German ambassador to Moscow in April 1918, was assassinated in July by the Left SRs, who wanted to disrupt the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty between Germany and the Soviet republic.

32. M. A. Trilisser, an Old Bolshevik, was an official of the GPU and was promoted to head a special section of the Comintern in 1935 whose function was to purge the Comintern. He disappeared in the 1937-38 purges.

33. Emelyan Yaroslavsky (1878-1943) was a top Stalinist specialist in the extirpation of "Trotskyism," which, however, did not prevent him from falling from favor in 1931-32 when he failed to keep up with the tempo demanded by Stalin in the rewriting of Soviet history.

34. Iraklii Tseretelli (1882-1959) was a Menshevik minister in the coalition Provisional Government, March-August 1917. Although this government had persecuted and imprisoned the Bolsheviks, he called upon them to help fight and defeat the counterrevolutionary drive against the Provisional Government by its own commander in chief, the czarist general Lavr G. Kornilov (1870-1918).

35. In 1927 the GPU tried to smear the Left Opposition by claiming that a "Wrangel officer" was seeking contact with its members. Piotr N. Wrangel (1878-1928) was a White Guard general who had fought to overthrow the Soviets in the civil war. This attempt to portray Oppositionists as collaborators of counterrevolutionaries backfired when the GPU was forced to admit that the alleged Wrangel officer was actually an agent of the GPU.

36. Bonapartism is a Marxist term describing a dictatorship or a regime with certain features of a dictatorship during a period when class rule is not secure; it is based on the military, police, and state bureaucracy, rather than on parliamentary parties or a mass movement. Trotsky saw two types of Bonapartism in the 1930s—bourgeois and Soviet. His most extensive writings on bourgeois Bonapartism (which he distinguished from fascism) will be found in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany (Pathfinder Press, 1971). His views on Soviet Bonapartism reached their final form in his essay "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," Writings 34-35.
37. "The 'Third Period' of the Comintern's Errors." The Militant, January 25-February 22, 1930. While this pamphlet is dated January 8, 1930, the first three of its five parts, when printed as newspaper articles, were dated December 18, 22, and 27, 1929, respectively. The "third period," according to the schema proclaimed by the Stalinists in 1928, was the final period of capitalism. In 1934, the theory and practice of the third period were officially discarded and replaced by those of the Popular Front (1935-39), but the latter period was not given a number. The "first period" was 1917-24 (capitalist crisis and revolutionary upsurge); the "second period" was 1925-28 (capitalist stabilization). (Several of the notes to this pamphlet about France are adapted from the Trotsky collection Le Mouvement communiste en France, edited by Pierre Broue, Minuit, Paris, 1967.)

38. L'Humanite, originally the paper of the French Socialist Party, became the paper of the French CP on its formation in 1920.

39. Marcel Cachin (1869-1958) was a leader of the French CP who came from a parliamentary background in the SP. Gaston Monmousseau (1883-1960), a former revolutionary syndicalist, became a leader of the CP and CGTU, and a staunch Stalinist.

40. Reformism is the theory and practice of gradual, peaceful, and parliamentary change (as opposed to revolution) as the best or only means of proceeding from capitalism to socialism. Reformists therefore strive to soften the class struggle and promote class collaboration.

41. In 1923 French troops occupied the Ruhr because of a delay in payment of German reparations. This detonated a prerevolutionary crisis in Germany, which the German CP leadership bungled, enabling the German government to recover control. This led to the temporary stabilization of both German and European capitalism.

42. Maurice Chambeland (1901-66) joined Monatte in resigning from the French CP in 1924, and became his close aide in the Revolution proletarienne group. He represented the syndicalist minority in debates with the Stalinist majority at the Fifth Congress of the CGTU in September 1929 in Paris.

43. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress in Britain at first endorsed the general strike in support of the miners' struggle in May 1926, but called it off after nine days, leaving the miners to fight alone until they were defeated.

44. The Unitary General Confederation of Labor (CGTU) split away in 1921 to form a more radical rival to the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the major union federation of France, which was dominated by the reformists. At the CGTU's Fifth Congress, the Stalinist majority had eight times as many votes as the minority. The CGTU and CGT were reunited in 1936 during the People's Front period. Albert Vassart (1898-1958) became secretary of the CGTU as well as a top leader of the French CP. Jean Bricot was a well-known pseudonym of Monmousseau in the union press.
45. Karl Marx (1818-83) was, with Frederick Engels, the founder of scientific socialism and a leader of the First International. Wilhelm Weitling (1808-71) was a prominent representative of German utopian communism and an early collaborator of Marx.

46. August Thalheimer (1884-1948), a founder and leader of the German CP, was expelled in 1929, and together with Heinrich Brandler organized the Communist Party Opposition (KPO), which was the German counterpart of the Right Opposition in the Soviet Union. John Pepper (pseudonym of Josef Pogany) played an undistinguished role in the Hungarian revolution of 1919, but when he came to the U.S. in 1922 as part of a Comintern delegation he was able to maneuver himself into membership of the CP's Central Committee; he remained one of its top leaders until he was expelled in 1929 as a sympathizer of the Right Opposition. Bela Kun (1886-1939) was a leader of the 1919 Hungarian revolution and head of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet republic. Moving to Moscow, he became a Comintern functionary. He was reportedly shot by the Stalin regime during its purge of communist exiles in the late 1930s. Kun was the only one of those cited by Trotsky who could rightly be called a congenital ultraleftist; of the others it would be more correct to state that they were ultraleftists or adapted to ultraleftism at "that time," 1921 and the Third World Congress. Trotsky is being sarcastic when he asks if 1921, when the ultralefts also thought the world revolution was around the corner, qualified as a "third" period.


48. Chartism (1838-50) was a movement of revolutionary agitation around "the people's charter," a six-point petition drawn up in 1838 by the London Workingmen's Association. The movement began, spread, and died during a period when British capitalism was experiencing a steady growth.

49. Le Temps (The Times) was the unofficial voice of the French government in the 1930s.

50. The Profintern (Red International of Labor Unions) was organized in Moscow in July 1920 as a communist-led rival to the reformist Amsterdam International (International Federation of Trade Unions). In 1945 they united as the World Federation of Trade Unions, but when the cold war began the reformists split away and created the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1949.

51. Ossip Piatnitsky (1882-1939), an Old Bolshevik, was a secretary of the Comintern, 1922-31, and headed its Organizing Bureau, whose aim was to control the practical everyday work of the various Communist parties. Pierre Semard (1887-1942) became general secretary of the French CP, 1924-29. He was executed by the Nazis during World War II.
52. In the 1924 French parliamentary elections the SP increased its vote and then shared power with the Radical Socialist Party in a coalition called the Left Bloc—a precursor of the People's Front—in which the CP refused to participate.

53. Solomon Lozovsky (1878-1952) was the Stalinist functionary in charge of the Red International of Labor Unions. He was arrested and shot on Stalin's orders during an anti-Semitic campaign.

54. The "municipal" scandals refer to the November 1929 expulsion from the French CP of six of its members serving on the municipal council of Paris. A month later they founded the POP (Workers and Peasants Party) on a centrist program; later the POP was to unite with other centrist elements in the PUP (Party of Proletarian Unity).

55. Louis Sellier (1885— ), general secretary of the French CP in 1923, was one of the six municipal councilmen expelled in 1929.

56. The first of August was the date selected by the Comintern as an international "red day," when the Communist parties throughout the world were directed to conduct a fight against imperialist war and for defense of the Soviet Union, in accord with a decision by the Sixth World Congress. The ultraleft rhetoric that accompanied the call for the demonstration made August 1 sound like the beginning of a civil war, especially in Berlin and Paris (see Writings 29), but actually there were only small, scattered, and ineffectual demonstrations that day. "Red days" continued to be a Comintern feature during most of the "third period," although their name was changed to "fighting days" in 1930.

57. Vyacheslav M. Molotov (1890— ), an Old Bolshevik, was elected to the CP's Central Committee in 1920 and soon became an ardent supporter of Stalin. He was a member of the ECCI, 1928-34, president of the Council of People's Commissars, 1930-41, and foreign minister, 1939-49, 1953-56. He was eliminated from the leadership in 1957 for opposing Khrushchev's "de-Stalinization" program.

58. Economism, a tendency of considerable influence in the Russian radical movement around the turn of the century, disappeared as a distinct current after the Economists left the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1903. They viewed the working-class struggle primarily as an economic one developing spontaneously around "bread-and-butter" issues.

59. Socialism in one country was Stalin's theory, introduced into the communist movement for the first time in 1924, that a socialist society could be achieved inside the borders of a single country. Later, when it was incorporated into the program and tactics of the Comintern, it became the ideological cover for the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism and was used to justify the conversion of the Communist parties throughout the world into pawns of the Kremlin's foreign policy. A comprehensive critique is developed by Trotsky in The Third International After Lenin.

60. Epigones, disciples who corrupt their teacher's doctrines, was Trotsky's derisive term for the Stalinists, who claimed to be Leninists.
61. The law of uneven development, applied to the historical process, deals with the varying rates and degree of development of the productive forces, classes, social institutions, etc., in different countries. Its corollary, the law of combined development, covers the peculiar combined formations in which lower stages of development merge with higher ones. Marx employed these laws and Trotsky used them explicitly in formulating his theory of permanent revolution and in explaining the motive forces of the October Revolution. When Trotsky said the law was known to Stalin he was emphasizing not only that the law was generally known but also that Stalin had tried to use it to justify his "theory" of socialism in one country.

62. The "spirit of Locarno and Geneva" (the softening of international contradictions) refers to the Locarno Pact, a series of treaties and arbitration conventions signed in 1925 by Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, "guaranteeing" the continuation of peace and existing territorial boundaries, and to Geneva as the site of the League of Nations and its many disarmament conferences.

63. Herman Remmele (1880-1937) was one of the Stalinist leaders of the German CP and an uncritical defender of the Kremlin policies that led to Hitler's victory in 1933. He fled to the USSR, where he was executed by the GPU in its purges of foreign communists.

64. The failure of May 1 refers to events in Berlin starting on May Day 1929, when the Social Democratic government prohibited demonstrations in the streets and the CP called for defiance of the ban. Unarmed and disorganized, the workers who responded to the CP call were brutally beaten and shot; the police murdered more than twenty-five workers and wounded hundreds of others. CP efforts to organize a protest general strike against the police terror evoked a weak response, but the Stalinists hailed the May events as a "glorious page" in history and urged that the same spirit be summoned in the coming August 1 demonstration.

65. The Anglo-Russian Trade-Union Unity Committee was established in May 1925 by the "left" bureaucrats of the British Trades Union Congress and the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet labor unions. Trotsky demanded the dissolution of the committee in 1926 after its British members betrayed the general strike, but the Stalinists refused and continued to cling to the committee until the British, finding they no longer needed it as a left cover, walked out of it in September 1927. Trotsky's views on the lessons of the Anglo-Russian Committee have been collected in Leon Trotsky on Britain (Monad Press, 1973, distributed by Pathfinder Press).

66. The united-front tactic was used by the Bolsheviks in Russia before the October Revolution and elaborated by the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920. It is designed to give the workers the opportunity to struggle jointly against their common class enemy, even when they are divided into reformist and revolutionary organizations; it also enables the revolutionary party to make contact
through joint struggle with the ranks of other working-class organizations. The major condition for the employment of this tactic, according to the Bolsheviks, is that the revolutionary party must at all times preserve its independence and right to criticize other participants in any united front. In the "third period" the Stalinists perverted this tactic into what they called the "united front from below," which was based on the idea that joint-action arrangements must be negotiated only with the ranks, not the leaders, of non-Stalinist organizations; the effect was to torpedo the possibility of any actual united fronts. Trotsky's fullest discussion of the united front will be found in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*.

67. The **Brandlerites** were the Communist Party Opposition (KPO) of Germany, so called after their leader **Heinrich Brandler** (1881-1967). A founder of the German CP and its principal leader when it failed to take advantage of the revolutionary crisis of 1923, he was made a scapegoat by the Kremlin and removed from the leadership in 1924. When the KPO aligned itself with Bukharin's Right Opposition in the USSR in 1929, Brandler and his supporters were expelled from the CP and the Comintern. The KPO continued to exist until World War II.

68. The **Amsterdam International** (also sometimes called the "yellow" international) was the International Federation of Trade Unions, the major organization in its field, associated with and controlled by the reformists. **Thomas** could be a reference to one of two people: **James H. Thomas** (1874-1949), a leader of the British railroad union, colonial secretary in the first Labour government and lord privy seal in the second, who deserted the Labour Party in 1931 to help MacDonald set up a coalition government with the Tories; or **Albert Thomas** (1878-1932), a right-wing leader of the French SP and a minister in the World War I cabinet, who concentrated his class collaborationist activity after the war in the International Labor Office of the League of Nations. **Hermann Mueller** (1876-1931) was the Social Democratic chancellor of a coalition government in Germany, 1928-30. **Pierre Renaudel** (1871-1935) was the leader of the right wing in the French SP, expelled in 1933 for voting in the parliament to cut the salaries of civil service employees.

69. **Wang Ching-wei** (1884-1944) was the leader of the Chinese government in the industrial area of Wuhan whom the Stalinists supported after they were double-crossed by Chiang. Only six weeks after Chiang Kai-shek's coup at Shanghai, Wang attacked the workers in Wuhan. **Albert A. Purcell** (1872-1935) and **Arthur J. Cook** (1885-1931) were "leftist" leaders of the British union movement and the Anglo-Russian Committee. **Robert La Follette** (1855-1925), U.S. senator from Wisconsin, was the Progressive Party presidential candidate in 1924; the American CP flirted with the idea of supporting him as a farmer-labor candidate. **Stefan Radich** (1871-1928), leader of the Croatian Peasants Party, suddenly was hailed by Moscow as "a real leader of the people" because he attended a congress of the
Peasant International in 1924. The Second International (or Labor and Socialist International) was organized in 1889 as the successor to the First International. It was a loose association of social democratic and labor parties, uniting both revolutionary and reformist elements. Its progressive role had ended by 1914, when its major sections violated the most elementary socialist principles and supported their own imperialist governments in World War I. It fell apart during the war but was revived as a completely reformist organization in 1923.

70. It was, of course, the Stalinist view, and not Trotsky's, that the Kuomintang of China, organized in 1911 by Sun Yat-sen, was a "workers' and peasants'" organization.

71. Zimmerwald, Switzerland, was the site in September 1915 of a conference to reassemble the antiwar internationalist currents that had survived the debacle of the Second International. Most of the participants were pacifists; a revolutionary minority led by Lenin constituted the Zimmerwald Left, which proved to be the embryo of the Third International, founded in 1919.

72. Twenty-one conditions for membership in the Comintern were adopted by its Second World Congress as a way of making affiliation more difficult for parties that had not broken fully with reformism; they were written by Lenin (Collected Works, volume 31).

73. Bohumil Jilek (1892-1963) was secretary of the Czechoslovakian CP at its founding in 1921. Removed from the leadership with the fall of Bukharin, he was expelled in 1929 and moved further to the right. Jay Lovestone (1898--) was a leader of the American CP who directed the expulsion of Trotsky's supporters in 1928, and was himself expelled on Moscow's orders as a supporter of the Right Opposition in 1929. The Lovestone group remained an independent organization until World War II. Lovestone later became cold-war adviser on foreign affairs for AFL-CIO President George Meany.

74. Leon Kamenev (1883-1936) was, like Zinoviev, an ally of Stalin in initiating the crusade against "Trotskyism" and then an ally of Trotsky against Stalinism until the Opposition was defeated and its leaders expelled. With Zinoviev, he recanted his ideas and was readmitted to the party, but was executed after the first Moscow trial. Alexei Rykov (1881-1938) was elected commissar of the interior in 1917 and, after Lenin's death, president of the Council of People's Commissars, 1924-30. In the latter post he collaborated with Stalin in defeating the Left Opposition. He was purged from his posts for participating in the Right Opposition and was executed after the 1938 Moscow trial. Mikhail Kalinin (1875-1946) was elected president of the Soviet Central Executive Committee in place of the deceased Yakov Sverdlov in 1919. Mikhail Tomsky (1886-1936), president of the Soviet trade unions, was allied with Stalin until 1928, when he helped to start the Right Opposition; like its other leaders he capitulated to Stalin in 1929. He committed suicide during the
first Moscow trial. Anatole V. Lunacharsky (1875-1933) was the Soviet government's first commissar of education, 1917-29. His short book about the leaders of the Russian Revolution has been translated into English under the title Revolutionary Silhouettes. All of the people cited here by Trotsky were Old Bolsheviks who at the last minute wavered when it was decided to organize the October 1917 insurrection, or actually opposed it in public.

75. Otto Kuusinen (1891-1964) was a Finnish social democrat who fled to the Soviet Union after the collapse of the Finnish revolution in April 1918. He became an early Stalinist and served as a Comintern secretary, 1922-31. Louis-Olivier Frossard (1889-1946) was a centrist in the French SP who helped organize the French CP and served as its general secretary. Later he rejoined the SP, becoming a spokesman of its right wing before leaving to serve in various capitalist cabinets, including the first Petain regime.

76. Eugene Varga (1879-1964), a Hungarian social democrat and economist, was president of the Supreme Economic Council of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet regime. In 1920 he went to Russia, joined the CP, and worked in the Comintern as an economics expert.

77. The Young Plan, after U. S. big-business lawyer Owen D. Young, was the second of two arrangements for the supervision of Germany's war reparations payments by a commission set up under the Versailles Treaty. The first had been the Dawes Plan, after U. S. banker and politician Charles G. Dawes. Young administered both plans, which had, like the Versailles Treaty, the contradictory aims of subordinating the German economy and stifling the postwar revolutionary upsurge. The Young Plan was superseded in 1931, when a moratorium on payment of the German war debt proposed by President Herbert Hoover was adopted.

78. The Syndicalist League of France, organized by Monatte and his supporters in 1926, served mainly as a bridge away from communism for various trade unionists who had been in and around the CP.

79. The Canton uprising of December 1927 was a putsch instigated by Stalin so that he would be able at the Fifteenth Congress of the Soviet CP that month to "refute" the charge of the Left Opposition that his policy had produced defeats in China. Since the Chinese CP was isolated and the uprising unprepared, it was crushed in less than three days with a loss of several thousand lives.

80. "A Necessary Supplement." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 8, January 1930. Translated for this volume by Jim Burnett. This was a supplement to the analysis of strikes in France made in the first part of "The 'Third Period' of the Comintern's Errors."

81. "'To Patiently Explain.'" By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by George Saunders. This was a letter in response to a request for tactical advice
from a group of people who described themselves as "revolutionary social democrats" and had recently broken from the mass Austrian Social Democratic Party.

82. **Josef Frey** (1882-1957), a founder of the Austrian CP, from which he was expelled in 1927, was also briefly the leader of an "Austrian Communist Party (Opposition)," which published **Arbeiter Stimme** (Workers' Voice).

83. The **Austrian crisis** in the autumn of 1929 occurred when ultraright and fascist forces carried on a campaign to adopt a new constitution that curtailed democratic rights and shifted power from the legislative to the executive branch of the government (see "The Austrian Crisis and Communism," November 13, 1929, in **Writings 29**).

84. **Karl Leuthner** (1869-1944) was a leader of the Austrian social democracy and editor of its paper **Arbeiter Zeitung** (Workers' Journal).

85. **Social fascism**, a theory made famous by Stalin from 1928 to 1934, held that the social democracy and fascism were not antipodes but twins. Since the social democrats were designated as only a variety of fascists, and since just about everyone but the Stalinists was some kind of fascist (a liberal fascist or a labor fascist or a Trotsky fascist), it was impermissible for the Stalinists to engage in united fronts with any other tendency against the (plain ordinary) fascists. No theory was or could have been more helpful to Hitler in the years before he won power in Germany. The Stalinists dropped the theory at some unpublicized date in 1934 without bothering to explain why, and soon were wooing not only the social democrats but also capitalist politicians like Roosevelt and Daladier, whom they had still dubbed fascists early in 1934.

86. **Austro-Marxism** was the brand of reformism advocated by the Austrian social democracy.


89. **La Lutte de classes** (The Class Struggle), a successor to the journal **Clarte** (Clarity) edited by Pierre Naville, was one of several periodicals speaking for the Opposition in France before Trotsky's exile in 1929.

90. **Fernand Loriot** (1870-1932) was a cofounder, with Maurice Paz and others, of the Oppositional group around **Contre le Courant** (Against the Stream), but then he abandoned communism altogether and joined the Syndicalist League. **Contre le Courant** is probably what Trotsky is referring to two paragraphs later as "vet
another almost-'communist' and almost-'Oppositionist' organ." Its final issue was dated October 1929.

91. **R.P.** was *La Revolution proletarienne*, published by the Syndicalist League.

92. **Le Cri du peuple** (The People's Call) was a paper published by a bloc of Monattists and members of the POP.

93. **Liu Jen-ching** (1899- ), leader of the Chinese Shih-yueh she (October Society) Left Oppositionist group, used the designation N in the Oppositional press.

94. The Polish CP's deplorable role in 1926 consisted of supporting Marshal Pilsudski's coup d'état. For a speech on the subject, see "Pilsudskism, Fascism, and the Character of Our Epoch" in *Writings 32*.


96. **Lev S. Sosnovsky** (1886-1937), an outstanding Soviet journalist, was one of the first Left Oppositionists and one of the last to capitulate. **Budu Mdivani** (1877-1937), a leader of the Georgian Bolsheviks, strongly opposed Stalin and Ordzhonikidze's bureaucratic centralism with respect to Georgia in 1922-23. He was sentenced as a "Trotskyist" in 1937 and executed. **N. A. Uglanov** was a Stalinist who rose to high rank through his anti-Trotskyist zeal and then became a Right Oppositionist. He was dropped from the Central Committee in 1930, later capitulated, and finally disappeared in the purges.

97. **Moisei Frumkin** (1878-1939) held a variety of lesser posts in the food commissariat until 1922 and then became an official in the commissariat for foreign trade and finance. Frumkin expressed views similar to those of Bukharin.

98. **Ivan N. Smirnov** (1881-1936), an Old Bolshevik, played a leading role in the civil war. A Left Oppositionist, he was expelled from the party in 1927 and capitulated in 1929. Reinstated and appointed director of auto plants, he was arrested early in 1933 and kept in prison until he was convicted in the first Moscow trial and executed.

99. **Mikhail Boguslavsky** (1886-1937), an Old Bolshevik, was a member of the Democratic Centralism group and later an adherent of the Left Opposition. Expelled from the party in 1927, he capitulated in 1929. He was a defendant in the 1937 Moscow trial and was executed.

100. **Gregory Y. Sokolnikov** (1888-1939), an Old Bolshevik, held many high military, diplomatic, industrial, and political posts in the Soviet government. He briefly supported the United Opposition, but soon made his peace with Stalin.

101. **Lazar Kaganovich** (1893- ) was a crony of Stalin and an undeviating Stalinist in various Soviet governmental and party posts. He was removed from all his posts when Khrushchev took over the Soviet leadership in the 1950s.

102. Lenin's **testament**, written in December 1922 and January 1923,
gave his final evaluation of the other Soviet leaders. Since it called for the removal of Stalin from the post of general secretary, it was suppressed in the Soviet Union until after Stalin's death; it is included now in volume 36 of Lenin's Collected Works. Trotsky's essay on the suppressed testament, dated December 31, 1932, will be found in Lenin's Fight Against Stalinism (Pathfinder Press, 1975).

103. "An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund." Fourth International (magazine of the Socialist Workers Party), April 1947. The Leninbund was an Oppositional group organized by Hugo Urbahns, Ruth Fischer, and Arkady Maslow; it included "Trotskyists" as well as "Zinovievists." Trotsky came into collision with Urbahns in 1929 over the latter's analysis of the Sino-Soviet conflict and the nature of the Soviet state. Urbahns, by now the principal leader of the Leninbund, responded in part by expelling two Left Oppositionists at the end of 1929, and by preparing to expel the others at a plenum in February 1930. Trotsky's open letter was an attempt to explain the issues behind the Leninbund crisis. The Left Oppositionists expelled at the Leninbund plenum proceeded to unite with other dissident forces outside the Leninbund to create the first distinctly Left Oppositionist group, the United Opposition of Germany.

104. Albert Treint (1889-1972) was a central leader of the French CP in the mid-twenties who supported the Russian United Opposition and was expelled in 1927. In the next few years he collaborated with several groups, belonging to the Communist League of France for a short period, before joining a syndicalist group.

105. The Belgian Opposition's position on the Chinese Eastern Railroad conflict in 1929 was one of the issues that led to a split in the organization a year later (see Writings 30-31).

106. Maurice Paz (1896- ), a lawyer and French Oppositionist associated with Contre le Courant, visited Trotsky in Turkey in 1929 and broke with the Opposition the same year over what he considered its unrealistic perspectives (see Writings 29). He joined the SP and became part of the Paul Faure tendency of its leadership.

107. Pierre Monatte (1881-1960) was a syndicalist who briefly belonged to the French CP before founding La Revolution proletarienne in 1924 and the Syndicalist League in 1926.

108. Jean Jaurès (1859-1914), an outstanding socialist orator, was a French pacifist who was assassinated at the start of World War I.

109. The Communist Manifesto, by Marx and Engels, was dated 1847. The First International (International Workingmen's Association) was organized in 1864 and disbanded in 1876.

110. Boris Souvarine (1893- ) was a founder of the French CP and one of the first biographers of Stalin. He was repelled by Stalinism in the 1920s and turned against Leninism in the 1930s. Trotsky's letters breaking with him politically are in Writings 29. For Trotsky, he was a prototype of the cynicism and defeatism that marked the renegades from Bolshevism.
111. "Reply to a Friend's Letter." Biuletten Oppozitsii, number 10, April 1930, where it appeared as the third of three letters to the Soviet Union printed under the title "From the Opposition's Circular Letters." Translated for this volume by Jim Burnett. These circular letters, in which Trotsky commented on questions raised in correspondence from Oppositionists in the Soviet Union, were copied and distributed by hand. The other two circular letters will be found in Writings 29.

112. The dictatorship here is short for the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the proletarian dictatorship, the Marxist term for the form of rule by the working class that follows rule by the capitalist class (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie). Modern substitutes for this term are "workers' state" and "workers' democracy."

113. "Unifying the Left Opposition." The Militant, March 29, 1930. Signed "The Editorial Board, Biuletten Oppozitsii." Early in 1930 both the French and American Left Opposition papers began to write about the need to unify the Opposition on an international basis. The present statement was Trotsky's response to the French proposals.

114. "Stalin Has Formed an Alliance with Schumann and Kerensky Against Lenin and Trotsky." Biuletten Oppozitsii, number 9, February-March 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Unsigned.

115. Harry Schumann was the head of a Dresden publishing firm, Karl Reissner-Verlag, which was founded in 1878 and expired after some attempts to adapt to the Nazis during Hitler's Third Reich. A man who knew how to swim with the stream, he published a chauvinist defense of Germany's war in 1914 and a book about the best known opponent of the war in 1919 (Karl Liebknecht, An Apolitical Portrayal of His Personality). He showed the latter to Trotsky when he visited him in March 1929 to seek a contract for Trotsky's works in German, but he did not say anything to Trotsky about his 1928 book Alexander Kerensky, Memoirs. From Czarism's Downfall to Lenin's Coup d'Etat.

116. Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919) was a German Social Democratic deputy in the Reichstag when World War I broke out. Although he followed party discipline in voting for war credits on August 4, 1914, he soon broke with the war policy and was imprisoned for antiwar activity, 1916-18. With Rosa Luxemburg he founded the Spartacus League. They were both assassinated by order of the Social Democratic government as leaders of an uprising in January 1919.

117. Alexander Kerensky (1882-1970), associated with the right wing of the Social Revolutionary Party, was prime minister of the Provisional Government when it was overthrown by the Bolsheviks. Both as prime minister and as an emigre he spent much time trying to depict the Bolsheviks as agents of the German kaiser (Wilhelm II, of the Hohenzollern dynasty) and the German general staff. Erich Ludendorff (1865-1937), army chief of staff during World War I, conducted negotiations with Lenin in 1917 that allowed Lenin to re-
turn in a sealed train through Germany, then at war with Russia.


119. Toward Capitalism or Socialism? was published in English as Whither Russia? in 1926. It will appear in The Challenge of the Left Opposition, a collection of Trotsky's writings from 1923 to 1929 being prepared by Pathfinder Press.

120. Yakov A. Yakovlev (1896-1937?), a right-winger in the Ukraine CP after the revolution, became an ardent supporter of Stalin against the Left Opposition and was made commissar of agriculture. Along with many other Stalinists, he vanished during the purges.

121. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was initiated in 1921 to replace the policy of War Communism (see note 182). To revive the economy after the civil war, NEP was adopted as a temporary measure allowing a limited revival of free trade inside the Soviet Union and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized and state-controlled sectors of the economy. The Nepmen, who benefited from this policy, were viewed as a potential base for the restoration of capitalism. NEP was succeeded in 1928 by the first five-year plan and subsequent forced collectivization of the land, although the Stalin regime continued until 1930 to say that NEP was still in effect.

122. Austen Chamberlain (1863-1937), a leader of the British Conservative Party, served as foreign secretary, 1924-29, in the period between the first and second Labour governments.

123. Gleb M. Krzhyzhanovsky (1872-1959), an Old Bolshevik, served as head of the State Planning Commission. He was purged in the thirties, but lived long enough to be "rehabilitated" under Khrushchev.

124. Article 58 of the Soviet penal code provided for punishment of those who engaged in counterrevolutionary activity against the Soviet state. Under Stalin it was converted into a factional instrument for imprisoning, deporting, exiling, or executing opponents of the bureaucratic apparatus.

125. "Yes or No?" Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 10, April 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Unsigned. A version containing editorial interpolations about American Stalinists was printed in The Militant, March 29, 1930, under the title "The Shooting of Blumkin."

126. Gustav Noske (1868-1946), a right-wing German social democrat, was minister of defense in 1919, in charge of the suppression of the Spartacist uprising. In this capacity, he ordered the assassination of Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) and other Spartacists. Luxemburg was a founder of the Polish Social Democratic Party and a leader of the left wing of the German social democracy, where she fought revisionism and the party's support of World War I. Trotsky's memorial speech on Luxemburg and Liebknecht will be found in his Political Portraits (Pathfinder Press, 1976).

128. The temporary Stalinist retreat from "complete collectivization" was first publicized in Stalin's article "Dizzy with Success," published March 2, 1930, and reprinted in his Works, volume 12.

129. Dmitri Manuilsky (1883-1952) was a secretary of the Comintern from 1931 to its dissolution in 1943. He joined the Stalin faction in the early 1920s. March 6 refers to unemployed demonstrations decided on in Moscow and carried out on that day in 1930 in several capitalist countries.

130. Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1937) was the prime minister in both the first British Labour government (1924) and the second (1929-31). He then bolted from the Labour Party to form a "national unity" cabinet with the Conservatives and Liberals, in which he was again prime minister (1931-35).

131. The American Federation of Labor, based primarily on conservative craft unions at that time, was so backward that its leaders were opposed to unemployment insurance until after the Democratic Party's support made the idea "respectable."

132. "Answers to Questions from the USSR." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Marilyn Vogt. This was another circular letter to the Russian Opposition, sent a few days before Trotsky completed his "Open Letter to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

133. The Workers' Opposition was a semisyndicalist, ultraleft group in the Russian CP in the early 1920s. Some of its leaders joined the United Opposition in 1926 and were expelled and deported in 1927.

134. The Bordigists, after their leader, Amadeo Bordiga (1889-1970), who was expelled from the Comintern on charges of "Trotskyism" in 1929, were also known as the Italian Left Faction and the Prometeo group, after their journal Prometeo (Prometheus). They were the first Italian group to adhere to the Left Opposition, but their inveterate sectarianism led to a separation from the ILO at the end of 1932.


136. The Central Committee's circular was published March 15, 1930, under the title "The Fight Against Distortions of the Party Line in the Collective Farm Movement."

137. "Model Rules of the Agricultural Artel," the code set forth by the Soviet Central Executive Committee, was not published until March 2, 1930, the same day that Stalin published his article "Dizzy with Success."

138. Manabendra Nath Roy (1887-1953) was a leading Indian Communist who felt that cooperation with bourgeois nationalist elements was indispensable for the colonial independence movement.
and also sympathized with the views of the Russian Right Opposition. In later years he defected from the socialist movement.

139. **Henri Barbusse** (1873-1935) was a pacifist novelist who joined the French CP, wrote biographies of Stalin and Christ, and sponsored amorphous antiwar and antifascist congresses used by the Stalinists as substitutes for genuine struggle. He was the chief figure associated with the periodical *Le Monde* (The World).

140. The **Social Revolutionary Party** (SRs), founded in 1900, became the political expression of all the earlier Populist currents in Russia and had the largest share of influence among the peasantry prior to the October Revolution.

141. **Anton I. Denikin** (1872-1947) was a commander of White Guard forces fighting in the civil war to overthrow the Soviet state with the help of the British, French, American, Japanese, and other imperialists.

142. The **Duma** (which, like soviet, means council) was the Russian parliament with extremely limited powers. Czar Nicholas II established it in 1905 and treated it with contempt, arbitrarily dismissing it whenever it displayed the slightest sign of wanting to follow an independent course.

143. Two-class "workers' and peasants' party" was a formula used by the Stalinists in the 1920s to justify support for the Kuomintang and other bourgeois parties in the East. Trotsky's critique appears in *The Third International After Lenin* and *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*.

144. The **democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry** was Lenin's slogan before 1917 to designate the form of state that would follow the overthrow of Russian czarism. He envisaged the revolution as bourgeois in character, led by a coalition of the workers and peasants which would take power and democratize the country without overstepping the limits of capitalist productive relations. He changed his position with the approach of the revolution, and on his return to Russia in April 1917 he reoriented the Bolshevik Party to the struggle for a proletarian dictatorship. In the 1920s the Stalinists revived the discarded formula to justify class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, especially in the colonial world.

145. "'As Pure and Transparent as Crystal.'* The Militant, April 26, 1930. Signed "Alpha."

146. **William Z. Foster** (1881-1961) was a member of the American SP, a union organizer, and a leader of the American CP. He was the CP's candidate for president in 1924, 1928, and 1932, and its chairman after World War II.

147. **Alexander Bittelman** (1890- ) had been a leader of the Foster caucus in the American CP and was demoted, like Foster, when Earl Browder was selected by Moscow to lead the party. In 1960 he was expelled from the CP as a "revisionist."

148. Foster was in fact replaced as top bureaucrat of the American
CP by Earl Browder in the early 1930s, and did not regain that position until after 1945, when the Kremlin disgraced, downgraded, and expelled Browder.

149. Stalin's speeches on the American Communist Party delivered on May 6 and 14, 1929, were also published in pamphlet form by the American CP in 1931.

150. "Three Editorials." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 10, April 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser.

151. Silov and Rabinovich were Oppositionists executed by the GPU, shortly after Blumkin's execution, for alleged "sabotage of the railroad system."

152. "They Didn't Know." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 10, April 1930. Unsigned. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. This was a sequel to "Stalin Has Formed an Alliance with Schumann and Kerensky Against Lenin and Trotsky."

153. The book that Trotsky was going to call Lenin and the Epigones was retitled La Revolution defigurée in French and, when expanded, The Stalin School of Falsification in English.

154. Nikolai N. Krestinsky (1883-1938) was the Soviet ambassador in Berlin since 1921. He was an early sympathizer of the Left Opposition, in 1923-24, and an early capitulator. Arrested during the purges, he was convicted in the 1938 Moscow trial and executed.

155. The Schumann case continued through the German courts for at least another year after this. Schumann lost at the first two trial levels, in Berlin and Dresden, and early in 1931 took his appeal to the highest court in Leipzig. That court held that the case was not limited to purely juridical issues but also involved political facts. Along this line it invited scholarly opinions from Leipzig University and permitted Trotsky to submit his evaluation of Kerensky's charges that the Bolsheviks were German agents, Kerensky's arrest of Trotsky in 1917, etc. Besides submitting such a statement to the court's adviser, Trotsky wrote a letter to the Politburo on February 15, 1931, asking for a united front to help defeat Kerensky's slanders against Lenin and the Bolsheviks by supplying the court with the necessary documents and historical materials (see Writings 30-31). The editors were unable to learn how the case finally ended in the court, although there is no evidence to show that Schumann ever published anything by Trotsky in the two years before the Nazis took power.

156. "The Slogan of a National Assembly in China." The Militant, June 14, 1930. This was a letter to Chinese Oppositionists.

157. The Cadets, popular name for the bourgeois-liberal Constitutional Democratic Party, favored a constitutional monarchy for Russia.

158. Conciliators, also translated often as compromisers, was a term the Bolsheviks used in 1917 to designate the Mensheviks, So-
cial Revolutionaries, and other radicals who supported the capitalist Provisional Government and tried to moderate the class struggle against it.


160. The 1927 platform of the Opposition was included in The Real Situation in Russia, 1928. It will appear in The Challenge of the Left Opposition.

161. The Narodniks (Populists) were a movement of Russian intellectuals who saw the liberation of the peasantry as the key to the country’s development and conducted their activities among them. The movement split in 1879; one of the two groups was led by Plekhanov, whose group split again, Plekhanov’s wing becoming Marxist while the other wing evolved into the Social Revolutionary Party.

162. Vladimir P. Milyutin was the first Soviet commissar of agriculture and began serving on the Supreme Council of National Economy in 1918. He always inclined to the right.

163. The Spartacists or Spartacus League was formed early in 1916 as an antiwar left wing in the German social democracy. When the latter split and the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) was formed in April 1917, the Spartacists became the left wing of the USPD until the end of World War I, when they took the initiative in forming the German Communist Party. They suffered a severe setback in January 1919 when they supported a poorly prepared insurrection against the coalition government led by the right-wing social democrats.

164. The reference to the March days of 1921 is to the period when the German CP leadership issued a call for an armed insurrection to seize power, an action which was crushed in two weeks because of its lack of mass support. The Third Congress of the Comintern later that year repudiated the March action and the ultraleft theories of "galvanizing the masses" used to justify it. The tail-endism of 1923 and the adventurous tactics of 1924 refer to the failure of the CP leadership to take advantage of the revolutionary situation that developed in Germany around the Ruhr crisis and the policy they pursued afterward. The Fifth Congress of the Comintern, convened in mid-1924, refused to acknowledge the defeat of the 1923 revolution, held that the high point of the crisis lay ahead, and instructed the German CP leadership to prepare the working class for insurrection.

165. Arkady Maslow (1891-1941), a German CP leader who supported ultraleftism in 1921 and along with Fischer and Thaelmann replaced the Brandler leadership in 1924, was expelled in 1927 because of his support to the Russian United Opposition. He helped to organize the Leninbund but then withdrew from its leadership; for a short time he sympathized with the movement for the Fourth International in the mid-thirties.
166. The Peasant International (Krestintern), formed by the Comintern in October 1923, was an experiment that did not meet with much success. It disappeared without publicity in the 1930s.

167. Frederick Engels (1820-1895) was the lifelong collaborator of Karl Marx and coauthor with him of many of the basic works of Marxism. In his last years he was the outstanding figure of the young Second International.

168. "A Letter to a Lovestoneite." The Militant, July 26, 1930, where it appeared under the title "Why Doesn't Lovestone Answer Trotsky?" This was a letter to Harry Winitsky, business manager of Revolutionary Age, the paper published by the Lovestoneites after their expulsion from the American CP on the Kremlin's orders in 1929. The "present director" of this paper, in Trotsky's reference, was Lovestone.

169. "A Big Step Forward." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 11, May 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Unsigned. In the early months of 1930 the French, United States, and Russian Opposition periodicals had written about the need for closer collaboration of the different groups. This led to a call by these three groups for a meeting in Paris to set up the International Left Opposition. Delegates present were: from France, Alfred Rosmer and Pierre Naville; Germany, Oskar Seipold; Belgium, A. Hennaut for the EC of the Belgian Opposition, and Leon Lesoil for the Charleroi Federation; Spain, Julian Gorkin; Czechoslovakia, Jan Frankel for the Lenorovich group; Hungary, Szilvassy; United States, Max Shachtman; and the Jewish group in France, J. Obin (later known as M. Mill). The Russian, Chinese, Austrian, Mexican, Argentine, and Greek Oppositions, and a student group in Czechoslovakia, whose representatives were unable to attend, later endorsed the decisions taken at the meeting. In Trotsky's unsigned article this gathering is referred to as a preliminary conference; The Militant called it an "international conference" in its May 3, 1930, issue; the delegates themselves, in a telegram to Trotsky, spoke of it as "the first international meeting of the Left Opposition." One of the purposes of the gathering was to prepare the way for a full-scale international conference, to act on written resolutions circulated and discussed beforehand, but an ILO conference of that type was not to be held until 1933—and even then it was called a preconference (see Writings 32-33).

170. The Provisional International Secretariat elected in April consisted of Rosmer (with Naville as his deputy), Kurt Landau of Germany, and Leon Sedov, Trotsky's son, who represented the Russian Opposition but was not able at that time to get from Turkey to France, the seat of the Secretariat. Although this body had relatively modest assignments, it took quite a while before it began to function even at the lowest level. Rosmer was to quit the Opposition in November 1930, and Landau was to split away a few months later, but
even at the beginning Trotsky was extremely dissatisfied with the Secretariat's functioning. Naville reports, in his 1958 book *Trotsky vivant*, that when he sent Trotsky various explanations about the delays, Trotsky sent a sarcastic reply on April 13, 1930: "I have received word from Comrade Naville that 'as a result of the semideflection of the Italians and the Belgians' no manifesto was adopted, and no bureau established. Now, if I understand correctly, we ourselves have decisively completed the defection that was half carried out by 'others.'"


172. Trotsky's reply to the Prometeo open letter was dated September 25, 1929, and will be found in *Writings 29*.

173. Angelo Tasca (1892-1960) was associated with Gramsci and Togliatti in the Turin group of the Italian SP when the latter voted to adhere to the Comintern in 1919. Its adherence was more formal than real, and the organization split in 1921, with the left wing becoming the Communist Party. In the CP, Tasca became as intransigent a leader of the right as Bordiga was of the left.

174. "Toward Capitalism or Socialism?" *Biuleten Oppozitsii*, number 11, May 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser.

175. Peter B. Struve (1870-1944), a Russian liberal economist, was in the early 1900s a leader of the "legal Marxists," whose principal objective was to introduce Western capitalist development into Russia. After 1905 he lined up with the right-wing Cadets, and after 1917 he joined the White Guard forces.

176. Aleksey A. Arakcheyev (1769-1834), a Russian general and political adviser to Czar Alexander I, was made minister of war in 1806.

177. The *Paris Commune* was the first workers' government. It was in power from March 18 to May 28, 1871, when it was overthrown by the military forces of French capitalism aided by German capitalism. Gaston Galliffet (1830-1909) was notorious for the ferocity with which he slaughtered the Communards and their families after they had surrendered.

178. Karl Zoergiebel (1878- ) was a social democrat and commissioner of the Berlin police who conducted a brutal assault against CP demonstrators on May 1, 1929.

179. Peter Stolypin (1862-1911) became the czar's prime minister in 1906 and carried out a coup that spelled the end of the 1905 revolution. His agrarian "reform" of 1906 was aimed at the destruction of the village communes and the strengthening of the rich peasants.

180. Serafim Sarovsky (1759-1833) was canonized by the church and the czar in 1903. The letter "yat," an obsolete letter of the Russian alphabet, was abolished by the Bolsheviks.
181. **Dual power** in 1917 refers to the period between the February and October revolutions, when authority was divided between the Provisional Government on one side and the Soviets on the other. Dual power was terminated when the Soviets took full power into their own hands.

182. **War Communism** was the name given to the system of production and distribution that prevailed in the Soviet Union when it was fighting for its life during the civil war of 1918-20. The Bolsheviks had not planned to nationalize and centralize the economy so much so soon after they came to power; their original economic plans were more modest and gradual. But everything was subordinated to the military struggle for survival. One result was growing conflict between the peasants, whose produce was requisitioned or confiscated, and the Soviet state; another was a continuing decline in production, both agricultural and industrial.

183. Stalin's "Reply to Collective Farm Comrades," published April 3, 1930, will be found in his *Works*, volume 12.

184. **Ivan T. Smilga** (1892-193?), an Old Bolshevik, was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council during the civil war and deputy chairman of the State Planning Commission in 1927. A leader of the Left Opposition, he was deported in 1928 and capitulated in 1929. He disappeared, without trial or confession, at the time of the Moscow trials.

185. "Six Letters to Olberg." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Marilyn Vogt. At the first Moscow trial in 1936, a defendant named Valentin Olberg "confessed" that he had been sent to the Soviet Union by Trotsky and Leon Sedov to assassinate Stalin and commit other terrorist acts; like the other defendants in that trial, he was convicted and quickly executed. In 1937 Trotsky, in his appearance before the commission of inquiry headed by John Dewey, submitted six letters he had written in 1930 to Olberg in Germany, together with ten he had received from Olberg at that time. These letters, together with other evidence given to the commission of inquiry, demonstrated that Olberg's testimony at the Moscow trial had been filled with lies and distortions about his relations with Trotsky. Olberg had initiated the correspondence, hoping to become a secretary of Trotsky. It is not certain that he was a GPU agent at that time, although Trotsky's friends in Berlin, after meeting with him, suspected that he was, and strongly advised Trotsky to have nothing to do with him. When Trotsky got this advice, he accepted it and discontinued his correspondence with Olberg. A detailed discussion of Olberg's testimony at the trial and its relation to these letters will be found in the Dewey Commission's report dated September 1937 and published under the title *Not Guilty* (reprinted by Monad Press, 1972, distributed by Pathfinder Press).

186. August 4, 1914, was the date when the Social Democratic
deputies in the German Reichstag voted for the war budget to finance World War I, despite their party’s antimilitarist stand up to that time; on the same day the French and Belgian socialist parties issued manifestoes declaring support of their governments in the war.

187. The National Minority Movement, started in August 1924 at the initiative of the British Communist Party, was a left wing in the trade unions. It represented as many as 200,000 union members and at its height claimed to have the support of about one-fourth of the whole union movement.

188. This article, "What We Gave and What We Got," will be found in Leon Trotsky on Britain.


190. A. I. Pfemfert was Alexandra Ramm, Trotsky’s German translator and wife of Franz Pfemfert (1879-1954), editor of Aktion. Both of them met Olberg and both advised Trotsky against having anything to do with him.

191. Kurt Landau was the leader of one of the German Opposition groups that merged to form the United Opposition at a conference in March 1930; he also served briefly as a member of the Provisional International Secretariat before splitting from the Left Opposition in 1931. Trotsky’s analysis of "Landauism" appears in Writings 32-33. It was through joining Landau’s group that Olberg became a member of the Opposition at the time of his correspondence with Trotsky.

192. This is probably the article "A Lesson in Democracy I Did Not Receive," April 22, 1929, which was printed in Pfemfert’s Aktion in September 1929, and is translated in Writings 29.

193. "Answer to Graef on Collectivization." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 11, May 1930. Translated for this volume by George Saunders. Signed "From the Editors." Immediately following and commenting on an article in the Biulleten by "Ya. Graef" entitled "Rural Collectivization and Relative Overpopulation—On a Question That Has Been Underestimated," it contains formulations and arguments similar to those Trotsky later made about another work on the same subject, "Remarks on Frank’s Work on Collectivization," December 9, 1930 (see Writings 30-31). "Frank" probably was a pseudonym of Graef, who was a member of the Austrian Left Opposition for a brief period before deciding in favor of Stalinism.

194. "Forgetful Myasnikov." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 11, May 1930. Translated for this volume by Jim Burnett. Signed "N. M.,” initials used by Leon Sedov, who prepared this item from an outline by Trotsky. G. I. Myasnikov (1889-1946), an Old Bolshevik, was expelled from the Russian CP in 1922 for violating discipline by his
leadership of the Workers' Group, a splinter of the Workers' Opposition. He made some approaches to Trotsky in 1929, when both were in exile, but the differences were too great to permit political collaboration.

195. "Problems of the Italian Revolution." New International, July 1944. This was the magazine of the Socialist Workers Party and its predecessors from 1934 to 1940 when, after the SWP suffered a serious split, it was seized by its editors, Max Shachtman and James Burnham, and converted into the voice of the Shachtmanite Workers Party and its successors until 1958, when it ceased publication. Trotsky's letter was addressed to three leaders of the Italian Communist Party, Blasco (Pietro Tresso), Feroci, and Santini, who had recently expressed their solidarity with the Left Opposition and had promptly been expelled from the Central Committee of the Italian CP. They organized themselves as the "New Italian Opposition" (to distinguish themselves from the "old" Opposition, the Bordigist Prometeo group), established contact with the ILO, and opened correspondence with Trotsky.

196. Rudolf Hilferding (1877-1941) was a leader of the German Social Democratic Party before World War I and author of the book Finance Capital. He was a pacifist during the war, and became a leader of the centrist USPD that had split away from the social democracy. He later returned to the social democracy, serving as finance minister in the Stresemann cabinet (1922-23) and the Mueller cabinet (1928-30). He fled to France in 1933. The Petain regime turned him over to the Gestapo in 1940, and he died in a German prison. Weimar was the name given to the democratic capitalist German republic and constitution that prevailed between the crushing of the revolution in 1918-1919 and Hitler's assumption of power in 1933.

197. Otto Bauer (1881-1938), leader of the powerful Austrian Social Democratic Party after World War I, was the chief theoretician of Austro-Marxism and a founder of the short-lived Two-and-a-Half International.

198. Permanent revolution was the theory most closely associated with Trotsky, beginning with the 1905 revolution when he first developed his ideas about the leading role of the working class in industrially backward and underdeveloped countries. Although Lenin and the Bolsheviks accepted the conclusions of this theory in leading the 1917 revolution, the Stalinists centered their fire on it in the 1920s after they adopted the theory of "socialism in one country." Trotsky's exposition, The Permanent Revolution, was written in 1928.

199. The revolutionary influence coming from Spain refers to the radicalization of the Spanish masses that had already resulted in the downfall of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship and was to produce the collapse of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic a year later.

200. Filippo Turati (1857-1932) was a founder of the Italian So-
cialist Party, which, after its split in 1921, when the Communist Party was formed, split again in 1922, shedding its right wing. Turati joined the latter group. Giuseppe Modigliani (1872-1947) was a prominent member of the SP who took the same political route as Turati.

201. Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924) was a reformist socialist member of the Italian parliament who was assassinated by Mussolini's thugs because he had denounced fascist electoral trickery and terrorism.

202. "With Marxist Spectacles." International Bulletin, Communist Left Opposition, number 4-5, August 1931. This was an excerpt from a letter responding to a member or branch of the Leninbund some months after its split from the Left Opposition.

203. "A Progress Report to the USSR." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by George Saunders.

204. Mikhail N. Pokrovsky (1868-1932) was a prominent Bolshevik historian and author of a voluminous history of Russia, among other works. The rewriting of all history in the Soviet Union brought a wave of repression in the social sciences and a campaign against Pokrovsky in the beginning of the thirties.

205. "What is Centrism?" La Verite, June 27, 1930. Translated for this volume by Jim Burnett.

206. Joseph Paul-Boncour (1873-1972) was a right-wing French socialist until 1931, served as a minister under Sarraut and Blum in the thirties, and rejoined the SP after World War II.

207. Albert Bourderon (1859-1930) was a French socialist who opposed World War I and attended the Zimmerwald conference. Georg Ledebour (1850-1937) was a German social democrat who opposed World War I and helped to found the USPD. He was against the USPD's joining the Third International or returning to the social democracy, and created his own small group, a new USPD. He joined the centrist SAP in 1931, and opposed merger with the Left Opposition.

208. The Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) was founded in 1917 by centrist elements leaving the social democracy. A majority of its members joined the German CP in 1920. A minority continued as an independent group affiliated to the Two-and-a-Half International until 1922, when they rejoined the social democracy, except for Ledebour's small group. The Two-and-a-Half International (the International Association of Socialist Parties) was formed in February 1921 by centrist parties and groups that had left the Second International under pressure from the revolutionary masses. While criticizing the Second International, its leaders did not have a basically different orientation; in May 1923 they reunited with it.

209. "The Revolution in India, Its Tasks and Dangers." The Mili-
tant, July 12, 1930. A mass campaign against British domination of India had started earlier in 1930, when a Labour government was in power in Britain.

210. Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) was the leader of the nationalist movement that later became the Congress Party of India, and the most prominent figure in the 1930 struggle. He organized mass opposition to British rule, but insisted on peaceful, nonviolent, passive resistance methods.

211. Andrei Bubnov (1883-193?), an Old Bolshevik who was associated with the Democratic Centralism tendency and other oppositional groups, dropped connections with all of them in 1923 and lined up with Stalin. He was a victim of the purge of the Stalinist apparatus at the end of the thirties.

212. G. Safarov (1891-1941), as a member of Zinoviev's group in Leningrad, supported the United Opposition. Expelled from the party in 1927, he capitulated to Stalin.


214. Stanislav Kosior (1889-193?), a secretary of the Ukrainian CP Central Committee in the twenties, became a member of the Politburo in 1930, following the Sixteenth Congress. In 1938 he was removed from all his posts and was soon lost in the purge. Vladimir Kosior, a former leader of the Democratic Centralism group, was a supporter of the Left Opposition and was expelled from the party in 1927.

215. Nikolai Skrypnik (1872-1933) was at various times commissar for internal affairs and commissar for education in the Ukrainian republic, and a member of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian CP. Trotsky's article on his suicide appears in Writings 32-33.

216. Pavel Postyshev (1888-193?) was a secretary of the Ukrainian CP. He became a candidate member of the Politburo in 1934, was replaced in that post in 1938, and was arrested that same year and executed.

217. Yuri Pyatakov (1890-1937), an Old Bolshevik, played a leading role in the Russian Revolution and civil war and held many key party and state posts. In his testament Lenin called him and Bukharin the "two ablest young men in the party." He became a Left Oppositionist in 1923, was expelled in 1927, and capitulated and was reinstated in 1928. As vice chairman of the commissariat of heavy industry, he helped to industrialize the country in the 1930s. He was convicted and executed in the second Moscow trial.

218. "Reply to Comrade K." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 12-13,
June-July 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Comrade K. was Kote Tsintsadze, an Old Bolshevik in exile, who died shortly after this letter was written and was eulogized by Trotsky in "At the Fresh Grave of Kote Tsintsadze," January 7, 1931, reprinted in Writings 30-31.

219. Valerian V. Kuibyshev (1888-1935), an Old Bolshevik who held many important posts before becoming chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy in 1926, was a dedicated Stalinist. The details of his mysterious death remain to be disclosed.


221. Jean Longuet (1876-1938), grandson of Karl Marx, was a French right-wing socialist and founder and editor of Le Populaire. He was a pacifist who voted for government war credits in World War I.

222. Walter Citrine (1887- ) was general secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, 1926-46. For his services to British capitalism, he was knighted in 1935 and made a baronet in 1946.

223. "The Valuable Work of F. Dingelstedt." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 12-13, June-July 1930. Translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. Unsigned. This was an editorial note of introduction to an article, "To the Sixteenth Congress of the CPSU," by F. Dingelstedt.

224. "The New Masses as 'Defender' of the October Revolution." The Militant, July 26, 1930. The New Masses, a Stalinist-controlled magazine which was still pretending to be nonpartisan, was especially interested in the publication of Trotsky's My Life in the United States. In its June 1930 issue the autobiography got a double-barreled treatment: Michael Gold, the editor, wrote a column on "Trotsky's Pride" in the "Notes of the Month," and Earl Browder essayed a review entitled "Trotsky's Estimate of Trotsky." Another contribution, "Mayakovsky" by A. B. Magill, imparted the news that at Zimmerwald in 1915 "Rakovsky was so sore he was going to take off his coat and punch Lenin and Zinoviev in the jaw for saying Martov was an agent of the bourgeoisie." Max Eastman, Trotsky's translator and a former member of the New Masses editorial board, asked the magazine to print Trotsky's answer to the attacks made against him, but the editors, after first agreeing to do so, decided it would be wiser not to.

225. Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930) was the Futurist poet who supported the October Revolution and became highly popular. He committed suicide in April 1930. Trotsky's article on his suicide is translated in Leon Trotsky on Literature and Art (Pathfinder Press, 1970).

226. Maxim Gorky (1868-1936), the Russian author, became a Bolshevik sympathizer. In 1917 he opposed the October Revolution, but later gave it critical support. He ceased making any public crti-
cism of the Soviet regime in the 1930s. Trotsky's 1936 article evaluating his career is also reprinted in Leon Trotsky on Literature and Art.


228. George Plekhanov (1856-1918) was the founder of the first Russian Marxist organization, the Emancipation of Labor group, started in 1883. After collaboration with Lenin on Iskra in emigration, he became a Menshevik, a supporter of the Russian side in World War I, and an opponent of the October Revolution.

229. White Guards and Whites were names used for the Russian counterrevolutionary forces following the October Revolution.

230. The Okhrana was the czarist secret police which conducted pogroms against the Jews and hounded the revolutionary movement.

231. "To the Editorial Board of Prometeo." Fourth International, September-October 1947. Fourth International was the name of the magazine expressing the views of the Socialist Workers Party after the New International was captured by Shachtman and Burnham in 1940; in 1956 its name was changed to International Socialist Review.

232. Bordiga, who was arrested by the Mussolini regime in 1926 and kept on a remote island, had recently been released from custody during a so-called amnesty, but was still kept under the strictest police surveillance.

233. "Circular Letter Number One." From the files of the International Communist League. Translated from the French for this volume by Russell Block. After complaining privately to Naville and others about the slovenly performance of the International Secretariat, Trotsky used this letter to the sections and members of the International Left Opposition to prod the Secretariat into following through on the decisions of the April 6 meeting. Soon after this the first issue of the new International Bulletin was published.

234. The Mahnrf group, after their periodical Der Neuer Mahnrf [The New Call], was formally named "Communist Opposition of Austria."

235. Roman Well and Senin were pseudonyms of the Sobolevicius brothers, who played a leading role in the German Opposition until the end of 1932, when they led a split toward the Stalinists (see Writings 32-33). As Dr. Robert Soblen, Well committed suicide in 1962 when he was under prosecution as a Soviet espionage agent in the USA.


238. Henricus Sneevliet (1883-1942), a founder of the Marxist movement in Indonesia and of the CP in Holland, organized the Revolutionary Socialist Party in 1929 after his expulsion from the Comintern. In 1933 Sneevliet's group joined the ILO, but withdrew in 1938 before the formation of the Fourth International. He was executed by the Nazis during World War II. The editors are unable to explain why Trotsky in 1930 called him "one of the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International." The latter was dissolved in 1923 and Sneevliet never belonged to it. Perhaps Trotsky used the term because Sneevliet's policies in 1930 reminded him of those held by the centrists of the Two-and-a-Half International.

239. Pierre Naville (1904- ) was a founder of the French Left Opposition and a member of the International Secretariat. He left the Fourth International during World War II. He has written many sociological works and a memoir, Trotsky vivant, published in 1958, and has helped to publish several Trotsky books in French. Gerard Rosenthal, who also went by the name of Francis Gerard, was a leader of Naville's group and later Trotsky's attorney in France.

240. "No Limits on Any Party Member." From La Crise de la section francaise de la Ligue communiste internationaliste, part two, published in 1939. Translated for this volume by Fred Buchman. This was an excerpt from a letter to Pierre Naville concerning the latter's hostility to Raymond Molièr (1904- ), another founder of the French Opposition. Trotsky often found himself in agreement with Molièr's positions in the French League's many internal disputes until 1935. Their collaboration ended when the Molièr group violated discipline by publishing a periodical, La Commune (see Writings 35-36), although Trotsky expressed a willingness to explore a reconciliation shortly before his death (Writings 39-40).

241. Trotsky reviewed this anti-Molièr incident at greater length a year later in "French Leadership Problems," June 28, 1931 (Writings 30-31). In a discussion with Naville reported in Trotsky vivant, Trotsky said that he was appalled by the bitter factionalism existing in the French League: "You know, I've never seen faction fights like yours. With us, there were many of them. It wasn't always sweet, oh no. But ferocious rows like yours, no, I've never seen that. It's extraordinary. How is it possible? It must be straightened out."


243. N. Markin was the pseudonym of Leon Sedov (1906-38), Trotsky's elder son, closest collaborator, and coeditor of Biulleten Oppozitsii. He lived with his parents in Turkey until 1931, then in Germany 1931-33, and finally in Paris until his death at the hands

244. "How the ILO Is Doing." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian for this volume by Marilyn Vogt. Unsigned. This was another of Trotsky's periodic circular letters to the USSR.

245. "Stalin and His Agabekov." *The Militant*, August 15, 1930. Signed "A." In a letter to the International Secretariat, Trotsky wrote: "I am sending you my article on the Agabekov case. This Agabekov affair has great importance. The Opposition should use it to raise the Blumkin case in a new light. You may use the article as an editorial without a signature, simply reprint it, or add to it, according to local conditions, etc."

246. **Andre Tardieu** (1876-1945), a conservative and nationalist, was premier of France in 1929-30 and 1932.


248. Stalin's speech to an official Conference of Marxist Students of Agrarian Questions, "Concerning Questions of Agrarian Policy in the USSR," will be found in his *Works*, volume 12.

249. **Vladimir Groman** (1873-1937) was a Menshevik statistical economist who began working for the State Planning Commission in 1922. He was the main figure in the 1931 "Menshevik trial" and was last heard of in prison.

250. **Anastas Mikoyan** (1895-____) replaced Kamenev as commissar of trade in 1926 and became a member of the Politburo in 1939. Mikoyan survived the purges, associated himself with Khrushchev's "de-Stalinization" program, and then survived Khrushchev.

251. **George Lvov** (1861-1925) was premier of the Provisional Government from March to July, when he was succeeded by Kerensky. **Alexander Guchkov** (1862-1936) was a leader of the Octobrists, monarchist party of the big commercial, industrial, and landowning bourgeoisie. **Paul Miliukov** (1859-1943) was the principal Cadet spokesman and outstanding bourgeois opponent of the Bolsheviks.


253. **George von Vollmar** (1850-1922) was a Bavarian social democrat and Reichstag deputy from Munich. In an 1879 article entitled "The Isolated Socialist State," he advanced and defended a concept of "socialism in one country." As a pioneer of reformism, he anticipated Eduard Bernstein.

254. "Preliminary Comments on the Sixteenth Congress." By permission of the Harvard College Library. Translated from the Russian
for this volume by George Saunders. This was a letter to the USSR.

255. **Manilov** is a character in Nikolai Gogol's *Dead Souls* who is inoffensive and ineffectual.


257. **Jan Rudzutak** (1887-1938) was elected to the Politburo after the Fifteenth Congress of the Soviet CP in 1927, demoted to candidate status after the Seventeenth in 1934, and purged in 1938.

258. **Paul von Hindenburg** (1847-1934) was a Prussian field marshal who commanded the German forces in World War I. Against social democratic opposition he was elected president of the Weimar republic in 1925, and was reelected with social democratic support in 1932. He appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933. **Arthur Henderson** (1863-1935) was a secretary of the British Labour Party who served as home secretary in MacDonald's first Labour cabinet and foreign secretary in his second. He was also president of the Second International, 1923 and 1925-29.

259. **Sergeant Prishibeyev** is a character in a story of the same name by Anton Chekhov. The English equivalent of Prishibeyev is "Squelch."


261. **V.K. Bluecher** had been the Red Army's military adviser to Chiang Kai-shek in the mid-twenties. He was shot on Stalin's orders in 1938.

262. **Semyon Budenny** (1883-1973), who joined the Soviet CP in 1919, was one of the few leading military figures to escape execution or imprisonment in the purges.

263. **Kliment Voroshilov** (1881-1969) was commissar of war, 1925-40, and president of the USSR, 1953-60.

264. Stalin's concluding remarks, "Reply to the Discussion on the Political Report of the Central Committee to the Sixteenth Congress of the CPSU," July 2, 1930, will be found in his *Works*, volume 12.


266. The Hungarian revolution of 1919 reached its high point in March when the capitalist government of Count Karolyi turned power over to the Soviets and a Soviet Hungary was proclaimed. But the new government was overthrown in August by counterrevolutionary armies directed by France and her allies.

267. "Proposal for an Open Letter." From the files of the International Communist League. Translated from the French for this volume by Russell Block. In 1930 Trotsky and others thought they saw signs that the French CP was turning away from some of the "third
period" excesses. This excerpt from a letter to Gerard was part of Trotsky's effort to get the French League to intervene effectively.


269. The Amtorg Trading Corporation was founded in New York with headquarters in Moscow in 1924 to conduct trade between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the years when the U.S. refused to recognize the USSR.

270. Hermann Gorter (1864-1927) was a Dutch writer and poet in the left wing of the labor movement, and an opponent of World War I. After the defeat of the German revolution (1918-19), he became an incurable sectarian, along with the majority of the Dutch CP leaders, and founded the antiparliamentary Communist Labor Party. The German Communist Workers Party (KAPD) was a group of ultra-leftists expelled from the CP in the fall of 1919. Although they began with a membership in the tens of thousands, in a few years they had dwindled into a small sect.


272. "Two Letters to China." Wu-ch'an-che (Le Proletaire), number 4, October 30, 1930. Translated from the Chinese for this volume by Joseph T. Miller. Le Proletaire was part of the title of the publication, possibly for easy identification by Western readers. Its contents were entirely in Chinese.

273. Ch'en Tu-hsiu (1879-1942), a founder of the Chinese CP, followed Comintern policy in the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. In December 1929 he published a letter explaining his part, as well as Stalin's and Bukharin's, in the defeat of the revolution and announcing his support of the Left Opposition, which he joined the following year. He was imprisoned by the Chiang Kai-shek regime from 1932 to 1937. He suffered ill health in prison and gave up politics.

274. Karl Kautsky (1854-1938) was regarded as the outstanding Marxist theoretician until World War I, when he abandoned internationalism and opposed the Russian Revolution.

275. The four groups were: Wo-men-ti-hua (Our Words), Shih-yueh she (October Society), Wu-ch'an-che she (Proletarian Society), Chantou she (Combat Society). On May Day 1931, a national conference of the four Chinese Oppositional groups met in Shanghai and voted to unify as the "Left Opposition of the Chinese Communist Party." They adopted a platform and a program of action, elected a national executive committee, and chose the name Huo hsing (Spark) for their paper. Soon after, however, the united organization suffered severe repression and arrests by the Chiang Kai-shek government.

276. "Greetings to La Verite." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 15-16,
September-October 1930. Translated for this volume by Fred Buchman. The occasion for the greetings was La Verite's first anniversary.

277. The phrygian cap, represented in Greek art as conical in shape, is identified in modern art with the liberty cap adopted by the revolutionaries of the French Revolution. The Amiens Charter, adopted by the 1906 congress of the CGT on the initiative of the syndicalists, demanded the complete autonomy and absolute independence of the unions from political parties.

278. "Notes of a Journalist." Biulleten Oppozitsii, number 15-16, September-October 1930, from which the first five sections were translated for this volume by Iain Fraser. The sixth section—"What Is Social Fascism?"—is taken from The Militant, October 1, 1930. Signed "Alpha."

279. Alfred Rosmer (1877-1964) was a revolutionary syndicalist and collaborator of Trotsky in France during World War I. He was elected to the ECCI in 1920 and was a leader of the French CP until his expulsion as an oppositionist in 1924. He was a leader of the ILO and its International Secretariat until November 1930, when he withdrew over differences with Trotsky on how to build the Left Opposition. Their personal friendship was renewed in 1936. He wrote several books on labor history. His memoir of Trotsky in Paris, 1915-16, appears in the collection Leon Trotsky, The Man and His Work (Pathfinder Press, 1969).

280. Alois Neurath (1886- ) was a leader of the Czechoslovakian CP and a member of the ECCI. Expelled as a "Trotskyist," he actually was closest to the Brandlerites. In 1932 he became critical of Brandler over the latter's apologies for the Soviet bureaucracy's role in the USSR and his dishonest criticisms of Trotsky's proposals on how to fight the Nazis in Germany. Neurath and a group around him joined the movement for the Fourth International in 1937.

281. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), president of the Indian Congress Party in 1929 and several other times afterwards, became prime minister when India obtained independence in 1947. He retained that post until his death. Vallabhbhai Patel (1877-1950) was a right-wing leader of the Indian Congress Party and became a member of the government after the proclamation of independence.

282. Ivan Ivanovich Khemnitzer (1745-1784) was a Russian writer of fables and other works; he attacked fruitless theorizing, the pomposity of the nobility, and the inequities of Russian life. A stanza from Metaphysic, a major work, reads: "A monk always wears his, / But what is it? / A rope! / A simple belt!"


284. Karl Korsch (1886-1961), a minister in the Communist-Social Democratic government of the German state of Thuringia, was
expelled from the German CP in 1929 for alleged "Trotskyism." He formed a small ultraleft sect.


286. Pierre Gourget, an early French Oppositionist, was a leader of the rightist tendency in the Communist League in 1930-31. He capitulated to Stalinism and returned to the CP in 1932.

287. "Physical Attack, Slander, and Provocation." International Bulletin, Communist Left Opposition, English edition, number 2, March 1, 1931, where it was entitled "A Necessary Warning." It was signed "International Secretariat" and bore the International Secretariat's date of October 12, 1930.

288. Andres Nin (1892-1937), a founder of the Spanish CP and a secretary of the Red International of Labor Unions, was expelled in 1927 as a Left Oppositionist. He participated in the formation of the ILO and was a leader of its Spanish section, which split from the ILO in 1935 to merge with the Catalan Federation and form the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). For a brief period he was a minister of justice in the Catalan government, but was arrested by the Stalinists and murdered.


290. In the September 14 Reichstag elections the CP received 4.6 million votes, a substantial increase from its 3.3 million in May 1928. By comparison, the Social Democrats got 8.6 million and the Nazis 6.4 million. This was a 700 percent gain in the fascist vote, making them the second biggest party in Germany. Trotsky's analysis of the vote, "The Turn in the Communist International and the Situation in Germany," September 26, 1930, will be found in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany.

291. For various reasons, the projected European conference did not take place.
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OTHER WRITINGS OF 1930

In addition to the material in the present volume, the following writings of Trotsky during the period covered here have been published:

The Stalin School of Falsification. 1937. Contains "Some Documents Relating to the Origin of the Legend of 'Trotskyism'" (February 7, 1930) and "A Contribution to the Political Biography of Stalin" (August 1930).

The Permanent Revolution. 1930. Contains an introduction to the German and other non-Russian editions originally entitled "Two Theories" (March 29, 1930).


The year 1930 witnessed the spread of the Great Depression to all parts of the capitalist world and a turn in the Soviet Union to the forced collectivization of agriculture and industrialization drive that imposed heavy sacrifices and suffering on the Soviet masses. These crucial events form the background of this volume, which collects the letters, articles, and pamphlets written by Leon Trotsky during the first ten months of 1930, the second year of his exile in Turkey.

Here Trotsky presents his criticisms and alternatives to the theory and practice of the Stalinist bureaucracy at home and abroad—to its economic adventurism and political repression in the Soviet Union, and to the ultra-left, Moscow-dictated policy of the "third period," a sectarian schema decorated with radical rhetoric that prevented the Communist parties throughout the world from taking advantage of the capitalist crisis.

In addition Trotsky writes, among other topics, about the formation of the International Left Opposition at a conference in Paris in April 1930, the nature of internationalism, the machinations of an unscrupulous publisher in Dresden, how leaders were made and unmade in the Communist International, the slogan of a national assembly in China, the role of democratic demands in fascist Italy, a debate over centrism in French union circles, revolutionary tasks in India, and the U.S. magazine New Masses.

Around half of the selections are translated into English for the first time, primarily from the Left Opposition journal Biulleten Oppozitsii and material at the Harvard College Library.

This book is also available in a cloth edition at $13.00.