WRITINGS OF
LEON TROTSKY
[1933-34]
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[1933-34]
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CONTENTS

Preface 9
Chronology 13
It Is Impossible to Remain in the Same "International" with Stalin, Manuilsky, Lozovsky and Company (July 20, 1933) 17
A Necessary Clarification (July 26, 1933) 25
For New Communist Parties and the New International (July 27, 1933) 26
Even Slander Should Make Some Sense (August 5, 1933) 28
Is Soviet Policy a Matter on Which Only Russian Socialists Are Competent to Decide? (August 9, 1933) 33
An Organ of Finance Capital on "Trotskyism" (August 13, 1933) 35
Declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninist Delegation at the Conference of Left Socialist and Communist Organizations (August 17, 1933) 37
More Urgent Needs for Fund Raising (August 18, 1933) 45
The German Opposition and the SAP Should Unite (August 18, 1933) 46
How to Handle Slanders and Insinuations (August 18, 1933) 48
The Declaration of Four (August 26, 1933) 49
Whither the Independent Labour Party? (August 28, 1933) 53
An Interview by C.A. Smith (August 29, 1933) 58
On the Conference of Left Socialist and Communist Organizations Held at Paris, August 27-28, 1933 (August 31, 1933) 63
The Paris Conference: A Firm Nucleus for a New International (September 1, 1933) 65
Stalin Prepares a Treacherous Blow (September 1, 1933) 69
How to Influence the ILP (September 3, 1933) 71
The ILP and the New International (September 4, 1933) 72
Success or Failure?  
(September 10, 1933) 79
Principled Considerations on Entry  
(September 16, 1933) 84
It Is Time to Stop  
(Published September 18, 1933) 88
About the United Front with Grzeginsky . . .  
(September 20, 1933) 92
The USSR and the Comintern  
(September 24, 1933) 94
The Fate of the British Section  
(September 25, 1933) 100
The Class Nature of the Soviet State  
(October 1, 1933) 101
To Dispel Misunderstandings  
(October 2, 1933) 123
The Lever of a Small Group  
(October 2, 1933) 125
Private Opinions and Public Statements  
(October 2, 1933) 127
A False Understanding of the New Orientation  
(October 8, 1933) 130
Doubts, Hesitations and Fears  
(Autumn 1933) 132
On the Saar Question  
(Published November 4, 1933) 135
Our Present Tasks  
(November 7, 1933) 136
Maria Reese and the Comintern  
(November 10, 1933) 140
Answers to Questions by Anita Brenner  
(November 13, 1933) 142
Hitler the Pacifist  
(November 23, 1933) 145
A Political Trial Without a Political Axis  
(November 26, 1933) 149
Nationalism and Economic Life  
(November 30, 1933) 155
Contribution Toward a Discussion on the Basic  
Theoretical Conceptions of the International  
Communist League  
(December 4, 1933) 163
Notes of a Journalist  
(December 12, 1933) 172
A Conference of the Bloc of Four  
(December 30, 1933) 178
Anatole Vasilievich Lunacharsky  
(January 1, 1934) 181
Cardinal Questions Facing the ILP  
(January 5, 1934) 186
Revisionism and Planning  
(January 9, 1934) 191
The SAP, the ICL and the Fourth International  
(January 11, 1934) 201
Are There No Limits to the Fall?  
(January 18, 1934) 209
On the Eve of the Seventeenth Congress  
(January 20, 1934) 222
A Real Achievement  
(January 24, 1934) 228
The Responsibility of Translators  
(February 20, 1934) 231
Centrism and the Fourth International  
(February 22, 1934) 232
France Is Now the Key to the Situation  
(Published March 1934) 238
Rakovsky's Declaration of Submission  
(Published March 10, 1934) 245
The Red Army  
(March 13, 1934) 246
A Centrist Attack on Marxism  
(March 16, 1934) 260
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once More on Centrism <em>(March 23, 1934)</em></td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greetings to <em>La Verita</em> <em>(March 25, 1934)</em></td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Proposed Fusion in the United States <em>(March 29, 1934)</em></td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meaning of Rakovsky's Surrender <em>(March 31, 1934)</em></td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Crisis of the Greek Section <em>(April 5, 1934)</em></td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behind Rakovsky's Capitulation <em>(April 19, 1934)</em></td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off With All the Blindfolds! <em>(Published April 27, 1934)</em></td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation with a Dissident from Saint-Denis <em>(Published June 8, 1934)</em></td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments and Rebuttals <em>(Published June 8, 1934)</em></td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War and the Fourth International <em>(June 10, 1934)</em></td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix: Leon Trotsky <em>by Andre Malraux</em></td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes and Acknowledgments</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leon Sedov, then 27 years old, and his father, Leon Trotsky, at Royan, France, August 1933.
Exiled to Turkey by the Soviet government in 1929, Leon Trotsky kept trying to get a visa that would enable him to move closer to the center of world politics. Virtually every government in Europe denied his applications during the next four-and-a-half years. It was not until 1933 that the French government, under Radical Premier Edouard Daladier, agreed to revoke the decree of 1916 that had banned Trotsky from France "forever" (because of his antiwar activities) and to grant him asylum. Trotsky and his companion Natalia sailed from Turkey in July 1933 to begin a residence in France that lasted almost two years. The present volume covers the first half of that period, July 1933 to June 1934.

July 1933 was eventful in Trotsky's life for another reason—it was the month that marked a profound change in his thinking about strategic problems facing the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

Trotsky's struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy and its perversions of Leninism had begun almost ten years before, when he organized the Left Opposition in 1923 to fight for revolutionary internationalism and proletarian democracy inside the Soviet Union. It continued after the Left Opposition was defeated and its leaders expelled, imprisoned or exiled; the International Left Opposition came into being the year after Trotsky's arrival in Turkey. Throughout that decade a constant factor in the Opposition's orientation had been the necessity to "reform" the Communist International—not to create a new movement to replace the Comintern but to influence and pressure it to return to the revolutionary policies and practices that had prevailed in Lenin's time. Thus the Left Opposition rejected the label of "party" or "International" and demonstratively called itself a "faction" of the Comintern and its affiliated parties, even though it had been expelled from them.
But the German catastrophe compelled Trotsky to rethink this question. Hitler's victory in January 1933—the worst defeat the working-class movement had ever suffered—was made possible by the criminally ultraleft policy of the German Communist Party, which opposed and blocked the formation of a workers' united front to stop the Nazis. In March 1933 Trotsky called on the Left Opposition to recognize that the German Communist Party was finished as a revolutionary force, to abandon the policy of "reform" in Germany and to begin working for the creation of a new revolutionary party in that country. After discussion, and some resistance because Trotsky's proposal represented a drastic change of perspective, the International Left Opposition approved the change.

But this was clearly only a transitional step. The policy followed in Germany had been devised not by the German party but by the leadership of the Comintern itself, that is, by the Soviet bureaucracy. In the months following the Nazi victory, when the Communist Party and every other German working-class organization were being smashed to pieces, the Comintern leadership had nothing to say about its German policy except that it had been correct from beginning to end. Not a single Communist Party anywhere in the world expressed a single criticism—none even proposed a discussion of the German defeat or a world congress to consider what had gone wrong if the official policy had been so eminently correct.

In mid-July, therefore, Trotsky took the next step. Just before leaving Turkey, he wrote a discussion article proposing that the Opposition go further, give up the perspective of reforming the Comintern altogether and proclaim the need to build a new International and new parties throughout the world. On the ship taking him to France, he wrote another discussion article, "It Is Impossible to Remain in the Same 'International' with Stalin, Manuilsky, Lozovskiy and Company," reprinted here as the first selection in this volume. This proposal too was adopted after discussion by the International Left Opposition.

Only one element of the previous "reform" perspective remained in Trotsky's July proposals—the belief that the Soviet state itself could still be regenerated without a revolution. Further thought and discussion, however, led him and his movement (which took a new name to symbolize its new orientation: the International Communist League) to decide that reform was no longer sufficient in this sphere either. The new position—that a political (but not a social) revolution was required in the Soviet Union—was expressed in his pamphlet, The Class Nature of the Soviet State, dated October 1, 1933, and reprinted in this volume. This became one of the fundamental
positions of both the International Communist League and the Fourth International that succeeded it.

No one understood better than Trotsky the immensity of the task that his small, isolated movement was shouldering. And no one was more indefatigable than he in searching out every possible opportunity for this small movement to break out of its isolation and find new allies, even temporary ones, so that the first steps could be taken in the direction of a new International. A month after he reached France, an international conference was held in Paris by several independent socialist and communist parties and groups. Trotsky knew that most of these groups were centrist, but he also knew that their members had been deeply shaken by the German events and that some of them were groping toward revolutionary regroupment and a new International. Although he could not attend the Paris conference himself, he met with many of its leaders and tried to win them over. As a result partly of his intervention, the leaders of a German and two Dutch parties signed, together with the Left Opposition, the "Declaration of Four," a public call for a new International that had been written by Trotsky. This and many other selections in this volume attest to Trotsky's keen interest in the development of these centrist parties and his attempts to persuade his own movement to assist them in whatever leftward evolution they were capable of.

Soon after coming to France, Trotsky decided that the next book he would write would be a biography of Lenin. While he was gathering and preparing the material for this work, most of his writing, at least during his first year in France, was about the problems of building the new International and about current events such as the Reichstag fire trial, the Seventeenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the capitulation to Stalin by his old comrade, Christian Rakovsky, and the political crisis that gripped France following an attempted coup d'etat by the fascists. Convinced that France was on the verge of a social explosion and therefore provided the key to the international situation, he began to pay more and closer attention to French developments.

At this point, in April 1934, the local police learned that Trotsky was living incognito at Barbizon, for which he had received permission from the national police. This discovery led to a big furore and a clamor by both the French fascists and the French Stalinists that he be expelled from the country. The Doumergue regime, which was seeking to create the image of a "strong" government and was also exploring the possibility of a military pact with the Soviet authorities, responded with a decree ordering Trotsky to leave at once. Since no other country would accept him, he could not comply. He was or-
ordered out of Barbizon, however, and had to keep moving from one town to another until June, when he finally found a place in a remote Alpine village where the government was willing to let him live until another country opened its doors. Trotsky's thinking about what should be done in France, which reached maturity while he was on the move in the spring of 1934, did not get written expression until June and later (see *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35*).

The present volume ends with one of Trotsky's most important pamphlets, the unsigned *War and the Fourth International*, published in June 1934. It is the most complete and systematic presentation of the Leninist attitude toward war in the epoch of imperialism that has ever been written.

Around one-third of the articles here are translated into English for the first time or have appeared previously only in internal bulletins with restricted circulation. Other articles by Trotsky included here were unsigned when first published or were signed by pen names, usually for security reasons. The date preceding each article indicates when it was completed; if that is not known, the date the article was first published is given. Translations originally done in the 1930s have been revised slightly to correct obvious errors and to achieve uniformity in spelling of names, punctuation, etc. 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." Most volumes in this series contain a section called "Other Writings," listing articles not included because they are in print and available elsewhere; the present volume does not have such a section because, to the best of our knowledge, it contains everything by Trotsky published for the period covered here.

The Editors

July 1971

*A Note on the Second Edition:* An article in the first edition entitled "Our Attempt to Fuse with the Hennaut Group" (Autumn 1933), mistakenly attributed to Trotsky in the bulletin from which it was taken, has been replaced by "Private Opinions and Public Statements" (October 2, 1933), and the relevant notes have been changed accordingly. The last paragraph of "Notes of a Journalist" (December 12, 1933), omitted from the 1934 translation used here, has been restored in this edition. In addition, some wrong dates, typographical errors, and inferior translation choices have been corrected.

September 1974
CHRONOLOGY

—1933—

July 17—Leon and Natalia Trotsky sail from Turkey on the S.S. Bulgaria, arriving at Marseilles July 24. Their asylum is protested by the French fascists, the Russian White Guard emigres and the French Stalinists. On July 25 they take up residence at Saint-Palais, near Royan, where visitors from various parts of Europe come to hold discussions with Trotsky.

August 19—The International Secretariat of the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists) votes at a plenary session to call for the creation of a new International.

August 26—Representatives of the Left Opposition and three other organizations sign the Declaration of Four, a statement written by Trotsky calling for a new International.

August 27-28—A conference of independent socialist and communist organizations meets in Paris; a majority refuses to join the call for a new International.

September—Trotsky urges the British Bolshevik-Leninists to join the Independent Labour Party. He decides to write a biography of Lenin.

October 1—Trotsky completes The Class Nature of the Soviet State, a pamphlet setting forth the perspective of political revolution in the Soviet Union.

October 14—Nazi Germany quits the League of Nations and a disarmament conference being held in Geneva.

October 24—The French cabinet headed by Premier Edouard Daladier falls; it is succeeded on October 27 by a cabinet headed by Albert Sarraut.

November 1—Trotsky moves to Barbizon, a small town near Paris.

November 5—The national council of the French Socialist Party expels the leaders of its right wing, the Neo-Socialists or Neos, for violating party discipline in the Chamber of Deputies.
November 12 — The Nazi government stages a plebiscite and announces its policies have been approved by an overwhelming majority.

November 16 — U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt grants diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union.

November 24 — Sarraut's cabinet falls; it is succeeded on November 27 by a cabinet headed by Camille Chautemps.

December — The Executive Committee of the Communist International, at its Thirteenth Plenum in Moscow, reaffirms the Stalinist theory of "social fascism."

December 30 — Representatives of the organizations that signed the Declaration of Four in August hold a conference in Paris.

— 1934 —

January 4 — Serge Alexandre Stavisky, a financier involved in several shady deals, is found shot to death. The ensuing scandal involves figures high in the government.

January 26—February 10 — The Communist Party of the Soviet Union holds its Seventeenth Congress, the first in four years. It is dubbed the "Congress of Victors" on the ground that the Stalinist leadership has eliminated all opposition.

January 27 — The Chautemps cabinet falls; it is succeeded on January 30 by a cabinet headed by Daladier.

February 6-12 — French fascists and royalists attempt to overthrow the government through a demonstration at the Chamber of Deputies, where fourteen are killed and hundreds hospitalized in fighting that lasts through the night. Daladier falls the next day and is replaced by Gaston Doumergue, a retired ex-president, who sets up a "strong" cabinet including Herriot, Tardieu, Barthou, Sarraut and Laval. On February 12 the labor movement holds a one-day general strike and demonstrations throughout the country.

February 11-16 — The Austrian government headed by chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss caps a year of repression by shutting down the Social Democratic press. A general strike is called, and the workers of Vienna fight a heroic battle, arms in hand, before they are subdued by the government's artillery. Hundreds are killed, thousands are imprisoned, and the Social Democracy is crushed.

February 28 — An international youth conference, broken up by the police in Holland, meets in Belgium and votes to work for the creation of a new International.

February — Christian Rakovsky, a leader of the Russian Left Opposition, capitulates to Stalin.

March — The International Communist League (new name of
the International Left Opposition) publishes a manifesto, written by Trotsky, which says that after the February crisis France has become the key to the international situation.

April—Jacques Doriot, a leader of the French Communist Party who has begun to criticize its refusal to engage in united-front struggles against fascism, refuses to visit Moscow for "discussion," thus opening the way for his expulsion from the CP.

Mid-April—Trotsky's residence at Barbizon is publicized by the local police, and the French fascists and Stalinists again demand his deportation. The Doumergue regime complies, but cannot carry out its expulsion decree because no other country will accept Trotsky. He is forced to leave Barbizon and has to keep moving from place to place until June, when he finds a home in an Alpine village acceptable to the government.

May 20-23—The French Socialist Party holds a national congress at Toulouse, its first since the departure of the Neo right wing. The party's shift to the left is expressed by the congress's vote against further governmental coalitions with the Radicals and by its appeals for left-wingers who had quit or been expelled to return to the party.

May 26—Nazi newspapers say France and the USSR have completed a military agreement providing for technical collaboration between their armies.

June 10—War and the Fourth International, a basic document written by Trotsky and adopted by the International Secretariat of the ICL, is published.
At Royan, France, in 1933: (l. to r.) Rudolf Klement, Trotsky, Yvan Craipeau, Jeanne Martin des Pallieres, Sara Weber and (front) Jean van Heijenoort.
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMAIN IN THE SAME "INTERNATIONAL" WITH STALIN, MANUILSKY, LOZOFSKY AND COMPANY

A Conversation

(July 20, 1933)

A: It is time to break with the Moscow caricature of an International. It is impossible to bear even a shadow of political responsibility for the Stalinists. We have been very prudent and very patient with regard to the Comintern; but there is a limit to everything: now that Hitler has been placed in the saddle, before the whole world, by Wels on one side and Stalin on the other; now that the Comintern, despite the catastrophe, has proclaimed its policy infallible—no sensible man will any longer hope that this clique can be "reformed."

B: The clique certainly not, but the Comintern taken as a whole?

A: One must not be deceived by general phrases. The "Comintern as a whole" is an abstraction, not to say an empty expression. Control is in the hands of the Stalinist clique. For six years now there has been no congress. Who has trampled on the statutes? The clique. By what right? By the right of usurpation. Not one section, not one local organization, not one paper has dared to breathe a word about the necessity for an International Congress. This means that, in fact, the fate of the "Comintern as a whole" lies in the hands of an irresponsible clique.

B: That is incontestable, but isn't that just how things stood a year ago, when we had not yet withdrawn the slogan of the reform of the Comintern?

A: No. That is not how the matter stood. A year ago, one still could hope to salvage the situation in Germany. We did everything in our power to throw light on the logic of the situation. If the Comintern had been a viable organization, its leadership could not have failed to hear the voice of events: it is absolutely impossible to expect a more powerful voice.
And if the Comintern remained deaf this time, it means that it is a corpse. In still another respect, a decisive change has taken place: last year the German Communist Party still existed. In the whirlpool of great events, it still had to reckon with the working masses. One had a certain right to hope, right up to the hour of the verification, that the development of the struggle of the masses would reverse not only Thaelmann's Central Committee but also the presidium of Stalin-Manuilsky. That did not happen.

Of the German Communist Party nothing has been left but an apparatus that grows weaker every day and becomes increasingly alienated from the masses. The point has been reached where the Central Committee prohibits the local illegal organizations from publishing their own articles and appeals: the duty of the local committees is only to reprint the revelations of the Manuilskys and the Heckerts. Every movement of thought represents a mortal danger for these people. The victory of Hitler is not really a "defeat" for them: it has freed them from all control from below. But now that the strongest party of the Comintern has left the stage, there is decidedly no means, no channel, and no lever left by which to act upon the clique that rules the Comintern.

B: Can the German Communist Party be spoken of as the strongest party of the Comintern? Have you forgotten the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)?

A: No, I have not forgotten. Even if one recognizes that the CPSU is a party (in reality, within the administrative cadres of the CPSU, which change according to the will of the clique, several parties are conducting a covert struggle against each other), this party is, in any case, not an active section of the Comintern. The Soviet workers have no idea of what is happening to the proletarian movement in the West: nothing is communicated to them or, still worse, they are ignobly deceived. Within the Politburo itself, with its present composition, there is not a single person who knows the life and the tendencies of the workers' movement in the capitalist countries.

The slogan of the "reform" of the Comintern was, for us, never a hollow phrase. We counted on reform as on a reality. Developments followed the worst road. That is precisely why we are compelled to declare that the policy of reform is exhausted to the very end.

B: Is it possible for us, then, to leave the centrist bureaucracy heir to the banner of the Comintern?

A: One should not be misled by ambiguous formulas. What is understood by a banner? A program? But we long ago rejected the program adopted by the Sixth Congress as a per-
nicious admixture of opportunism and adventurism. In the course of several years, basing ourselves on the lessons of events, we counted upon changing the program of the Comintern by internal means. Now this possibility has disappeared at the same time as the possibility of "reform." To the miserable, eclectic program of the Comintern, we must counterpose our Marxist program.

_B:_ And the first four congresses of the Comintern?

_A:_ Naturally, we do not abandon them, especially since the Stalinists have long ago renounced them and given them over to us. We will build our program upon the foundation established by the first four congresses: it is an irreproachable Marxist foundation; it is our foundation. Only the Left Opposition has translated the lessons of the last ten years into the language of Marxism. Our international preconference has summed up these lessons in its eleven points. There is, however, an omission from the total. The preconference met on the eve of the decisive examination to which history submitted the Comintern. The complete and conclusive collapse of the Comintern is not recorded in the decisions of the preconference. It must be done by the conference. As far as everything else goes, the decisions of the preconference retain all their force. The principal documents of the first four congresses plus the eleven points of the Left Opposition—these are the fundamental elements of the true program of the Communist International.

_B:_ The opponents, in spite of everything, will say that we are renouncing the banner of Lenin.

_A:_ The opponents have been shouting that for some time, and all the more loudly the more they trample the heritage of Bolshevism into the mud. As for us, we shall say to the workers of the entire world that we are taking upon ourselves the defense of the banner of Marx and Lenin, the continuation and development of their work, in the intransigent struggle not only against the reformist traitors—that goes without saying—but also against the centrist falsifiers of Bolshevism, usurpers of the banner of Lenin, organizers of defeats and capitulations, and corrupters of the proletarian vanguard: the Stalinists.

_B:_ Then what is to be done about the CPSU? What is to be done about the USSR? Won't the opponents say that we consider as lost the achievements of the workers' state and that we are preparing armed insurrection against the Soviet government?

_A:_ Certainly they will say that. They have been saying it for some time now. What else can they say to justify their base persecutions of the Bolshevik-Leninists? But we are guid-
ed not by the calumny of opponents but by the actual course of the class struggle. The October Revolution, with the Bolshevik Party at its head, created the workers' state. Now the Bolshevik Party no longer exists. But the fundamental social content of the October Revolution is still alive. The bureaucratic dictatorship, notwithstanding the technical successes achieved under it (against itself), greatly facilitates the possibility of the capitalist restoration, but luckily the point of a restoration has not yet been reached. With favorable internal and, above all, international conditions, the edifice of the workers' state can be regenerated on the social foundations of the Soviet Union without a new revolution.

For a long time we had calculated that we would succeed in reforming the CPSU itself and, through its mediation, in regenerating the Soviet regime. But the present official [Communist] party now bears much less resemblance to a party than two years ago or even a year ago. The party congress has not taken place for more than three years, and nobody talks about it. The Stalinist clique is now whittling down and reconstructing its "party," as if it were a disciplinary battalion. The purges and expulsions were at first intended to disorganize the party, to terrorize it, to deprive it of the possibility of thinking and acting; now the repressions are aimed at preventing the proletarian party is indispensable if the Soviet state is not to perish. There are many elements in favor of it, but only in a struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy can they be brought to the surface and united. To speak now of the "reform" of the CPSU would mean to look backward and not forward, to soothe one's mind with empty formulas. In the USSR, it is necessary to build a Bolshevik party again.

B: But isn't that the road of civil war?
A: The Stalinist bureaucracy ordered a civil war against the Left Opposition even in the period when we stood quite sincerely and with conviction for the reform of the CPSU. Arrests, deportations, executions—what are these if not civil war, at least in embryo? In the struggle against the Left Opposition, the Stalinist bureaucracy constituted an instrument of the counterrevolutionary forces, and thus it isolated itself from the masses. Now civil war is placed on the agenda along another line: between the counterrevolution on the offensive and the Stalinist bureaucracy on the defensive. In the struggle against the counterrevolution, the Bolshevik-Leninists will obviously be the left flank of the Soviet front. A fighting bloc in coalition with the Stalinists will result here from the whole situation. It should not, however, be thought that in this strug-
gle the Stalinist bureaucracy will be unanimous. At the decisive moment, it will break up into fragments, and its component elements will meet again in the two opposing camps.

B: So civil war is inevitable?

A: It is going on right now. By keeping to the present course, it can only become more acute. With the further impotence of the Comintern, with the paralysis of the international proletarian vanguard, and, under those conditions, with the inevitable growth of world fascism, the victory of the counter-revolution in the USSR would be inevitable. Naturally, the Bolshevik-Leninists will continue their work in the USSR regardless of the conditions. But the workers' state can be saved only by the intervention of the world revolutionary movement. In all of human history, the objective conditions for this regeneration and redevelopment have never been so favorable as now. What is lacking is the revolutionary party. The Stalinist clique can rule only by destroying the party, in the USSR as in the rest of the world. Escape from this vicious circle is possible only by breaking with the Stalinist bureaucracy. It is necessary to build a party in a fresh place, under a clean banner.

B: And how will the revolutionary parties of the capitalist world be able to act upon the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR?

A: The whole question is one of real strength. We have seen how the Stalinist bureaucracy crawled before the Kuomintang, before the British trade unions. We see how it is crawling now, even before the petty-bourgeois pacifists. Strong revolutionary parties, truly capable of fighting against imperialism, and consequently of defending the USSR, will compel the Stalinist bureaucracy to reckon with them. Much more important is the fact that these organizations will acquire an enormous authority in the eyes of the Soviet workers and will thus finally create favorable conditions for the rebirth of a genuine Bolshevik party. It is only on this road that the reform of the Soviet state is possible without a new proletarian revolution.

B: So then, we abandon the slogan of the reform of the CPSU, and we build up the new party as the instrument for the reform of the Soviet Union.

A: Perfectly correct.

B: Is our strength equal to such a grandiose task?

A: The question is posed incorrectly. It is necessary first to formulate the historical problem clearly and courageously and then to assemble the forces to solve it. Certainly we are still weak today. But that does not at all mean that history
will grant us a delay. One of the psychological sources of opportunism is fear of great tasks, that is, the mistrust of revolutionary possibilities. However, great tasks do not fall from the sky; they emerge from the course of the class struggle. It is in just these very conditions that we must seek the forces for the resolution of the great tasks.

_B:_ But doesn't the overestimation of one's own forces often lead to adventurism?

_A:_ True. It would be pure adventurism if we were to "proclaim" that our present organization is the Communist International or if, under this name, we were to unite mechanically with the various other opposition organizations. It is impossible to "proclaim" a new International: the perspective as yet is still to build it. But one can and should, from today on, proclaim the _necessity_ of creating a new International.

Ferdinand Lassalle, who was no stranger to opportunism or adventurism, nevertheless expressed perfectly well the fundamental requirement of revolutionary politics: "_Every great action begins with the statement of what is._" Before replying to concrete questions about this—how a new International is to be built, what methods are to be applied, what dates are to be fixed—it is necessary to assert openly what is: the _Comintern is dead for the revolution._

_B:_ On this point, in your opinion, there can no longer be any doubts?

_A:_ Not a shadow. The whole course of the struggle against National Socialism, the outcome of that struggle, and the lessons of this outcome indicate equally not only the complete revolutionary bankruptcy of the Comintern but also its organic incapacity to learn, to mend its ways, that is, "to reform itself." The German lesson would not be so irrefutable and so crushing were it not the crowning piece in a ten-year history of centrist blundering, of pernicious errors, of ever-more-horrifying defeats, of increasingly fruitless sacrifices and losses, and—side by side with that—complete theoretical devastation; bureaucratic degeneration; parroting; demoralization; duping the masses; uninterrupted falsifications; banishment of revolutionists; and the selection of functionaries, mercenaries and pure lackeys. The present Comintern is an expensive apparatus for weakening the proletarian vanguard. That is all! It is not capable of doing more.

Wherever the conditions of bourgeois democracy open up a certain elbowroom, the Stalinists, thanks to their apparatus and treasury, simulate political activity. Muenzenberg has now become a symbolical figure of the Comintern. And who is Muenzenberg? He is an Oustric on the "proletarian" arena.
Empty noncommittal slogans; a little bit of Bolshevism; a little bit of liberalism; a journalistic cattle auction; literary salons where friendship for the USSR has its price; theatrical hostility towards the reformists, changing easily into friendship for them (Barbusse22); and, mainly, plenty of cash, independent of the working masses—that is what Muenzenberg is. Living politically off the favors of the bourgeois democracy, the Stalinists yet demand of them, to top it all off, that they strike down the Bolshevik-Leninists. Can one sink lower? . . . Yet as soon as the bourgeoisie seriously lifts the fascist or simply the police fist, Stalinism puts its tail between its legs and obediently retires into the void. The Comintern in agony can give nothing to the world proletariat, absolutely nothing, except evil.

B: It is impossible not to acknowledge that the Comintern, as a central apparatus, has become a brake on the revolutionary movement, just as it must be agreed that reform of the apparatus, independent of the masses, is utterly unrealizable. But what about the national sections? Are all of them in the same stage of degeneration and decadence?

A: After the German catastrophe, we saw how the Stalinist parties were liquidated without mass resistance in Austria as well as in Bulgaria.23 If the situation is more favorable in some countries than in others, the difference, despite everything, is not very great. But let us even assume that one section of the Comintern or another is found to be conquered by the Left Opposition: the morning after this, if not the night before, it will be expelled from the Comintern and it will have to seek a new International for itself (something like that did happen in Chile24). Cases of that sort also took place during the rise of the Third International: thus, the French Socialist Party transformed itself officially into the Communist Party. But that did not change the general direction of our policy towards the Second International.25

B: Don't you think that thousands of "Stalinists" sympathetic to us will recoil in fright when they learn that we are breaking finally with the Comintern?

A: It is possible. It is even entirely likely. But all the more decisively will they join with us at the next stage. It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that in every country there are thousands of revolutionists who have abandoned the official party or been expelled from it, who did not join us chiefly because to them we were only a faction of that same party with which they were disgusted. An even greater number of workers are breaking right now from reformism and seeking revolutionary leadership. Finally, amid the putrefaction of the
Social Democracy and the wreck of Stalinism, a young generation of workers that needs a stainless banner is rising. The Bolshevik-Leninists can and should form the kernel around which all these numerous elements may crystallize. Then everything alive in the Stalinist "International" will shake off its last doubts and join us.

_B_: Are you not afraid that the new orientation will meet with opposition within your own ranks?

_A_: At first it is absolutely inevitable. In many countries all the work of the Left Opposition is chiefly, if not exclusively, bound up with the official [Communist] party. It has penetrated very little into the trade unions and has been almost totally uninterested in what is happening inside the Social Democracy. It is high time to put an end to narrow propagandism! It is necessary for each member of our organization to think over the problem thoroughly. The events will help: every day will bring irrefutable arguments on the necessity of a new International. I do not doubt that carrying out the turn simultaneously and decisively will open up before us a broad historical perspective.
A NECESSARY CLARIFICATION\textsuperscript{26}

(\textit{July 26, 1933})

\textit{L'Humanite}\textsuperscript{27} speaks of Trotsky's journey with "his retinue" of secretaries, stenographers, etc. It goes without saying that the Stalinist editors spare no insults in relation to this so-called "retinue."

I find it necessary to set the record straight.

I was accompanied on the way by young comrades who came at different times to Prinkipo on their own initiative and helped me in my work, not as "salaried secretaries," but as friends united by the same banner.

The same may be said for the comrades who met me on my arrival and helped me to settle in France.

I do not fear that they themselves can be affected by base and ineffectual insults emanating from the bureaucratic heights where everything is based on considerations of career and where revolutionary solidarity has been completely forgotten if it was ever understood.
FOR NEW COMMUNIST PARTIES
AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL\textsuperscript{28}

(July 27, 1933)

Up to now we have developed as a faction of the Third International. After our expulsion we regarded ourselves as a faction, and our aim was the reform of the Communist International. This was an absolutely inevitable stage. Even if some of us had had the conviction, some time ago, that the Comintern would be doomed to ultimate defeat, it would have been impossible for us to proclaim ourselves a new International. It was necessary to demonstrate what we are worth, what our ideas are worth, to train cadres. That could only be done as a faction. This was an inevitable stage.

We must put an end to this, internationally as well as nationally. We conceived of a theoretical development in which the historic events explained in advance by us, with our criticism, could produce a radical change in the policy of the Comintern. These great events have taken place. There was China, but at that time the criticism of the Opposition remained a closed book, and the workers in the West heard very little of it. There was Germany. We followed the events step by step, and we predicted them more or less accurately. This was the classic situation for reform to take place if it were possible.

On April 5 [1933], after the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern,\textsuperscript{29} we should have proclaimed: The Communist International is dead! We lost several months that, despite everything, bear a certain importance. Why this delay? First, because our declaration of the need for a new party in Germany caused dissension in our ranks. The problem was to bring about a decisive turn without leading to a split. The first stage was the proclamation of a new party for Germany. And then it was also necessary to see what the influence of the German catastrophe would be on other sections of the Comintern.

Our waiting attitude is to be explained by the caution necessary in such a turn. The influence of the German catastrophe must of necessity cause a change in the Comintern, either in
the direction of reform or in the direction of accelerated disintegration. The Comintern cannot remain what it was on the eve of the German catastrophe. The road taken by the Comintern is now quite definite. One cannot hope for a miracle. It is doomed to defeat. The idea of reform is to be rejected, nationally and internationally, for the Comintern in its entirety, because it is nothing more than an unscrupulous bureaucratic caste that has become the greatest enemy of the world working class. It is absolutely necessary to free the proletarian vanguard from the dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

What does this turn mean in its essence? We cease to be a faction; we are no longer the Left Opposition; we become embryos of new parties. Our activity is no longer limited by the idea of factions. That should give us inestimable advantages. The Stalinist organizations diminish more and more. The working class casts the Comintern from its bosom. We will be doomed to failure if we remain attached to it. Some organizations, some groups, are opposed to us only because we are in favor of reform. It will be said, they are confusionists, but there are also healthy elements among them who have not taken our road. We must free ourselves from the formal guardianship of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Is it a question of proclaiming the split now? One cannot do that now. We do not have sufficient forces. A current towards the left is forming in the Socialist Parties. We should orient ourselves toward these currents. The Communist International was formed out of these centrist elements of yesterday who turned to the revolution. The general situation was much more favorable in 1918. The rhythm of development was much more rapid. Now we are faced with the greatest defeat of the workers' movement. If the development is much slower, in the meantime the bankruptcy of the Social Democracy takes place side by side with the bankruptcy of the Comintern, and all that on the basis of the catastrophic bankruptcy of capitalist society.

We are the embryos for the formation of a revolutionary organization. Thus, for example, the conference projected in Brussels by the SAP and by similar groupings in other countries. We should answer yes to their invitations. If we say: it is necessary to be a faction of the Comintern, then a united front will take place against us on a question that has become empty. We must proceed differently. We must go there and say: "You have reproached us with reform. Now we are in a new historic stage in which the policy of reform is exhausted. Let's not discuss past points of view. The difference is liquidated."
On every occasion the Stalinists repeat that the Bolshevik-Leninists, whom they call "Trotskyists," are working in favor of military intervention in the USSR. A shameless absurdity of this kind is calculated to mislead ill-informed people. The courageous man, the honest one, must inevitably say to himself: "It is impossible that such a thing is simply an invention; there must be some truth in it." And unfortunately there are not a few such courageous men in the world.

How then must one understand the aid that the "Trotskyists" will lend to intervention? Does that mean that the Bolshevik-Leninists are on the side of imperialism in the struggle against the USSR, that is, that they will be materially or politically interested in overthrowing the workers' state with the aid of the military force of the imperialist bourgeoisie? There are people who even go so far as to make such assertions. In the majority of cases, these are slovenly careerists who are little concerned over intervention, revolution, Marxism and ideas in general; they simply serve the master of today and will unhesitatingly betray this master in time of danger.

At bottom, these udarniks [shock brigadiers] of slander continue the tradition of the reactionaries, who, from 1914 onward and particularly from 1917, repeated indefatigably that Lenin and Trotsky were agents of the German general staff. After fifteen or twenty years—in the course of which such events as the October Revolution, the civil war, the creation of the Third International and the intransigent struggle of the Bolshevik-Leninists for the banner of Marx and Lenin against the degenerating bureaucracy have taken place—the Stalinists have dredged out of the mud the accusation formerly fabricated by the [czarist] military espionage, by Miliukov, Bourtzev and Kerensky.33

Others of the more prudent bureaucrats do not trust themselves to pose the question in the spirit of the British and czarist
counterespionage. They add a wise word: The Trotskyists, they say, *objectively* aid the counterrevolution and the intervention. Such a formula, which itself pretends to objectivity, is in reality deprived of all content. Any mistake of the revolutionary party aids the enemy directly or indirectly; but the whole question consists precisely in this: *on whose side is the mistake?* The Bolshevik-Leninists have demonstrated (and events have justified our arguments) that the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy has aided the bourgeoisie and foreign imperialism against the workers in China; that it aided the British reformists against Communism; that in the USSR it has aided and continues to aid the Thermidoreans and the Bonapartists against the October Revolution; finally, that it aided Hitler against the proletariat in Germany. Is this true or not? This is the decisive question.

Of course, our criticism does not contribute to raising the authority of the Stalinist faction; but can one put the prestige of the bureaucracy and the vital interests of the world proletariat on the same plane? The Stalinist bureaucracy, which disposes in abundance of the services of publications, papers, "theoreticians," journalists, has not even approached a refutation of our criticism. Is it not truly astounding that the Comintern has no book that draws the lessons of the German events of 1923, the Bulgarian insurrection and a series of other events of lesser extent? Thus, after the miserable report of Heckert, they have put a cross on the study and on the analysis of the causes of the victory of German fascism. By treating our criticism as counterrevolutionary, the Stalinist bureaucracy merely says thereby that we assail the principle of its infallibility. This principle has no need of demonstration: whoever doubts it is expelled from the organization and is locked in a prison in the USSR; then the family of the criminal is deprived of domicile and bread.

But is the Opposition correct in its criticism or not? What then does *military intervention* have to do with it? However, in its chase for stronger and stronger arguments to justify its measures of physical destruction of the Leninists, the Stalinists with more and more frequency and always with greater obstinacy advance the argument of intervention. Their reasoning is constructed somewhat along the following lines: the "Trotskyists" say that socialism in a single country is impossible; that the kulaks [wealthy peasants] in the USSR are not destroyed; that Social Democracy is not fascism, consequently . . . the "Trotskyists" press forward on the road of intervention. This conclusion does not in any way at all flow from the premises. Only a little reflection is necessary to be convinced
that the very conclusion stands in direct contradiction with the premises. The Stalinists themselves have repeated on numerous occasions that it is precisely the success of the construction of socialism that sharpens the hatred of the imperialists for the USSR and by that brings closer the danger of intervention. But then is it not the Bolshevik-Leninists who declare that the actual successes are far from being as great as the Stalinist faction affirms? How then can this criticism push the bourgeoisie on the road of intervention? Let them explain that to us!

No one who knows anything will deny that the hostility of the world bourgeoisie originated from the fear of the extension of the proletarian revolution in other countries. This danger, in any case, affects the world bourgeoisie more immediately than the "liquidation" of classes in the USSR. The Bolshevik-Leninists, as is known, accuse the Stalinist bureaucracy of having practically renounced the policy of world revolution. Whether this is basically true or not, in any case such an accusation should diminish and not augment the danger of intervention. And, indeed, one can bring tens and hundreds of proofs to bear that the bourgeoisie believes that the policy of "socialism in one country" is much more realistic, wiser, "national" than the policy of "Trotskyism," that is, of the international proletarian revolution. The criticism of the Left Opposition can only strengthen the diplomatic positions of Stalinism. A serious bourgeois, Campbell, has shown the necessity of recognizing the Soviet Union by referring to Stalin's remark that the course towards international revolution was liquidated with the expulsion of Trotsky. It is true that Stalin has disavowed these words. Let us grant that they were said to Campbell not by Stalin himself but by one of his associates; let us even grant that Campbell, in order to make the greatest impression, has himself put this argument into Stalin's mouth. At bottom that does not change the matter one iota. Campbell puts as a positive feature of Stalin that which the Left Opposition considers a negative feature, and the American bourgeois is right, from his point of view.

In any case, to accuse the Stalinist bureaucracy of being nationally limited does not hinder but facilitates "normal" and even "friendly" relations for it with the bourgeois states. What happens then to the lecture on intervention? It can, however, be said that we do not exactly explain the basis of the Stalinist argumentation. Let us take their official press. We have at hand the last number of L'Humanité (August 2). Let us surmount our natural repugnance for slander and probe the arguments of the functionaries of L'Humanité. Here, as an
example of "Trotskyist" counterrevolution, they cite the words of Simone Weil:39 "The diplomacy of the Russian state should inspire us with defiance in case of war as in case of peace, just as the diplomacy of the capitalist states, if not to the same degree." Further on they cite the words of a so-called Trotskyist, Prader: "The power that dominates the USSR has nothing in common—in spite of its lies—with the October Revolution." In alleging these two quotations, of which we cannot guarantee the authenticity of the text, the editors write: "These are word for word the same filth that appears in the press of the other White Russian or French counterrevolutionaries, of Vozrozhdenie [Renaissance] of General Miller, in the Poslednie Novosti [Latest News] and in Le Populaire of Blum-Rosenfeld."

So the White Russians accuse Soviet diplomacy of having sunk to the level of bourgeois diplomacy or of having betrayed the heritage of the October Revolution. Can anything more stupid or more ridiculous be imagined? And in order to show what he really is, the unfortunate functionary tries to accomplish more than he can: "the accusations of the two camps coincide word for word."

In reality, the White Guard press exerts all its strength to prove to the bourgeois governments that the Stalinist bureaucracy continues the criminal work of the October Revolution, that it does not limit itself to national aims but aspires as before to the world revolution, and that is why the conclusion of a Franco-Soviet nonaggression pact or the recognition of the Soviets by Spain are fatal mistakes. In other words, the reactionary Russian and world presses try to demonstrate that Soviet diplomacy is not "Europeanized," that is, that it is not bourgeoisified; and it sees in its refusal to bourgeoisify itself a basis for intervention: there is at least some logic in that. But the Stalinists have nothing, except absurdities. The Whites hate the Soviets with a vehement hatred and precisely because of that they look for arguments that have political meaning. It is an entirely different thing when an appointed functionary defends a cause that is quite foreign to him: he throws into the same sack all the absurdities that come into his poor head.

The functionary receives his task for the day: connect Trotsky with the White emigres in order thereby to justify the repres- sions against Rakovsky and thousands of irreproachable Bolsheviks. Then how does the indifferent functionary act in the cause? He assuredly does not throw himself into a polemic with Trotsky or his comrades; such a polemic promises nothing good. He has neither facts nor arguments: where would he find such facts and arguments? The functionary finds two iso-
lated quotations that have no relation with Trotsky, and he sets his wits to work to identify these quotations with the point of view of the White Guards, which is directly contrary both in spirit and letter. In order to give proof of his zeal, the functionary adds: "word for word." In slandering he takes no care to give his slander even an appearance of sense. No wonder if the advanced workers more and more turn their backs on the dishonest, ignorant and traitorous functionary.
IS SOVIET POLICY A MATTER ON WHICH ONLY RUSSIAN SOCIALISTS ARE COMPETENT TO DECIDE?43

(August 9, 1933)

To the Comrades of the Independent Labour Party44

You have published my Copenhagen speech on the Russian Revolution in pamphlet form.45 I can, of course, only be glad that you made my speech accessible to British workers. The foreword by James Maxton46 recommends this booklet warmly to the Socialist readers. I can only be thankful for this recommendation.

The foreword, however, contains an idea to which I feel obliged to take exception. Maxton refuses in advance to enter into the merits of those disagreements that separate me and my co-thinkers from the new ruling faction in the USSR. "This is a matter," he says, "on which only Russian socialists are competent to decide."

By these few words, the international character of socialism as a scientific doctrine and as a revolutionary movement is completely refuted. If socialists (communists) of one country are incapable, incompetent, and consequently have no right to decide the vital questions of the struggle of socialists (communists) in other countries, the proletarian International loses all rights and possibilities of existence.

I will allow myself, moreover, to affirm that, while refraining formally from judging the struggle that split the Russian Bolsheviks, Maxton, possibly without wishing it, has nevertheless expressed himself in hidden form on the essence of the dispute and, in effect, in favor of the Stalinist faction, since our struggle with it concerns precisely the question as to whether socialism is a national or international matter. Accepting the possibility of the theoretical and practical solution of the problems of socialism within national limits, Maxton concedes the correctness of the Stalinist faction, which bases itself on the theory of "socialism in one country."

In reality, the disputes between the Russian Bolsheviks are
not simply Russian disputes, just as the conflicts between the Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain are not simply British conflicts. The matter concerns not only the fate of the present Communist International but also that of a proletarian International in general.

Forces are being grouped, not only in the USSR but also far beyond its limits, by their positions on "socialism in one country" versus international socialism. Sections of true internationalists, taking as their point of departure the theory of permanent revolution, are to be found now in almost all the countries of the world. Their number and influence grow. I believe that, on the basic questions of struggle between us and the Stalinists, every member of the ILP not only can but is duty bound to arrive at his independent opinion.

On my part, I am ready to help as much as I can, in print or orally, every British socialist, every British worker in the study of the disputed questions of the International. . . .

Comradely yours,
L. Trotsky
We call the attention of every thinking Communist to the Moscow correspondent’s cable that *Le Temps* published on August 13. The cable seems to have been written directly in Stalin’s office. Trotsky "will in no case return to the Soviet Union"; "Trotsky never was a friend of the peasantry"; "no reconciliation is possible between Trotsky’s policy of permanent revolution and the policy of . . . socialism in one country." All this is said, it is clear, not to scare the bourgeoisie but, on the contrary, to pacify the public opinion of the French bourgeoisie.

To fool the foreign workers, Stalin orders the official Communist press of the West to say that Trotsky is an ally, a prop and a hope of the world bourgeoisie: But *Le Temps*’s correspondent assiduously assures the French bourgeoisie that "Trotsky has no program, no adherents, and his name no longer evokes an echo in the Russian masses." In other words, the organ of finance capital not only does not attempt to exaggerate the influence of its supposed "ally," but, on the contrary, calms the French bourgeoisie with assurances of the full and complete victory [by the advocates] of socialism in one country over [those of] the permanent revolution. The political meaning of *Le Temps*’s cable acquires full significance in view of Herriot’s visit to the USSR and, in general, in connection with the policy of rapprochement between bourgeois France and the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The most significant part of the cable, however, is its conclusion: "we are reassured from absolutely competent sources that even in case of repentance, as was done by Kamenev and Zinoviev it would be impossible to accord him [Trotsky] permission to return to the USSR." To every politically literate person, this can only mean that Stalin, the "absolutely competent source," formally obligated himself to the agent of French finance not to admit Trotsky to the USSR even if he should
sign a letter of repentance. "However," the correspondent adds in passing, "it is not at all in Trotsky's character to sign such letters."

*Le Temps* carefully circumvents the contradiction of why "it would be impossible to accord [Trotsky] permission to return to the USSR," even in case of repentance, if he has no program, no adherents and is isolated from the masses. The experienced correspondent kept political discipline and did not ask any embarrassing questions of the "absolutely competent source." Stalin made the airtight promise: the French stock market need not fear a rapprochement with Moscow; "Trotsky will in no case be admitted to the USSR." Yesterday Stalin made this pledge to Hitler, today to *Le Temps.*

Once again, let the Stalinists consider well this remarkable document. This is not chatter of the yellow tabloid press. Not in vain did Jaures once say: "*Temps* is the bourgeoisie turned newspaper."
The Collapse of Both Internationals

Despite the evident disintegration of world capitalism as an economic and social system, the workers' movement of the world is now passing through a deeper crisis than after the smashing of the Paris Commune or during the imperialist war. Two working-class parties of the most industrial country of Europe, the Social Democratic and the Communist parties, which led behind them thirteen million voters, capitulated without a fight before the fascist regime. Two Internationals were subjected to a test and proved bankrupt.

The Social Democracy, whose bankruptcy became apparent in the imperialist war of 1914-18, tried to reconstitute its ranks after the world catastrophe, thereby hindering the workers from going over to communism and to the Third International. The defeat of the German Social Democracy confirms that reformism, which has brought the Second International to disaster, can and could lead the workers only to new catastrophes. The Social Democracy, which to the end held on to the soil of rotting capitalism, was itself drawn into the process of decay. However, the Third International, whose task it was to organize the forces of the proletariat for a revolutionary rise against the bourgeoisie of all the countries and for the victory of socialism, has also failed in its task. It fell victim to bureaucratic centrism, which is based on the theory and practice of socialism in one country; in a word, it was wrecked by a system of errors that entered into history under the name of Stalinism. At the time when capitalism, torn by world contradictions, placed the international revolution on the agenda, the Comintern became only a submissive and impotent chorus to the conservative and nationally limited bureaucracy of the Soviet Union.
Thousands of Communists are now trying in Hitler's Germany to save the official party by continuing the old policy under the new conditions. With all our revolutionary sympathy for the self-sacrificing fighters, we must tell them that wrongly directed efforts and sacrifices will be fruitless. Under the conditions of fascist terror, the Stalinist policy is doomed to a complete smashup within a short time. An illegal revolutionary party in Germany must be built on new foundations.

After the living march of events had shown that fascism and the Social Democracy, the two polar tools of the bourgeois regime, exclude each other not only politically but also physically, it was necessary to put the simple conclusion of this experience as the basis for all our international agitation, pushing the Social Democracy to the path of a united front with the Communist Parties. Despite all evidence, the bureaucracy of the Comintern restated the theory of social fascism as firmly as ever and, having thereby completely blocked itself from an approach to the reformist mass organizations, substituted masquerade blocs with impotent circles of pacifists and adventurists for the proletarian policy of the united front. If the lesson of the German catastrophe did not help the Stalinist bureaucracy, nothing will help it. New national parties and a new International are necessary.

The Position of the Bolshevik-Leninists

The participants in the present conference are of different political origins. Some split off in recent years from the parties of the Second International; others came from the ranks of the Third International; there are, finally, some of a mixed or intermediary origin. Some acted as independent parties, others considered themselves and worked as factions. If these organizations come together today for the first time at a common conference to try to find bases for joint work, all of them have by this very fact openly admitted the necessity of welding together the proletarian vanguard on new foundations.

With regard to Germany, our international organization (Bolshevik-Leninists) has, after serious and heated debates, almost unanimously adopted this position. With regard to the Comintern as a whole, the question was formally raised by us for discussion only within the last couple of weeks. We are speaking here in the name of the international plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists, which has approved this declaration. Our national sections have not as yet had time to fully express themselves. But the question has been prepared to such an extent by the foregoing development of events, as well as by the development of the Left Opposition itself, that we have no
doubt as to the verdict of our organizations. At any rate, the final word belongs to our sections.

Some participants of the present conference are probably of the opinion that we came to the break with the Stalinist bureaucracy with unnecessary belatedness. It is not the place here to return to the old disputes. The fact, however, is that our policy, having taken into consideration objective conditions and not subjective moods, has given us the possibility of forming stable organizations of Bolshevik-Leninists in more than twenty countries. Although in their majority they are cadres and not mass organizations, their invaluable advantage lies in the fact that they are linked on an international scale by a unity of programmatic and strategical conception that has evolved gradually from the experiences of great events and from the struggles of the proletariat.

The Struggle with Reformism

From what has been said already, it is clear that the break with the centrist bureaucracy by no means makes our attitude to reformism less sharp. On the contrary, it is more irreconcilable now than ever before. We see the chief historic crime of the Stalinist bureaucracy precisely in the fact that by its whole policy it renders invaluable aid to Social Democracy and hinders the proletariat from going over to the path of revolution.

For us Bolshevik-Leninists and, we trust, also for all of you, there cannot even be any thought of constant work in common with organizations that have not broken with the principled foundations of reformism, that continue to hope for the regeneration of the Social Democracy as a party or that consider the unification of the Second and Third Internationals as their mission. Groupings permeated by such tendencies can only pull the workers backwards. And, basing ourselves on all the lessons of the past, we want to go forward.

The "twenty-one conditions" for acceptance to the Communist International, elaborated in its time by Lenin for the purpose of a decisive separation from all types of reformism and anarchism, acquire at this stage again an urgent character. It is, of course, a question not of the text of this document, which should be radically changed in accordance with the conditions of the modern period, but of its general spirit of revolutionary Marxist irreconcilability.

Only under the condition of irreconcilable separation from reformism is it possible and necessary to enter into friendly cooperation with all those proletarian organizations that are actually developing from reformism towards communism. We condemn and reject categorically the mode of actions of the
Stalinist bureaucracy, which treats as "left social fascists" all revolutionary organizations that—by the fault of the Comintern—find themselves outside the Comintern, and which, on the morning after a catastrophe, touchingly invites them into the Comintern as "sympathizing" parties. The Comintern is capable only of decomposing and destroying proletarian organizations but not of strengthening and educating them. The cooperation that we have in mind presupposes an honest attitude to facts and ideas, mutual comradely criticism and respect for each other.

The First Four Congresses of the Comintern

Revolutionary policy is unthinkable without revolutionary theory. Here we need, least of all, to start from the beginning. We stand on the basis of Marx and Engels. The first congresses of the Communist International left us an invaluable programmatic heritage: the character of the modern epoch as an epoch of imperialism, that is, of capitalist decline; the nature of modern reformism and the methods of struggle with it; the relation between democracy and proletarian dictatorship; the role of the party in the proletarian revolution; the relation between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry (agrarian question); the problem of nationalities and the liberation struggle of colonial peoples; work in the trade unions; the policy of the united front; the relation to parliamentarism, etc.—all these questions have been subjected by the first four congresses to a principled analysis that has remained unsurpassed until now.

One of the first, most urgent tasks of those organizations that have inscribed on their banners the regeneration of the revolutionary movement consists in separating out the principled decisions of the first four congresses, in bringing them in order and in subjecting them to a serious discussion in the light of the future tasks of the proletariat. The present conference must, in our opinion, indicate the ways and the first steps of this necessary work.

Strategic Lessons of the Last Decade

The political life of the proletarian vanguard did not stop at the first congresses of the Communist International. Under the influence of historic circumstances, that is, the march of the class struggle, the apparatus of the Comintern has completely gone over from Marxism to centrism, from internationalism to national limitedness. If the building of the Third International was impossible without cleansing the layers of reformism away from the teachings of Marx, so now the creation of revolutionary parties of the proletariat is unthinkable without
cleansing the layers and falsifications of bureaucratic centrism away from the principles and methods of communism.

The struggle (with numerous and heavy sacrifices) of the Left Opposition against the oscillations of the Stalinist apparatus is imprinted in a series of documents of a programmatic and strategical character. In accordance with the most important political stages of the last decade, the following problems have been illuminated in these documents: the economic construction of the USSR; the party regime; the policy of the united front (Anglo-Russian Committee, on one side, the German experience, on the other); the path of the Spanish revolution ("democratic dictatorship"); the fight against war; the fight against fascism, etc. The basic conclusions of this ten-year struggle are given in the form of a synopsis in the "eleven points" of the international preconference of the Left Opposition. We are submitting this programmatic document here for your attention.

It is superfluous to say that on our part, we will consider with the greatest attention all the theses, resolutions and programmatic declarations in which other organizations represented here have expressed or may express their estimation of the tasks and perspectives. We do not want anything so much as the mutual exchange of experience and ideas. We wish to state with great satisfaction that the "Declaration of Principles" of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland concurs on all the basic questions with the platform of the International Left Opposition.

The present preconference cannot, of course, discuss with the necessary profundity the programmatic and strategical lessons of the world revolutionary struggle. But it is time to make a start. We permit ourselves to express the wish that each of the organizations represented here will reprint our "eleven points" in their press with the necessary commentaries, and that afterwards the possibility will be given us, in the form of discussion, to defend our theses in the same press. On our part, we obligate ourselves to publish for the information and discussion of our sections every programmatic document that may be introduced by other organizations and shall willingly give to the defenders of the document corresponding space in our press.

The USSR

The question of the USSR is of exceptional importance to the workers' movement of the world and therefore also to the correct orientation of the present conference. We Bolshevik-Leninists consider the USSR, even in its present form, a workers' state. This estimation needs no illusions or embellishment.
One cannot feel anything but contempt for those "friends" of the USSR who declare every work of criticism against the Soviet bureaucracy to be a counterrevolutionary act. If revolutionists had been guided by such rules of conduct, the October Revolution would have never taken place.

We reject as a mockery of Marxist thought the Brandlerian position, according to which the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy represents a chain of errors in all other countries, but remains infallible in the USSR. Such a "theory" is based on the negation of the general principles of proletarian policy and brings the International down to a mere sum total of national parties whose leaders are always ready to close their eyes to mutual sins. A Marxist can have nothing in common with this Social Democratic conception.

The policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR is of the same principled nature as the policy of the Comintern. The difference lies not in methods but in objective conditions: in the USSR the bureaucracy bases itself on the foundations laid by the proletarian revolution, and if in a decade it succeeded in squandering the capital of the Comintern, in the USSR it has undermined but not liquidated the foundations of the socialist state. In reality, deprived of the party, trade unions and soviets, which the bureaucracy had seized, the Soviet proletariat defends by its revolutionary traditions the workers' state from a bourgeois overturn.

To identify the social order of the USSR with "state capitalism" of the American, Italian or German type is to ignore the main question of the social order, namely, the property character, and to open the doors wide to false and dangerous conclusions. On this question there can be for us no ambiguities and no compromises. The defense of the workers' state from imperialism and counterrevolution remains as heretofore the duty of every revolutionary worker. But to serve this defense does not at all mean to become a tool of Soviet diplomacy.

The acts and declarations of Soviet diplomacy have provoked more than once, especially in the past period, the burning and entirely righteous indignation of the advanced workers. Nothing weakens the international position of the USSR more, despite all recognitions and nonaggression pacts, than the thoroughly opportunistic external policy of the Stalinists, permeated by the pacifying illusions of "socialism in one country."

One cannot defend the USSR without the revolutionary struggles of the world proletariat; there can be no revolutionary struggles without independence from the Soviet bureaucracy as well as from Soviet diplomacy. On the other hand, the most
Declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninist Delegation

irreconcilable criticism of Stalinism does not exclude but, on the contrary, prescribes a united front with the Soviet bureaucracy against the common enemies.

The Party Regime

The question of the party regime should become the subject of the greatest attention in the building of new parties and of a new International. Workers' democracy is not an organizational but a social problem. In the last analysis, the stifling of workers' democracy is the result of the pressure of class enemies through the medium of the workers' bureaucracy. This historic law is confirmed equally by the history of reformism in capitalist countries and by the experience of the bureaucratization of the Soviet state.

The Social Democracy attains the regime necessary for it by means of a complicated system: on one hand, it systematically expels not only from the party but also from the trade unions radically or critically inclined workers, if they cannot be bribed by remunerative positions; on the other hand, it frees its ministers, parliamentary deputies, journalists and trade-union bureaucrats from submitting to discipline with regard to the party. The combined methods of repression, betrayal and bribery permit the Social Democracy to retain the semblance of discussions, elections, control, etc., while remaining, at the same time, the apparatus of the imperialist bourgeoisie within the working class.

By means of the state apparatus, the Stalinist bureaucracy liquidated the party, soviet and trade-union democracy not only in essence but also in form. The regime of personal dictatorship has been fully transmitted from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to all the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries. The party officials have the task of interpreting the will of the top bureaucracy. The party masses have only one right: to keep silent and obey. Repressions, baiting, bribery are the usual methods for keeping "order" in the party. Such is the path of decay and ruin of the proletarian parties.

A revolutionist is brought up only in the atmosphere of criticism of all that exists, including also his own organization. A firm discipline can be attained only by conscious trust in the leadership. This trust can be gained not only by a correct policy but also by an honest attitude toward one's mistakes. The question of the internal regime thus acquires for us an extraordinary importance. The advanced workers must be given the possibility of a conscious and independent participation in the building of the party and in the direction of its whole policy. Young workers must be given the possibility to think, criticize, make mistakes and correct themselves.
It is clear, on the other hand, that the regime of party democracy can lead to the creation of a hardened and unanimous army of proletarian fighters only in case our organizations, basing themselves on the firm principles of Marxism, are ready to fight irreconcilably, but with democratic methods, all opportunistic, centrist and adventurerist influences.

The orientation towards a new International is dictated by the whole course of development. This does not mean, however, that we propose to proclaim a new International immediately. We would have introduced such a proposal without hesitation had the organizations represented here already been in actual, that is, tested by experience, agreement with regard to the basic principles and methods of revolutionary struggle. But we do not have it. We can arrive at a principled unanimity and therefore an International only through joint revolutionary work and serious mutual criticism.

A new International cannot be prepared without practical participation in the unfolding events. To counterpose a programmatic discussion to the revolutionary struggle would, of course, be false. It is necessary to combine the two. We welcome the fact that the conference placed on the agenda urgent questions concerning the fight against fascism and against war, and in each of these fields we are ready, hand in hand with other organizations, to make a real step forward.

Comrades! Without leadership, without international direction, the whole proletariat will be unable to free itself from the present oppression. The creation of a new International depends not only on the objective course of events but also on our own efforts. It is very likely that already now we are much stronger than it may seem to us. Not in vain does history show us how an organization possessing authority but having lost direction may for a long time keep on piling up errors seemingly unpunished; but finally the course of events brings the inevitable collapse. On the contrary, an organization that is armed with a reliable compass, but has for a long period remained in an insignificant minority, can with the advance of a historic turn suddenly rise to a higher level. Under the condition of correct policy on our part, such a possibility opens up before us. With joint forces let us try not to miss this opportunity. Our revolutionary responsibility is immeasurably great. Let our creative work rise to the height of this responsibility.
Dear Comrades:

In the latest issue of La Verite, I find unexpectedly an appeal "to collect funds needed to help Comrade Trotsky." I understand the feelings that guided the authors of this appeal. However, I permit myself to say to them that they committed the serious fault of not asking for my opinion. The financial difficulties I have as a result of the liquidation of Marxist literature in Germany and the crisis in bookselling in America are of a transient character. In any case, I am certain of overcoming them without burdening the comrades. There are more urgent needs for fund-raising by the proletarian press.

With my communist greetings,

Leon Trotsky
Dear Comrade Schwab:

I don't need to tell you that it was an immense pleasure to spend those three days with you and for once to thoroughly discuss in person all the undecided questions. I hope the discussion wasn’t fruitless on either side. I, at least, got many important facts and ideas, and a great deal of stimulation, from it. In this letter, I would like to summarize—very briefly—the outcome of our discussions, as I see it.

Undeniably, the work of the KPO minority within the SAP has been successful. But this success has got to be pushed further, or it will be dissipated. The Left Opposition, too, must take a leap to a higher level. Amalgamation of the two organizations will be the starting point of an important new chapter in their development.

What about the disagreements? I certainly don't want to deny that there are differences—easily explained by the history of our organizations—in the way we approach questions. But these differences don’t seem to me fundamental. What is more, with goodwill on both sides, they can very advantageously complement each other and be fruitful.

Naturally, the unification would have to take place on the basis of a programmatic document. This document should, of course, be concerned with the future, not with the past, and it should draw from the past only the lessons necessary for the new tasks. This important document could be produced by the unified forces of the two organizations, and since it would set forth the platform of the unification, it could serve as a manifesto to rally the forces to build the new party and the new International. It is truly a question of striking while the iron is hot. Not only—and this is, of course, decisive—do the world situation and the situation of the world proletariat now demand a quick and energetic intervention by the vanguard that possesses the necessary initiative, but the internal situation
of our organizations is pushing in the same direction. If we let the next few weeks go by, the mechanism of political life—especially in emigration—will bring a deterioration of relations between our organizations. Conflicts will multiply. And just because these conflicts lack any principled basis, they could be that much more poisonous. Both these phenomena would inevitably be carried over to the international plane. In England, Holland, wherever there are German emigrants, both groups would try to win the furious competition—inside the "domestic" organizations as well.

To act quickly, we should not stand on formalities. The leading bodies inside Germany are in a very difficult position, and they possess far too little information about what is happening abroad to be able to take the initiative in this matter now. The initiative belongs to the emigrants. The Germans have entered a period in which the emigration constitutes the decisive point of concentration. We must establish a good common journal, which, if at all possible, should begin to appear weekly in the immediate future. The fact of unification would inevitably awaken new hopes and perspectives, win new sympathy, and—what is not unimportant—open up new sources of money. We need a good weekly, and with our united forces, we would be in a position to establish one. And the paper will have to function, in a major way, as an organizer. Without a political weekly, and perhaps a theoretical monthly, our friends in Germany would gradually disappear into the prisons and concentration camps without being replaced by new forces.

Obviously, the whole question must be decided by the organizations themselves. But I would be extraordinarily happy if our discussion should have made the decision easier.

With best communist greetings,
L. T.
Dear Comrade Frank,

The draft resolution concerning the financial question does not seem to me to be sufficiently clear-cut and categorical. The resolution should be conceived in such a way that it could be published in the press, even without comment, should the need arise. That is why it would be better to divide it in two parts, one dealing with the contributions of the sections, the other dealing with the case of M. In this second part, a beginning should be made by acting on the decision of the Executive Committee of the French League concerning M. (with a short, exact quotation on the need for him to give up business and to devote himself fully to politics). The plenum should confirm this resolution as being fully in the interest of our organization, that is to say, the most reasonable use of Comrade M.’s energies. Consequently, the plenum would remove from M. all the financial obligations put on him. What is most important is the part dealing with the control commission. To speak of "the shortest space of time" is absolutely intolerable after the infinite delays. There are only two possibilities: either the control commission should present its report during the plenum session or, if it is not in a state to do so, it should be condemned for lack of energy in a question involving the rebuttal of calumnies from enemies of the League. If the plenum itself could make a pronouncement on the substance of the question, and I believe it would not be difficult at all for it, it should itself, in this purely political matter, play the part of a control commission and declare that R. Molinier engaged in business only in the interest of the organization and that the plenum refutes with indignation all the slanders and insinuations whose authors have never dared appear openly to bring their accusations before a competent body.

Yours,

L. Trotsky
THE DECLARATION OF FOUR

On the Necessity and Principles
of a New International

(August 26, 1933)

In full realization of the great historic responsibility that devolved upon them, the undersigned organizations have unanimously decided to combine their forces for joint work for the regeneration of the revolutionary proletarian movement on an international scale. As the basis for their activity, they lay down the following principles:

1. The mortal crisis of imperialist capitalism, which has taken the props out from under reformism (Social Democracy, the Second International, the bureaucracy of the International Federation of Trade Unions), poses imperatively the question of the break with reformist policy and of the revolutionary struggle for the conquest of power and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship as the only means for the transformation of capitalist society into a socialist society.

2. The problem of the proletarian revolution bears, by its very nature, an international character. The proletariat can build a complete socialist society only on the basis of the world division of labor and world cooperation. The undersigned categorically reject, therefore, the theory of "socialism in one country," which undermines the very foundation of proletarian internationalism.

3. No less energetically must be rejected the theory of the Austro-Marxists, centrists and left reformists who, under the pretext of the international character of the socialist revolution, advocate an expectant passivity with regard to their own country, thereby in reality delivering the proletariat into the hands of fascism. A proletarian party that evades the seizure of power under the present historic conditions commits the worst of betrayals. The victorious proletariat of one country must strengthen its national dictatorship by socialist construction, which remains of necessity incomplete and contradictory until the working class seizes political power in at least a few ad-
vanced capitalist countries. Simultaneously, the victorious working class of one country must direct all its efforts to the extension of the socialist revolution to other countries. The contradiction between the national character of the seizure of power and the international character of socialist society can be resolved only by courageous revolutionary action.

4. The Third International, which grew out of the October Revolution, laid down the principles of proletarian policy in the epoch of imperialism and gave the world proletariat the first lessons in the revolutionary struggle for power, fell victim to a chain of historical contradictions. The treacherous role of the Social Democracy and the immaturity and inexperience of the Communist Parties led to the breakdown of the postwar revolutionary movements in the East and in the West. The isolated position of the proletarian dictatorship in a backward country gave an extraordinary power to the ever-more-conservative and nationally limited Soviet bureaucracy. The slavish dependence of the sections of the Comintern on the Soviet leadership led, in its turn, to a new series of grave defeats, to bureaucratic degeneration of the theory and practice of the Communist Parties and to their organizational weakening. More than that, the Comintern proved not only incapable of fulfilling its historic role but also became more and more of an obstacle in the way of the revolutionary movement.

5. The advance of fascism in Germany put the organizations of the working class to a decisive test. The Social Democracy once more confirmed the designation given to it by Rosa Luxemburg and revealed itself for the second time as "the stinking corpse." The overcoming of the organizations, ideas and methods of reformism is the necessary prerequisite for the victory of the working class over capitalism.

6. The German events revealed with no less force the collapse of the Third International. Despite its fourteen-year existence, despite the experience gained in gigantic battles, despite the moral support of the Soviet state and the plentiful means for propaganda, the Communist Party of Germany revealed under conditions of a grave economic, social and political crisis, conditions exceptionally favorable for a revolutionary party, an absolute revolutionary incapacity. It thereby showed conclusively that despite the heroism of many of its members it had become totally incapable of fulfilling its historic role.

7. The position of world capitalism; the frightful crisis that plunged the working masses into unheard-of misery; the revolutionary movement of the oppressed colonial masses; the world danger of fascism; the perspective of a new cycle of wars which threatens to destroy the whole human culture—these are the conditions that imperatively demand the welding to-
gather of the proletarian vanguard into a new (Fourth) International. The undersigned obligate themselves to direct all their forces to the formation of this International in the shortest possible time on the firm foundation of the theoretical and strategic principles laid down by Marx and Lenin.

8. While ready to cooperate with all the organizations, groups and factions that are actually developing from reformism or bureaucratic centrist (Stalinism) towards revolutionary Marxist policy, the undersigned, at the same time, declare that the new International cannot tolerate any conciliation towards reformism or centrist. The necessary unity of the working-class movement can be attained not by the blurring of reformist and revolutionary conceptions nor by adaptation to the Stalinist policy but only by combating the policies of both bankrupt Internationals. To remain equal to its task, the new International must not permit any deviation from revolutionary principles in the questions of insurrection, proletarian dictatorship, soviet form of the state, etc.

9. By its class basis, by its social foundations, by the uncontestably prevailing forms of property, the USSR remains even today a workers' state, that is, an instrument for the building of a socialist society. The new International will inscribe on its banner as one of its most important tasks the defense of the Soviet state from imperialism and internal counterrevolution. Precisely the revolutionary defense of the USSR places upon us the imperative task of freeing the revolutionary forces of the entire world from the corrupting influence of the Stalinist Comintern and of building a new International. Only under the condition of complete independence of the international proletarian organizations from the Soviet bureaucracy and the tireless unmasking of its false methods before the working masses is a successful defense of the Soviet Union possible.

10. Party democracy is a necessary prerequisite for the healthy development of revolutionary proletarian parties on a national as well as an international scale. Without freedom of criticism, without the election of functionaries from top to bottom, without the control of the apparatus by the rank and file, no truly revolutionary party is possible.

The need for secrecy under conditions of illegality changes completely the forms of the internal life of a revolutionary party and makes wide discussions and elections difficult, if not altogether impossible. But even under the most difficult conditions and circumstances, the basic demands of a healthy party regime retain their full force: honest information about the party, freedom of criticism and a real inner unity between the leadership and the party majority. Having suppressed
and crushed the will of the revolutionary workers, the reformist bureaucracy turned the Social Democracy and the trade unions into impotent bodies despite their memberships numbering in the millions. Having stifled inner democracy, the Stalinist bureaucracy also stifled the Comintern. The new International, as well as the parties adhering thereto, must build their entire inner life on the basis of democratic centralism.

11. The undersigned created a permanent commission of delegated representatives and assigned the following to it:

a. to elaborate a programmatic manifesto as the charter of the new International;

b. to prepare a critical analysis of the organizations and tendencies of the present-day workers' movement (theoretic commentary to the manifesto);

c. to elaborate theses on all the fundamental questions of the revolutionary strategy of the proletariat;

d. to represent the undersigned organizations in the eyes of the whole world.

Signed:

E. Bauer — International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninist)
J. Schwab — SAP (Socialist Workers Party of Germany)
P. J. Schmidt — OSP (Independent Socialist Party of Holland)
H. Sneevliet — RSP (Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland)
The latest political decisions of the National Council of the British Independent Labour Party show clearly that after its break with the reformists this party continues to move leftward. Similar processes are to be observed in other countries: a left wing forms within the Social Democratic parties, which subsequently splits off from the party and tries with its own forces to pave a revolutionary path for itself. These processes reflect, on one side, the deep crisis of capitalism and of reformism, which is inseparably bound up therewith, and, on the other, the inability of the Comintern to group around itself revolutionary currents within the proletariat.

In England, however, the situation is further complicated by an unheard-of combination. Whereas in other countries the Comintern continues to treat the left socialist organizations as "left social fascists" and as "the most dangerous counter-revolutionists," a permanent collaboration has been established between the ILP and the Communist Party of Great Britain. How the leaders of the Comintern combine this collaboration with the theory of "social fascism" remains a mystery. In the July issue of the theoretical organ of the Comintern, Fenner Brockway, the newly appointed secretary of the ILP, is called a "counterrevolutionist" as heretofore. Why the British Communist Party made a united front this time not from below but from above; moreover, with leaders who prove to be "counterrevolutionists"; and a united front made not for one single practical action but for collaboration in general—no mortal can solve these contradictions. But if principles are left aside, the matter can be explained very simply: under the exceptionally favorable conditions of Great Britain, the Comintern managed completely to isolate and weaken its British section by the ruinous policies of the Anglo-Russian Committee, the "third period," "social fascism" and the rest; on the other
hand, the deep social crisis of British capitalism pushed the ILP sharply towards the left; not heeding consistency or logic, the totally discouraged Comintern this time grabbed the alliance proposed to it with both hands.

We could have and should have welcomed and heartily supported the collaboration of the ILP with the Communist Party had it not been based on evasiveness, suppressions and ambiguities on both sides.

Of the Communist Party, the National Council says that it is as "revolutionary in outlook as ourselves." That is all that we learn with regard to the appraisal of the Communist Party and of its policy. Every serious and thinking worker will inevitably ask: why are two parties necessary if they both have an equally revolutionary outlook? The worker will be more astonished upon learning that the leaders of one of the equally revolutionary parties consider the leaders of the other party "counterrevolutionists" and "left social fascists." Possibly the National Council refrains from a critical estimation of its ally so as not to undermine the alliance itself? But an alliance of revolutionary organizations that is based not on open mutual criticism but on diplomacy will be thrown over by the first gust of the political storm, like a house of cards.

The theses of the National Council explain the bloc with the Communist Party, first, as a step towards the united front, secondly, as a stage in the creation of a mass revolutionary party. Each of these two arguments has its weight; but mechanically placed side by side, they contradict each other. The theses repeat that the united front should embrace any and all organizations of the proletariat insofar as they wish to participate in the struggle: the Labour Party, the trade unions, even the cooperatives. But we know well, and not from literature but from the tragic experience of the German catastrophe, that the Comintern rejects the united front with reformist ("social fascist") organizations. How does the ILP intend to build a united front with reformist organizations in alliance with the Communist Party: only from below and under the leadership of the Communist bureaucracy guaranteed in advance? To this question there is no answer.

Mentioning in passing that the bloc with the Communist Party has pushed certain sections of the "official movement" to the right, the National Council expresses the hope that these prejudices can be conquered by an active participation in daily struggles. The fact that the reactionary prejudices of the leaders of the Labour Party and of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress do not frighten the leaders of the ILP only does the ILP credit. Unfortunately, however, it is not only a
question of prejudices. When the Communist bureaucracy declares that reformism and fascism are twins, it not only criticizes the reformist leaders incorrectly but also provokes the rightful indignation of the reformist workers. The theses, it is true, say that the criticism of reformism should correspond to actual facts and push the reformist workers forward and not back; but the Communist Party is not mentioned in this connection by one word. What can be made of the theory of "social fascism"? And how can the policy of the united front be built on this theory? To pass such questions in silence in the resolution does not mean to remove them from life. An open discussion could possibly force the Communist Party to adopt a correct position; diplomatic evasiveness can only pile up contradictions and prepare a new catastrophe for the next mass movement.

Without defining in principle their attitude to official Communism (Stalinism), the theses of the National Council stop midway in their relation to reformism. The reformists must be criticized as conservative democrats and not as fascists, but the struggle with them must be no less irreconcilable because of it, since British reformism is the main hindrance now to the liberation not only of the British but also of the European proletariat. The policy of a united front with reformists is obligatory, but it is of necessity limited to partial tasks, especially to defensive struggles. There can be no thought of making the socialist revolution in a united front with reformist organizations. The principal task of a revolutionary party consists in freeing the working class from the influence of reformism. The error of the Comintern bureaucracy consists not in the fact that they see the leadership of a revolutionary party as the most important condition for the victory of the proletariat—that is entirely correct—but in the fact that, being incapable of gaining the confidence of the working masses in daily struggle starting as a minority in modest roles, it demands this confidence in advance, presents ultimatums to the working class and disrupts attempts at a united front because other organizations are not willing to voluntarily hand it the marshal's baton. This is not Marxist policy but bureaucratic sabotage. A secure and firm victory of the proletarian revolution—we repeat it again—is possible only under the condition that a revolutionary, that is, a truly communist, party succeeds in gaining the firm confidence of the majority of the working class before the overthrow. This central question is not touched on in the theses. Why? Out of "tact" with regard to the ally? Not only that. There are deeper causes. Insufficient clarity of the theses with regard to the united front flows from the incom-
plete realization of the methods of the proletarian revolution. The theses speak of the necessity "to wrest the control of the economic system and the state from the capitalist class and to transfer it to the working class." But how can this gigantic problem be solved? To this pivotal question of our epoch the theses reply with a naked phrase: "this can only be achieved through united action of the working class." The struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat remain abstractions that can be easily dissolved in the amorphous perspectives of the united front.

In the realm of ready-made revolutionary formulas, the bureaucracy of the British Communist Party is immeasurably better equipped. Precisely in this lies its present advantage over the leadership of the ILP. And it must be said openly: this superficial, purely formal advantage may, under the present circumstances, lead to the liquidation of the ILP without any gain accruing to the Communist Party and to the revolution. The objective conditions have more than once pushed tens and even hundreds of thousands of workers towards the British section of the Comintern, but the leadership of the Comintern was only capable of disillusioning them and throwing them back. If the ILP as a whole should enter the ranks of the Communist Party today, within the next couple of months one-third of the new members would return to the Labour Party; another third would be expelled for "conciliatory attitudes toward Trotskyism" and for similar crimes; finally, the remaining third, disillusioned in all its expectations, would fall into indifference. As a result of this experiment, the Communist Party would find itself weaker and more isolated than now.

The ILP can save the workers' movement of England from this new danger only by freeing itself from all unclarity and haziness with regard to the ways and methods of the socialist revolution and by becoming a truly revolutionary party of the proletariat. There is no necessity to invent anything new in this field: all has been said and said well by the first four congresses of the Comintern. Instead of feeding on bureaucratic substitutes of the epigones, it is better to have all the members of the ILP study the resolutions of the first four congresses of the Comintern. But this alone does not suffice. It is necessary to open a discussion in the party on the lessons of the last decade, which was marked by the struggle between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Left Opposition. The content of this struggle was made up of the most important stages of the world revolutionary movement; economic and political tasks of the USSR; problems of the Chinese Revolution; the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee; methods of the united front; problems of party democracy; the causes of the German catastrophe.
Whither the Independent Labour Party?

This enormous cycle of problems cannot be passed by. They are not Russian but international problems. *

In our epoch a revolutionary party cannot but be international. What is the position of the ILP on this? Having entered into an alliance with the Communist Party, the ILP has not determined its international position. It broke with the Second International and made an alliance with the Third, but it also enters into a working alliance with left socialist parties. This alliance, in its turn, is not homogeneous. There are elements in it that gravitate towards Bolshevism, but there are also elements that pull towards the Norwegian Labor Party, 77 that is, in reality, towards the Social Democracy. What position does the ILP take on all these questions? Is it willing to share the fate of the already historically doomed Comintern, does it want to try to remain in an intermediary position (which means to return by roundabout ways to reformism), or is it ready to participate in the building of a new International on the foundations laid by Marx and Lenin?

To the serious reader, it is clear that our criticism is not in the least inspired by animosity towards the ILP. On the contrary, we see too clearly that if this party should ingloriously disappear from the scene socialism would suffer a new blow. And this danger exists, and it is not far removed. In our epoch it is impossible to remain long in intermediary positions. Only political clarity can save the ILP for the proletarian revolution. The aim of these lines is to help pave the way to revolutionary clarity.

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* See the declaration of the Left Opposition delegation at the Paris conference.
AN INTERVIEW BY C. A. SMITH

(August 29, 1933)

It was all rather breathtaking. Driven at midnight to a station in Paris; put on a train but kept ignorant of destination; leaving the train according to instructions at a certain time; recognized by a comrade, armed with a telegraphed description of us; whirled off for a further journey; admitted past various obstacles; and finally greeted with tempestuous heartiness by Leon Trotsky himself.

We settled down to business immediately and for over ten hours, with breaks only for meals, plied one of the world's most distinguished revolutionaries with questions. No one could fail to be impressed by the man's enormous vitality or charmed by his frank and eager courtesy. Clear analytical exposition, supplemented by a wealth of vivid imagery and forceful metaphor, made his conversation both an intellectual and an aesthetic delight.

"You are aware," I said, "that at the Paris conference of revolutionary socialist parties the Independent Labour Party voted against the main resolution (because we considered the condemnation of the Comintern unbalanced and exaggerated) and also against the proposal to form a Fourth International. We are consequently particularly desirous of hearing: (a) your chief criticism of the Comintern, (b) why you despair of its reform, (c) what action you propose taking."

Trotsky's criticisms, delivered with great verve and clarity, related both to the Communist International's policy and to its organization. The latter he declared to be bureaucratic, and corruptly bureaucratic at that. Discussion is stifled, criticism is regarded as disloyalty, and all who oppose the bureaucratic leaders are expelled as heretics.

Bolshevik self-criticism, said Trotsky, is a departed glory. In the early days, even during the civil war, perfect freedom of discussion was the rule. In the Red Army there was strict military discipline with severe punishment, yet even there in
policy discussions private soldiers, as party members, frequently attacked Lenin (as well as Trotsky himself) or the Central Committee as a whole and criticized them unsparingly. During the civil war a congress was held every year, with an additional congress in a case of emergency; now five years pass and there is no Comintern congress.

Functionaries of the Comintern presidium are changed by the decree of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Brandler, the German Communist Party leader, criticized the Comintern policy in Germany. He was summoned to Moscow and detained there several years, finally getting away by extraordinary methods. If a man refuses to go to Moscow when ordered there, he is immediately expelled from the party.

This suppression of internal criticism, insisted Trotsky, arises from the determination of the Stalinist faction to retain control in the teeth of a wrong policy. But the results of bureaucratic rule themselves influence policy. The bureaucratic mind has an essential distrust of the masses and, in consequence, develops the usual characteristics of bureaucracies, whatever their time or place. Specifically, the present Russian bureaucracy differs from the bourgeois bureaucracies of the capitalist countries in that the former desires to preserve the Soviet Union and the latter desire to overthrow it. Generically, however, they are identical in outlook and methods.

Decisions are taken without consulting the rank and file, and every art of lying, concealment and repression is used to compel acceptance of the line laid down by the executive, often out of touch with the situation it is attempting to control. Further, the bureaucracy never dares to admit its mistakes, which are the more grave the more the bureaucracy considers itself infallible. The most glaring instance of this refusal to admit mistakes is afforded by the German debacle.

The Communist International line there was tragically wrong, declared Trotsky, and many of the ablest Communist leaders recognized this. It led the German workers to certain and frequently predicted disaster. Yet, immediately after the disaster, the Communist International solemnly declared that its line had been correct.

This same distrust of the masses was revealed throughout the history of the Anglo-Russian Committee, when the Communist International recognized as the representatives of the British workers the trade-union bureaucracy, even during the actual days of their betrayal of the General Strike of 1926—and, worse still, after it. Bureaucratic distrust was shown in the Communist International's terrible mishandling of the Chinese Revolution, when they placed it under the direction of
the bourgeois Kuomintang, which, as Trotsky had foretold, soon after betrayed it with massacre and torture.

Bureaucratic distrust is shown repeatedly, continued Trotsky, in the Communist International's attitude to other organizations, where, despite the slogan of "united front from below," the aim has been not so much to mobilize the revolutionary workers as to capture the organizational apparatus. All this, reinforced by the financial control of the Communist International bureaucracy over its national sections, breeds a mentality of dependence, of unquestioning obedience, which is the very antithesis of the critical and independent mind required for a revolutionary.

"What were the Comintern errors in Germany?" I interpolated.

"The mistakes have continued for ten years: missing the revolutionary situation in 1923 (the occupation of the Ruhr); steering a course to armed uprising after the relationship of forces had radically changed against the proletariat; a turn toward 'courting' Social Democracy (1926-27); a new turn toward adventurism ('third period,' conquest of the streets and so on); a radically false policy with regard to the trade unions; the replacement of educational work by 'ultimatism'; the creation of tiny parallel trade unions, that is, the isolation of the party from the class; the theory of social fascism and the renunciation of the policy of the united front; nationalistic agitation and the adaptation to fascism ('national liberation' of Germany, the participation in the Prussian plebiscite together with the Nazis); systematic destruction of all defense organizations established by local workers' organizations.

"Social Democracy and fascism are not twins, as the Comintern International declared," insisted Trotsky. "True, Social Democracy supports the bourgeoisie, but it does not (despite treacherous leaders) support fascism, whose victory signifies the extermination of Social Democracy as a party."

"What are your chief criticisms of the present policy of the Communist International?" I asked.

"Chiefly, the theory of 'socialism in one country' and its resultant policy of 'centrism.'" Trotsky defined centrism as the sum total of all the tendencies between Marxism and reformism that move from one to the other. The Communist International bureaucracy is predisposed to become reformist but cannot do so because it is tied to the Soviet state. Yet it cannot be revolutionary because it has abandoned the theory of world revolution. So it swings between the two poles and remains centrist.

"Secondly, the theory of 'socialism in one country' is not an abstract principle but a matter of life and death. The present crisis in capitalism arises not only from the contradiction
between productive forces and private property but also from that between productive forces and national states. The task of socialism is not to push back the productive forces within the boundaries of a single state but, on the contrary, to organize them on a world scale. And this presupposes the world revolution, which ought to be the basis of the Comintern."

This is not incompatible with the rapid industrialization of Russia. It was Trotsky who in 1923 was pleading in speech and writing for a five-year plan, when Stalin was deriding him as an optimist. When the bureaucracy was at length converted to this optimism, they swung into the opposite extreme and fell into the error of "socialism in one country."

"Do you support the proposal for an industrial and transport boycott of fascist Germany at the earliest possible moment?"
"Yes, at the earliest suitable moment; it is only a question of capacity."

"At the Paris conference," I said, "the Independent Labour Party urged an amendment calling for a protest or demonstration strike of definite and limited duration with regard to some special Nazi outrage, but this was rejected."

"This time the Independent Labour Party line was the perfectly correct revolutionary policy," replied Trotsky.

Next I asked: "Why do you despair of the Comintern's correcting this policy?"

"First, because there is no democracy within the party, and critics who attempt to correct its line are expelled. Secondly, this fight is not of recent origin; it started ten years ago. The crucial instance is Germany. If that cannot convince the bureaucracy of its errors, then nothing can. And if the Independent Labour Party is still to wait hopefully a little longer, how much longer will you wait, and what evidence will finally satisfy you? The destruction of the now endangered Soviets would surely be too high a price for the enlightenment of the Independent Labour Party."

"What do you think must be done?"
"Form the Fourth International," said Trotsky, "to include all revolutionaries who accept the principles of Marx and Lenin and know that the Second and Third Internationals are both bankrupt—the one through reactionary reformism and the other through bureaucratic centrism. We of the International Left Opposition are ready, however, to make a united front with the Comintern bureaucracy for the specific purpose of defending the Soviet Union."

"And what is your advice to the Independent Labour Party?"
"To remain independent at all costs, until it has completed its movement from reformism to revolution, from an empirical
to a theoretical basis. You require a firm grasp of the revolu-
tionary theory of the capitalist state, a correct evaluation of
social and economic forces, adequate information of the move-
ment of revolution and reaction outside Great Britain, and a
definite plan of the revolutionary course within Britain—a
plan flexible in detail but rigid in principle."

Regretfully we took our leave to catch the night train to
Paris. More than once we turned back to salute the erect figure
of the former Red Army leader, who stood waving repeated
farewells. While not prepared to accept all his conclusions,
we were glad to have heard his own statement of his case.
So, too, we believe, will be the majority of revolutionary so-
cialists in Britain.
ON THE CONFERENCE OF LEFT SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS HELD AT PARIS, AUGUST 27-28, 1933

(August 31, 1933)

1. The conference of fourteen parties, organizations and groups of the most heterogeneous character and tendencies is the result of the deepest crisis of the socialist and communist movements, or, more exactly, the fruit of the collapse not only of the Second but—on another historical level and due to other causes—also of the Third International.

2. There can be, it is clear, no thought of the building of a new International by organizations that have profoundly different and even opposite principled bases. The Left Opposition participated in the conference under its own banner with the aim of assisting in the principled separation from reformists and centrists and of drawing together homogeneous revolutionary organizations.

3. The only tangible result of the conference, but an exceptionally important one, was the declaration signed by four organizations (ILO, SAP, two Holland parties: RSP and OSP), which represents the first *open step in the direction of the building of a new International on the principled foundations of Marx and Lenin*.

4. The plenum clearly realizes that the four named organizations of different political origin cannot attain complete unity on fundamental principles, tactical and organizational methods within a few days. At any rate, the attained result gives sufficient cause to believe that the future work of the organizations on the programmatic manifesto and tactical documents will make it possible not only to assure the necessary unanimity but also to attract under the banner of the new International a number of revolutionary organizations and factions.

5. The plenum considers it necessary immediately to begin
the elaboration of the programmatic documents and to create a technical secretariat that could, while yet in the process of editing the manifesto and the resolutions, enter into contact with sympathizing organizations so that their opinion, suggestions and criticism may find a reflection in the text of the programmatic documents.

6. The plenum instructs its representative in the programmatic commission to be guided by the basic ideas expressed in the declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninists and made public at the Paris conference of August 27-28.

7. With regard to the decisions adopted by the heterogeneous majority of the conference and permeated through and through by this heterogeneity, the plenum of the Bolshevik-Leninists does not find it possible to take political responsibility for these decisions.* Insofar as the adopted decisions may lead to this or that practical action (for example, boycott of Hitler Germany), the Left Opposition is ready, according to circumstances, to take an active part in actions that correspond to its general principles.

On the basis of practical activities, the Left Opposition will always aim at a closer drawing together with parties and organizations nearest to it. Only under this condition can a broad and courageous policy of the united front for immediate political aims help the work for the building of a new communist International.

The plenum calls upon all sections of the Left Opposition to realize fully the historic importance of the step made. Our immediate task now consists in giving the Declaration of Four the widest possible publicity in communist, socialist, trade-union and, especially, youth ranks. Through newspapers, leaflets, posters, in speeches and discussion, it is necessary to popularize and to explain the meaning of the declaration. Without sparing any effort, it is necessary to rouse the proletarian vanguard to the building of the new International.

The declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninists made public at the conference ends with the words: "Our revolutionary responsibility is immeasurably great. Let our creative work rise to the height of this responsibility." Let us fully realize that these words refer first of all to the Bolshevik-Leninists themselves.

* In taking this position, the plenum only makes use of the right that the conference granted to all the participating parties until October 15, namely, to ratify or, on the contrary, to reject the resolutions of the conference.
THE PARIS CONFERENCE:
A FIRM NUCLEUS FOR A NEW
INTERNATIONAL^{83}

(September 1, 1933)

The conference is over. As yet we have neither the minutes nor the final text of the resolution. Nevertheless, the principal conclusions can be drawn. These conclusions are entirely favorable to the Left Opposition. This can be seen best of all by the comparison of what we expected to obtain and what we obtained. In preliminary discussions and correspondence, we all agreed that if we should succeed in getting four or even three signatures under a clear and precise document in favor of the new International we would have made an enormous step forward. We obtained the four signatures that we counted on (the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland, the Socialist Workers Party of Germany and the Independent Socialist Party of Holland together with the International Left Opposition) under a document that is the only tangible result of the conference and that may and should become of historic importance.

We achieved this momentous result not by some chance combination or skillful maneuvers (on the contrary, in this field we made some errors) but due to the fact that the historic step made by us has fully matured. In spite of ten years of worldwide baiting and slander of the Left Opposition; in spite of the fact that this slander left its trace even in the consciousness of the opponents of Stalinism, among them in the ranks of the Social Democratic workers; in spite of all this, three organizations that lead a few tens of thousands of workers found no other path but to unite with us on a common document that presupposes a long and stubborn struggle. A wide breach was made in the wall surrounding the Left Opposition. We can expect with certainty that additional new organizations and factions, which are being pushed to the revolutionary path by the whole situation, will with every passing month convince themselves that the only banner under which the proletarian vanguard can rally is the banner of Bolshevism-Leninism.
The Declaration of Four is above called the only serious result of the Paris conference. As far as the vague decisions of the majority are concerned, they have no future. This will not be hard to understand if we should analyze the composition of the conference. If the delegates of the four organizations that signed the declaration made up its left wing, then the right wing was made up of the representatives of the Norwegian Labor Party, which aims at the creation of a Scandinavian "International" through an alliance with the Swedish and Dutch Social Democracy and is afraid, therefore, to compromise itself by proximity to Communists. One must be a hopelessly naive person or, what is worse, an unprincipled schemer to hope for a union or collaboration with this thoroughly opportunist party or with the small groups that gravitate to it, like the French PUPists (Party of Proletarian Unity), the Italian Maximalists, the Catalan Federation of Maurin, the Polish group of Doctor Kruk or the altogether humorous party of Steinberg (former people's commissar). 84

Urbahns represented at the conference the little that remained of the Leninbund. 85 If, with all his best revolutionary intentions, Urbahns proved anything in the last years, it is his total incapacity for collective work, on one side, and for systematic thinking, on the other. His ludicrous theory of "state capitalism," which puts on the same level the USSR, the United States, the Germany of Hitler and the Italy of Mussolini, alone excludes the possibility of joint work with him in the creation of a new International.

The Swedish Independent Communist Party (Kilbom) 86 and the British Independent Labour Party stand in a class by themselves. Both these organizations are at the crossroads. The Swedish party represents too solid a workers' organization to follow the policy of Brandler-Thalheimer, 87 which is based entirely on the servile hope that perhaps Manuilsky will pardon them and call them to power. On the other hand, the party of Kilbom is, apparently, as yet strongly infected with rightist tendencies and especially with distrust towards the Left Opposition. It cannot retain its present intermediary position. It must make a choice. We must help it make the right choice.

If the party of Kilbom vacillates between the Right and the Left Communist Oppositions, the Independent Labour Party vacillates between the Comintern and the new International. Maybe not at once, but inevitably the bureaucrats of the Comintern will push the Independent Labour Party on the road of the new International. Sooner or later this party, at least its revolutionary nucleus, and we shall meet.
It is absolutely clear that the decisions adopted by such a heterogeneous majority can have only a platonic, decorative character. Not a few are all too willing to "condemn" the Second International, to shout about its bankruptcy, so as to carry on in practice a policy of opportunism. Not a few are willing to shout about the bankruptcy of the Third International so as to carry on in reality a policy of backstage combinations that are in spirit very much akin to bureaucratic centrism. Not only are denunciations of the Second and Third Internationals insufficient to advanced workers but the bare admission of the necessity of a new International does not suffice either. It is necessary to say clearly what International we have in mind: the restoration of the miserable Two-and-a-Half International or the unification of the international proletarian vanguard on the basis of a revolutionary program that actually corresponds to the problems of our epoch. To elaborate such a program in the company of Tranmael, Louis Sellier, Maurin and others, or even to support the fiction of an international organization in common with them, would mean to sow chaos and ideological demoralization instead of the necessary saving clarity.

We cannot pass by the fact that two of our allies (the German SAP and the Dutch OSP) joined not only the bloc of four that signed the declaration but also the committee of the majority (together with two representatives of the ILP and one representative of the Norwegian party). We, the Left Opposition, cannot expect and do not expect anything positive from this committee. We consider the participation of two of our allies (SAP and OSP) in the committee (the RSP, the party of Sneevliet, did not enter the committee) as a glaring contradiction. We also consider the voting of the representatives of the OSP and the SAP for the resolution of the majority as a grave political error that is capable only of sowing illusions and confusion. But it would be entirely wrong if we should on this basis renounce the honest attempt at collaboration with these two allies. Their participation in a bloc with us is an indication of the future. Their participation in the "committee" is a reflection of the past.

Revolutionary irreconcilability consists not in demanding that our "leadership" be recognized a priori, not in presenting our allies at every occasion with ultimatums and threatening with a break, with the removal of signatures, etc. We leave such methods, on one hand, to the Stalinist bureaucrats, on the other, to some impatient allies. We realize full well that disagreements between us and our allies will arise more than once. But we hope, more than that, we are convinced, that
the march of events will reveal in deeds the impossibility of participating simultaneously in the principled bloc of four and in the unprincipled bloc of the majority. Without resorting to any unbecoming "ultimatums," we retain, however, the full right not only to appear under our own banner but also to tell our allies openly our opinion with regard to that which we consider their mistakes. We expect the same frankness from our allies. Our alliance will only be strengthened by this.

The elaboration of a programmatic document is now on the agenda. The manifesto of the new International should give a general picture of the modern capitalist world (as well as of the Soviet Union), of its economy, politics and international relations. All the convulsions of our epoch (wars, crises, fascist barbarism) should be explained as the result of the tardiness of the proletarian revolution. The responsibility for this tardiness must be placed on the Second and Third Internationals. A special chapter of the manifesto should be devoted to the picture of the decline of both Internationals. In conclusion, the problems of the proletarian revolution, as well as the problems of saving the USSR, demand the creation of a new International. The concluding chapters should outline the program of struggle of the new International.

The elaboration of such a document is the task of the coming two to three months. So responsible a task can be solved well only in a collective manner. Although it is a question of a document of an international character, the most important national problems must find reflection in it. The receipt of various political documents and in general of written or printed material that might help in the elaboration of this or that part of the manifesto is most desirable.

The sections of the Left Opposition will, of course, exert all their efforts to give the Declaration of Four the widest possible publicity and popularization. Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of revolutionary workers will breathe with relief upon learning that there is a way out from the revolutionary impasse. We must strike while the iron is hot!
Soviet delegates, unable to muster any reasons for the justification of violence against Comrades Rakovsky, Victor Serge and many others, declared at the conference of teachers that took place in Reims that a trial will soon be held in the USSR that will show that Trotskyists have participated in sabotage and counterrevolutionary activities! This is the reserve argument with which Stalin's office supplied the delegate for his journey. Referring to a Moscow radio announcement, bourgeois newspapers afterwards carried the information that a few dozen "Trotskyists" were actually arrested in the Ukraine and charged with sabotage and state treason; they were all brought to special trial.

It is clear beforehand to every thinking person that the Bolshevik-Leninists, called "Trotskyists," can have even less relation to the economic sabotage of the workers' state than the German Communists to the Reichstag fire. The Left Opposition has always faithfully supported the industrialization of the country not only in theory but also in practical work. It has considered and now considers the economic successes of the Soviet state as its own successes. It has fought and fights now only against the false economic leadership of the uncontrolled bureaucracy.

If real saboteurs are arrested in the Ukraine, they cannot have and do not have any relation to the Left Opposition; if adherents of the Left Opposition are arrested in the Ukraine, they cannot have and do not have any relation to sabotage. The indictment of "Trotskyists" in counterrevolutionary activities can only be based on an "amalgam," that is, a criminal combination of persons who have no relation to each other.

As far back as 1927, an agent of the GPU, formerly an officer in the Wrangel army, offered his "technical assistance" to a member of the Communist Youth League sympathetic
to the Left Opposition—and on the basis of this provocation, the Bolshevik-Leninists were accused of connections . . . not with the GPU but with a Wrangel officer. Now it is a question of a crime of far greater magnitude. Stalin is in urgent need of shootings of supposed Trotskyists for real crimes, or of real Trotskyists for supposed crimes, to justify the repressions against irreproachable revolutionists whom he has kept now almost six years in jails and exile.

Even from the infrequent official communications on the progress of the party purge, one can see that the Left Opposition cannot be eradicated; in different localities of the country, in full view of responsible party officials, the "Trotskyists" group together and act. The scant revelations of Pravda show that the Left Opposition is surrounded by an atmosphere of sympathy, otherwise the local Communists and the local control commissions would have no need to drive and threaten the expulsion of "Trotskyists." No less clear and evident are the successes of the Left Opposition on the international arena. The Stalinists know no less than we of the important gains of the Bolshevik-Leninists among the international proletarian vanguard. The bureaucracy is in great panic. It is necessary to do something and right away! But what? To enter into discussions would be a hopeless task from which only the Bolshevik-Leninists stand to gain. No, drastic measures are needed! Stalin is not stopped even by the fact that by his new amalgam he hinders greatly the world proletariat in its struggle against the amalgam of Hitler. In both cases proletarian revolutionists are involved.

It is the task of the Left Opposition to warn the advanced workers of the whole world of the crime that is being prepared. The poisoned weapon should be turned against the poisoners. At the same time, we must vigilantly watch that the rightful indignation of the world proletariat against the Bonapartist methods does not turn its sympathies completely away from the Soviet state. The proletarian vanguard should take upon itself the defense of the heritage of the October Revolution—against the Stalinist bureaucracy.
On the question of the ILP, the Secretariat has altered so much of my proposition that it suggests to our English section—if my information is correct—that some comrades should not enter the ILP, so that they can continue publishing the paper. This plan, after a long conversation with Smith (who makes the best impression personally), seems to me of no use. The ILP, and this is to its credit, has expelled two members because they were also members of the Communist Party. The ILP will also distrust us for the same reason. This distrust can only be overcome if our people get into the ILP with the desire to influence the party as a whole and to become powerful there but not to work toward breaking away a small part from the whole party.

The publication of a small, monthly paper under the circumstances is senseless, because the same articles are published at the same time or earlier in The Militant. We can make good use of The Militant as a "central organ" for our internal work within the ILP.

Comrade Witte is traveling to England, and it would be very good if he would discuss and examine the whole question from this point of view with the English comrades.

I am of the opinion, under the given circumstances, that the English section in relation to the ILP must use the tactic applied by the Brandlerite minority toward the SAP. If we only send a part of our membership into the ILP and keep a publication going outside of it, then we are in danger of getting our members expelled from the ILP in a very short time. Our mutual relations would be poisoned by this, and we would lose, because of our outside action, the possibility of gaining considerable influence.
THE ILP AND THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

(September 4, 1933)

After a brief interval I am returning again to the policy of the Independent Labour Party. This is occasioned by the declaration of the ILP delegation at the Paris conference, which permits a clear idea of the general direction the ILP is heading as well as of the stage at which it now finds itself.

The delegation considers it necessary to call a world congress of "all" revolutionary parties beginning with those adhering to the Third International. "If the Third International proves unprepared to change its tactics and organization, the time will have come to consider the formation of a new International." This sentence contains the very essence of the present policy of the ILP. Having shifted decisively to the left, to communism, the members of this party refuse to believe that the Communist International, which has numerous cadres and material and technical means at its disposal, is lost for the revolutionary movement. It is necessary, they say, to make one more test of the ability or inability of the Comintern to change its policy.

It is incorrect, even naive, to pose the question in this manner. The ability or inability of a party is not determined at a congress but in daily struggle, and particularly in times of great dangers, momentous decisions and mass action. After the victory of Hitler, for which the Comintern bears a direct responsibility, the leadership of the Comintern not only has left its policy unchanged but also has intensified its disastrous methods. This historic test has a thousand times more weight than all the declarations that the representatives of the Comintern might make at any one congress. It must not be forgotten that congresses represent elements of "parliamentarism" in the workers' movement itself. While parliamentarism is inevitable and necessary, it cannot add anything fundamentally new above what has been actually attained in mass struggle. This
The ILP and the New International

refers not only to the parliamentarism of the bourgeois state but also to the "parliamentary" institutions of the proletariat itself. We must orient ourselves by the real activity of working-class organizations and not expect any miracles from the proposed world congress.

During a period of ten years (1923-33), the Left Opposition acted as a faction of the Comintern, hoping to attain an improvement in its policy and regime by systematic criticism and an active participation in the life of the Comintern and its sections. The Left Opposition, therefore, has a colossal experience of an international character. There was not a single, important, historic event that did not force the Left Opposition to counterpose its slogans and methods to the slogans and methods of the bureaucracy of the Comintern. The struggle around the questions of the Soviet economy and the regime of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Chinese Revolution, Anglo-Russian Committee, etc., etc., remained comparatively little known to the workers' parties of the West.* But two chapters of this struggle passed before the eyes of the advanced workers of all the world: they deal with the theory and practice of the "third period" and with the strategy of the Comintern in Germany.

If the Left Opposition can be blamed for anything, it is certainly not for an impatient break with the Comintern. Only after the German Communist Party, which had been gathering millions of votes, proved incapable of offering even the least resistance to Hitler, and after the Comintern refused to recognize not only the erroneousness of its policy but even the very fact of the defeat of the proletariat (in reality the victory of Hitler is the greatest defeat of the proletariat in the history of the world!) and replaced the analysis of its mistakes and crimes by a new campaign of persecution and slander against real Marxists—only after this did we say: nothing can save these people any more. The German catastrophe, and the role of the Comintern in it, is infinitely more important for the world proletariat than any organizational maneuvers, congresses, evasive declarations, diplomatic agreements, etc. The historical judgment on the Comintern has been pronounced. There is no appeal from this verdict.

The history of the Comintern is almost unknown to the mem-

* This material is in print, however, in a series of studies and documents published partly also in foreign languages. For the English comrades, the publications of the American League (Pioneer Publishers) are of great importance. Whoever wishes to study seriously the ten-year struggle of the Left Opposition for the reform and improvement of the Comintern must study all these documents.
bers of the ILP, which has just recently taken the revolutionary path. Besides, no organization learns only by books and files. The ILP wants independently to undergo an experience that others have already undergone on a much larger scale. Had this involved only the loss of a few months, one could have reconciled oneself to it despite the fact that each month of our time is much more precious than years of another period. The danger, however, is that, aspiring to "test" the Comintern by drawing closer to it, the ILP may, without realizing it, follow the ways of the Comintern—and ruin itself.

The trade-union question remains the most important question of proletarian policy in Great Britain, as well as in the majority of old capitalist countries. The mistakes of the Comintern in this field are innumerable. No wonder: a party's inability to establish correct relations with the working class reveals itself most glaringly in the area of the trade-union movement. That is why I consider it necessary to dwell on this question.

The trade unions were formed during the period of the growth and rise of capitalism. They had as their task the raising of the material and cultural level of the proletariat and the extension of its political rights. This work, which in England lasted over a century, gave the trade unions tremendous authority among the workers. The decay of British capitalism, under the conditions of decline of the world capitalist system, undermined the basis for the reformist work of the trade unions. Capitalism can continue to maintain itself only by lowering the standard of living of the working class. Under these conditions trade unions can either transform themselves into revolutionary organizations or become lieutenants of capital in the intensified exploitation of the workers. The trade-union bureaucracy, which has satisfactorily solved its own social problem, took the second path. It turned all the accumulated authority of the trade unions against the socialist revolution and even against any attempts of the workers to resist the attacks of capital and reaction.

From that point on, the most important task of the revolutionary party became the liberation of the workers from the reactionary influence of the trade-union bureaucracy. In this decisive field, the Comintern revealed its complete inadequacy. In 1926-27, especially in the period of the miners' strike and the General Strike, that is, at the time of the greatest crimes and betrayals of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, the Comintern obsequiously toadied to the highly placed strikebreakers, cloaked them with its authority in the eyes of the masses and helped them remain in the saddle. That
is how the Minority Movement98 was struck a mortal blow. Frightened by the results of its own work, the Comintern bureaucracy went to the extreme of ultraradicalism. The fatal excesses of the "third period" were due to the desire of the small Communist minority to act as though it had a majority behind it. Isolating itself more and more from the working class, the Communist Party counterposed to the trade unions, which embraced millions of workers, its own trade-union organizations, which were highly obedient to the leadership of the Comintern but separated by an abyss from the working class. No better favor could be done for the trade-union bureaucracy. Had it been within its power to award the Order of the Garter,99 it should have so decorated all the leaders of the Comintern and Profintern.100

As was said, the trade unions now play not a progressive but a reactionary role. Nevertheless, they still embrace millions of workers. One must not think that the workers are blind and do not see the change in the historic role of the trade unions. But what is to be done? The revolutionary road is seriously compromised in the eyes of the left wing of the workers by the zigzags and adventures of official communism. The workers say to themselves: The trade unions are bad, but without them it might be even worse. This is the psychology of one who is in a blind alley. Meanwhile, the trade-union bureaucracy persecutes the revolutionary workers ever more boldly, ever more impudently replacing internal democracy by the arbitrary action of a clique, in essence, transforming the trade unions into some sort of concentration camp for the workers during the decline of capitalism.

Under these conditions, the thought easily arises: Is it not possible to bypass the trade unions? Is it not possible to replace them by some sort of fresh, uncorrupted organization, such as revolutionary trade unions, shop committees, soviets and the like? The fundamental mistake of such attempts is that they reduce to organizational experiments the great political problem of how to free the masses from the influence of the trade-union bureaucracy. It is not enough to offer the masses a new address. It is necessary to seek out the masses where they are and to lead them.

Impatient leftists sometimes say that it is absolutely impossible to win over the trade unions because the bureaucracy uses the organizations' internal regimes for preserving its own interests, resorting to the basest machinations, repressions and plain crookedness, in the spirit of the parliamentary oligarchy of the era of "rotten boroughs." Why then waste time and energy? This argument reduces itself in reality to giving up the
actual struggle to win the masses, using the corrupt character of the trade-union bureaucracy as a pretext. This argument can be developed further: why not abandon revolutionary work altogether, considering the repressions and provocations on the part of the government bureaucracy? There exists no principled difference here, since the trade-union bureaucracy has definitely become a part of the capitalist apparatus, economic and governmental. It is absurd to think that it would be possible to work against the trade-union bureaucracy with its own help, or only with its consent. Insofar as it defends itself by persecutions, violence, expulsions, frequently resorting to the assistance of government authorities, we must learn to work in the trade unions discreetly, finding a common language with the masses but not revealing ourselves prematurely to the bureaucracy. It is precisely in the present epoch, when the reformist bureaucracy of the proletariat has transformed itself into the economic police of capital, that revolutionary work in the trade unions, performed intelligently and systematically, may yield decisive results in a comparatively short time.

We do not at all mean by this that the revolutionary party has any guarantee that the trade unions will be completely won over to the socialist revolution. The problem is not so simple. The trade-union apparatus has attained for itself great independence from the masses. The bureaucracy is capable of retaining its positions a long time after the masses have turned against it. But it is precisely such a situation, where the masses are already hostile to the trade-union bureaucracy but where the bureaucracy is still capable of misrepresenting the opinion of the organization and of sabotaging new elections, that is most favorable for the creation of shop committees, workers' councils and other organizations for the immediate needs of any given moment. Even in Russia, where the trade unions did not have anything like the powerful traditions of the British trade unions, the October Revolution occurred with Mensheviks predominant in the administration of the trade unions. Having lost the masses, these administrations were still capable of sabotaging elections in the apparatus, although already powerless to sabotage the proletarian revolution.

It is absolutely necessary right now to prepare the minds of the advanced workers for the idea of creating shop committees and workers' councils at the moment of a sharp change. But it would be the greatest mistake to "play around" in practice with the slogan of shop councils, consoling oneself with this "idea" for the lack of real work and real influence in the
trade unions. To counterpose to the existing trade unions the abstract idea of workers' councils would mean setting against oneself not only the bureaucracy but also the masses, thus depriving oneself of the possibility of preparing the ground for the creation of workers' councils.

In this the Comintern has gained not a little experience: having created obedient, that is, purely Communist, trade unions, it counterposed its sections to the working masses in a hostile manner and thereby doomed itself to complete impotence. This is one of the most important causes of the collapse of the German Communist Party. It is true that the British Communist Party, insofar as I am informed, opposes the slogan of workers' councils under the present conditions. Superficially, this may seem like a realistic appraisal of the situation. In reality, the British Communist Party only rejects one form of political adventurism for another, more hysterical form. The theory and practice of social fascism and the rejection of the policy of the united front creates insurmountable obstacles to working in the trade unions, since each trade union is, by its very nature, the arena of an ongoing united front of revolutionary parties with reformist and nonparty masses. To the extent that the British Communist Party proved incapable, even after the German tragedy, of learning anything and arming itself anew, to that extent can an alliance with it pull to the bottom even the ILP, which only recently has entered a period of revolutionary apprenticeship.

Pseudo-Communists will, no doubt, refer to the last congress of trade unions, which declared that there could be no united front with Communists against fascism. It would be the greatest folly to accept this piece of wisdom as the final verdict of history. The trade-union bureaucrats can permit themselves such boastful formulas only because they are not immediately threatened by fascism or by communism. When the hammer of fascism is raised over the head of the trade unions, then, with a correct policy of the revolutionary party, the trade-union masses will show an irresistible urge for an alliance with the revolutionary wing and will carry with them onto this path even a certain portion of the apparatus. Contrariwise, if communism should become a decisive force, threatening the General Council with the loss of positions, honors and income, Messrs. Citrine and Co. would undoubtedly enter into a bloc with Mosley and Co. against the Communists. Thus, in August 1917, the Russian Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries together with the Bolsheviks repulsed General Kornilov. Two months later, in October, they were fighting hand in hand with the Kornilovists against the Bolsheviks. And in
the first months of 1917, when the reformists were still strong, they spouted, just like Citrine and Co., about the impossibility of their making an alliance with the dictatorship either of the right or left.

The revolutionary proletarian party must be welded together by a clear understanding of its historic tasks. This presupposes a scientifically based program. At the same time, the revolutionary party must know how to establish correct relations with the class. This presupposes a policy of revolutionary realism, equally removed from opportunistic vagueness and sectarian aloofness. From the point of view of both these closely connected criteria, the ILP should review its relation to the Comintern as well as to all other organizations and tendencies within the working class. This concerns first of all the fate of the ILP itself.
SUCCESS OR FAILURE? 105

More on the Paris Conference

(September 10, 1933)

When a movement enters a new, higher stage, there are always elements who defend the past. A wider perspective frightens them. They see nothing but difficulties and dangers.

Comrades who participated in one of the meetings of Bolshevik-Leninists communicated to me somewhat the following criticism by one of the participants: "We made no gains at the Paris conference; the whole matter came down to negotiations and agreements by the leaders; such a policy cannot have any revolutionary significance; the joint declaration signed by the leaders of four organizations signifies in reality a deviation towards the Social Democracy. . . ." Since this criticism reflects—it is true, in a very exaggerated form—the doubts and apprehensions of a certain number of comrades (according to all information, a small minority), it is necessary to examine seriously the above-enumerated arguments.

"The negotiations were carried on by the leaders." What does this argument mean? Conferences and conventions always consist of "leaders," that is, of representatives. It is an impossible task to assemble in one place all the members of the Left Opposition, the SAP, RSP, and OSP. How can agreements between organizations be made without negotiations of the representatives, that is, "leaders"? On this point the criticism obviously makes no sense.

Or does the author of the criticism mean that the representatives of the organizations that signed the joint declaration do not express the opinion of the rank and file? Let us examine this argument as well. With regard to the SAP, it is known to all that the rank and file of the party have been striving for a long time not only for a closer approach to us but also for a complete fusion with us, while, until very recently, the leaders evaded the issue and put brakes upon it, fearing a separation from possible allies of the right. In this case, why did the leaders find themselves compelled to sign jointly with us a most important document? The answer is clear: the pressure of the
rank and file toward the left, that is, toward us, became so strong that the leaders of the SAP were forced to turn to us. Those who know how to interpret political facts and symptoms correctly will say that this is a great victory. This conclusion retains its full force independently of how adroitly or skillfully the negotiations between the leaders were carried on. What decided the matter was not the negotiations but the whole preceding work of the Left Opposition.

With regard to the OSP, the situation is approximately the same. This organization was not connected with us at all. Two years ago it found itself in a bloc with Seydewitz and Rosenfeld. Now it has drawn nearer to us. It is clear that the leaders of this organization would have never made this step if there had not been a strong pull to the left on the part of the rank and file.

With the RSP (Sneevliet), the matter stands somewhat differently. Friendly relations existed here already for quite some time. Many comrades know what active support Sneevliet and his friends have rendered the Left Opposition during the Copenhagen conference and, especially, during the Amsterdam anti-war congress. The question of the Comintern prevented this political proximity from taking an organizational form.* When we declared ourselves for a new International, the wall dividing us was broken down. Is it not clear that in this case our new orientation immediately brought a concrete and valuable result?

About three months ago, we wrote hypothetically that with a broad and decisive policy we could probably find a number of allies among left socialist groupings. A month or a month and a half ago, we voiced the conjecture that a break with the Comintern would greatly facilitate the influx to our side of revolutionary groupings of Social Democratic origin. Is it not clear that the Paris conference confirmed both these conjectures, and on a scale that we ourselves could not have expected two or three months ago? Under these conditions, to complain that everything came down to negotiations by the leaders and to assert that the new alliance has no revolutionary significance is to reveal a complete ignorance of the basic processes that are now taking place inside the proletariat.

But particularly strange (mildly speaking) sounds the argument that we are making a turn towards... reconciliation with the Social Democracy. The Stalinists slander us in this manner and not for the first time. What basis is there for carrying these "arguments" into our own organization? Let us, how-

* The differences on the trade-union question have lost their former sharpness, if they have not disappeared altogether.
Success or Failure?

ever, examine them somewhat more closely. The Paris conference was not called by us. We do not take the slightest responsibility for its composition and agenda. We came to this conference to present there our point of view. Possibly our declaration contained some concessions to the Social Democracy? Let someone get up courage to say it! The declaration signed by the four organizations, it is understood, does not contain our program. But it defines clearly the road of the Fourth International on the basis of an irreconcilable struggle with the Social Democracy, a complete break with bureaucratic centrism and a resolute condemnation of all attempts along the lines of the Two-and-a-Half International. Where in this are concessions to the Social Democracy?

The Declaration of Four does not give and, under the circumstances, could not give an answer to all the problems of program and strategy. It is clear that it is impossible to build a new International on the basis of this declaration. But we did not intend anything of the sort. The declaration itself states clearly that the organizations that signed the declaration oblige themselves to elaborate, within a short time, a programmatic manifesto, which should become the fundamental document of the new International. All our sections, all the three allied organizations, as well as all sympathizing groups and elements, should be drawn to this work. Do we intend to make any concessions to the Social Democracy in this manifesto?

The declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninists, made public at the conference, states clearly on what basis we propose to write the manifesto: the decisions of the first four congresses of the Comintern, the "twenty-one conditions," the "eleven points" of the Left Opposition. Only the future will show whether any serious disagreements will arise on this basis between ourselves and our allies. If disagreements should arise, we will seriously fight for our point of view. Until now we have not shown any excessive pliancy in questions of principle.

The same critics also add the following argument: the new International can be built only on the wave of the ascent of the revolutionary movement; now, however, in the atmosphere of decline, all attempts in this direction are doomed in advance to failure. This profound historic argument is borrowed as a whole from the sterile scholastic, Souvarine\textsuperscript{109} (who, alas, as far as I know, has meanwhile had time to make a turn of 180 degrees). The necessity of a break with the Second International and the preparation for the Third International was proclaimed by the Bolsheviks in the autumn of 1914, that is, in the atmosphere of a frightful disintegration of Socialist Parties. At that time also there was no lack of wise men who spoke of the
"utopianism" (the word "bureaucratism" was not in such abuse then) of the slogan of the Third International. Kautsky went further in his famous aphorism: "The International is an instrument of peace and not of war." In reality the same idea is expressed by the critics quoted above: "The International is an instrument of ascent and not of decline." The proletariat has need of an International at all times and under all conditions. If there is no Comintern today, we must say so openly and immediately start the preparation for a new International. How soon we will be able to put it on its feet depends, of course, on the whole march of the class struggle, on the decline or ascent of the workers' movement, etc. But even in the period of the worst decline, it is necessary to prepare for a future ascent, giving our own cadres a correct orientation. Fatalistic complaints about the objective decline most often reflect a subjective decline.

Let us take the conferences of Zimmerwald and Kienthal as a comparison. They consisted, necessarily, of the "leaders" (every conference consists of leaders). By the number of workers directly represented, they were weaker than the Paris conference. The majority in Zimmerwald and Kienthal consisted of right-centrist elements (Ledebour who could not resolve to vote against the war budget, Hoffmann, Bourderon, Merrheim, Grimm, Axelrod, Martov and others).

Lenin found it possible to sign the manifesto of the whole conference despite the vagueness of this document.*

As far as the Zimmerwald "left" was concerned, it was extremely weak. After the rout of the Bolshevik Duma fraction and of the local organizations, the Bolshevik Party was no stronger during the war than the present Russian Left Opposition. Other left groups were incomparably weaker than our three present allies. The general position of the workers' movement under the conditions of war seemed absolutely hopeless. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks, as well as the group of Nashe Slovo, took a course towards the Third International from the very beginning of the war. Without this course the October Revolution would have been impossible.

We repeat, Lenin found it possible under the then-existing conditions to sign, together with Ledebour, Bourderon, Grimm and Martov, a manifesto against the war. The Bolshevik-Leninists have not signed the resolution of the majority of the Paris conference and will, of course, take no responsibility.

* By the way, some wise men recall, without any rhyme or reason, the "August bloc" of 1912 that had only national limits, but leave unobserved the international Zimmerwald conference, the analogy that suggests itself.
for this majority. Perhaps the policy of Lenin at Zimmerwald and Kienthal was . . . a turn towards the Social Democracy? But the objection may be raised that now under the conditions of peace a stricter selection is necessary than in wartime. Correct! Ledebour and Bourderon endangered themselves by signing the manifesto of Zimmerwald, while Tranmael and Co. carry on their maneuvers (giving the right hand to the Scandinavian Social Democracy and the pinky of the left to the Paris conference) without running any risk. It is precisely for this reason that we refused to sign the meaningless resolution of the Paris majority. Where in this are the concessions to the Social Democracy?

However, two of our allies—our opponents will say to us—have signed the resolution of the majority, showing, thereby, that they have not as yet made the final choice. Absolutely correct! But we do not take any responsibility for our allies, just as they take no responsibility for us. The terms of our agreement are clearly formulated and are now accessible to all. The future will show which side our allies will finally choose. We want to help them make the right choice. One of the most important rules of revolutionary strategy reads: watch your ally as well as your enemy. Mutual criticism on the basis of full equality—in this there is no trace of backstage diplomacy of the leaders; everything is done and will be done in full view of the masses, under their control, for the purpose of education of the masses. Other ways and means of revolutionary policy do not exist at all.

There are also other rules of revolutionary policy that it is advisable to recall: do not get frightened needlessly and do not frighten others without cause; do not make false accusations; do not look for capitulation where there is none; do not replace Marxist discussion with unprincipled squabbles. Long experience has shown that, precisely at the time when an organization is getting ready to get out of the narrow alley onto a wider arena, elements can always be found who have grown accustomed to their alley, know all their neighbors, are used to carrying all the alley news and rumors and are busy with the terribly important affairs of the "change of ministries" in their own alley. These conservative and sectarian elements are very much afraid that on a wider arena their art will find no application. They grab, therefore, the wagon by its wheels and try to turn it back, and they justify their, in essence, reactionary work by terribly "revolutionary" and "principled" arguments. We have tried above to weigh these arguments on the scale of Marxist dialectics. Let the comrades themselves decide what is their weight.
Dear Comrades,

I have not yet received your letter in which you motivate your negative attitude to the entry into the ILP. But, so as not to delay this matter, I shall try to examine the principled considerations for and against the entry. If it should happen that your letter contains additional arguments, I shall write you again.

In its present state, the ILP is a left-centrist party. It consists of a number of factions and shadings that are indicative of the different stages of evolution from reformism to communism. Should the Bolshevik-Leninists enter into the official Communist Parties, which they had long designated, and with full reason, as centrist organizations? For a number of years, we have considered ourselves Marxist factions of centrist parties. A categorical answer—yes, yes; no, no—is insufficient also in this case. A Marxist party should, of course, strive to full independence and to the highest homogeneity. But in the process of its formation, a Marxist party often has to act as a faction of a centrist and even a reformist party. Thus the Bolsheviks adhered for a number of years to the same party with the Mensheviks. Thus, the Third International only gradually formed itself out of the Second.

Centrism, as we have said more than once, is a general name for most varied tendencies and groupings spread out between reformism and Marxism. In front of each centrist grouping it is necessary to place an arrow indicating the direction of its development: from right to left or from left to right. Bureaucratic centrism, for all its zigzags, has an extremely conservative character corresponding to its social base: the
Soviet bureaucracy. After a ten-year experience, we came to the conclusion that bureaucratic centrism does not draw nearer and is incapable of drawing nearer to Marxism, from the ranks of which it emerged. It is precisely because of this that we broke with the Comintern.

While the official Communist Parties have been growing weaker and decomposing, left flanks have separated from the reformist camp, which has grown considerably in numbers. These flanks also have a centrist character, but they move towards the left and, as demonstrated by experience, are capable of development and yield to Marxist influence. Let us recall once more that the Third International originated from organizations of this sort.

A clear example of the above is furnished by the history of the German SAP. A few hundred communists who split off from the Brandlerist opposition and entered the SAP have succeeded in a comparatively short time in placing themselves at the head of this organization, which, for the most part, consists of former Social Democratic members. At that time we criticized the group of Walcher-Froelich, Thomas and others not because they resolved to enter a left-centrist party, but because they entered it without a complete program and without an organ of their own. Our criticism was and remains correct. The SAP bears even now traces of shapelessness. Some of its leaders even now consider irreconcilable Marxist criticism as "sectarianism." In reality, however, if the Left Opposition with its principled criticism had not been standing at the side of the SAP, the position of the Marxists within the SAP would have been incomparably more difficult; no revolutionary group can live without a constantly creative ideological laboratory. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the movement of the centrist party (SAP) to the left was so decisive that the communist group, even without a complete program and without an organ of its own, found itself very soon at the head of the party.

The history of the SAP is neither a chance one nor an exceptional one. For a number of years the Comintern prevented by its policy the going-over of the Socialist workers to the revolutionary road. A mass of explosive material accumulated, therefore, in the camp of reformism. The frightful crisis of capitalism and the triumphal march of fascism, accompanied by the absolute impotence of both Internationals, gave the left-centrist organizations an impulsion towards communism; this is one of the most important prerequisites for the creation of new parties and of a new International.

In the area of theory, the ILP is completely helpless. This gives an advantage to the official Communist Party—herein
lies the danger. This opens up the field for the intervention of our British section. It is not sufficient to have correct ideas. In a decisive moment one must know how to show one's strength to the advanced workers. As far as I can judge from here, the possibility for influencing the further development of the ILP as a whole is not yet missed. But in another couple of months, the ILP will have completely fallen between the gear wheels of the Stalinist bureaucracy and will be lost, leaving thousands of disappointed workers. It is necessary to act and to act immediately.

It is worth entering the ILP only if we make it our purpose to help this party, that is, its revolutionary majority, to transform it into a truly Marxist party. Of course, such an entry would be inadmissible if the Central Committee of the ILP should demand from our friends that they renounce their ideas, or the open struggle for those ideas in the party. But it is absolutely admissible to take upon oneself the obligation to fight for one's views on the basis of the party statutes and within the limits of party discipline. The great advantage of the Left Opposition lies in the fact that it has a theoretically elaborated program, international experience and international control. Under these conditions, there is not the slightest basis for the fear that the British Bolshevik-Leninists will dissolve without a trace in the ILP.

Some comrades point out that the ILP has greatly weakened, that behind the old front a ramshackle structure hides itself. This is very possible. But this is not an argument against entry. In its present composition, it is clear, the ILP is not viable. It is getting weaker and is losing members not only on the right but also on the left, because its leadership has no clear policy and is not capable of imbuing the party with confidence in its strength. It is possible to stop this further disintegration of the ILP only by imparting to it Marxist views on the problems of our epoch, and in particular a Marxist analysis of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Only the Bolshevik-Leninists can do this work. But to do this they must courageously destroy the wall that divides them today from the revolutionary workers of the ILP. If the apparatus of the ILP should not admit our section into the ranks of its party, this would be the best proof that the leadership has completely submitted to the Stalinist bureaucracy behind the back of the party. In this worst case we would acquire a strong weapon against the leaders and would gain the sympathy of the rank-and-file members of the ILP.

It may be objected that the small size of our British section would not permit it to play the same role with regard to the
ILP that the group of Walcher-Froelich played with regard to the SAP. Possibly. But even if the ILP is doomed to disintegrate, the Bolshevik-Leninists can save for the revolution an important kernel of this party. It must also not be forgotten that the group of Walcher-Froelich was completely isolated, while our British friends can count on international help in their work.

I am very much afraid that our British friends, at least some of them, are restrained from entering the ILP by the fear of malicious criticism of the Stalinists. There is nothing worse in revolutionary policy than to be actuated by purely external, superficial criteria or by the fear of public opinion of the bureaucracy only because we were connected with it in the past. It is necessary to determine one's road in accordance with the deep currents within the proletarian vanguard, to trust more in the power of one's ideas without looking back at the Stalinist bureaucracy.

G. Gourov [Leon Trotsky]
IT IS TIME TO STOP

(Published September 18, 1933)

On August 19 the plenum (International Secretariat) adopted a decision of great political responsibility: the break with the Comintern and the course of a new International. The first result of the new orientation was the principled document of four organizations opening up the era of the preparation for the new International. The second result was the adherence to the international Bolshevik-Leninist organization of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland (RSP), numbering about a thousand members. In a number of countries (England, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland . . .), the new orientation opened up wide perspectives. All our previous work had only a preparatory character. In the full meaning of the word, we are entering a new epoch; from propaganda circles we are becoming fighting political organizations of the proletariat.

Under these conditions the discussion in the French League opened up. The drawn-out character of the disintegration of the French Communist Party, the abundance of elements of revolutionary decomposition (groups, sects, cliques without ideas and without a future), the numerousness of national immigrant groups that are especially affected by the disintegration of communism—all these causes, combined with the lack of firm and consecutive leadership, led to the fact that, almost from the very beginning of the existence of the French League, its inner life represented a series of crises that never reached the level of principles but distinguished themselves by extreme bitterness and poisoned the atmosphere of the organization, repelling serious workers despite their sympathy for the ideas of the Opposition.

The present crisis of the League, despite its external similarity, at least at the first stage, to the previous crises, differs from them profoundly in that it coincides with a great turn in the whole policy of our international organization. The enor-
mous progressive importance of the new orientation consists partly in that it permits the testing of the old groups, tendencies and individual workers not by chance and subjective criteria but by faultless objective criteria flowing from the whole course of our development. No matter what the origin of the discontentment, conflicts, personal friction, etc., may have been, all the old disagreements must of necessity group themselves now around the basic alternatives: forward to a wide arena of the Fourth International or backward to small circles stewing in their own juice.

Lifeless, sectarian elements of the French League, as well as of other sections, feel that the ground is slipping from under their feet. The coming out on a wider arena frightens them, as their whole psychology is adapted to an atmosphere of closed circles. Some of the defenders of circle life rebel openly against the new orientation, discovering in it tendencies towards the Second International; under the cover of ultraradical formulas borrowed from the Stalinists is concealed capitulation before new tasks, new difficulties and new perspectives. Others recognize the new orientation in words but determine their policy independently of the new orientation, entering into blocs with its adversaries or advancing the criteria of yesterday, as if nothing had changed in the outside world and in our policy. The irresolute say: "The new orientation did not change practically anything in France." A great error! Despite the greater slowness and backwardness of the inner differentiation of the French workers' movement, it has accumulated numerous revolutionary elements that are waiting for a new banner and a new orientation. The present struggle among the socialist leaders reflects the deep regroupments in the working class itself. The banner of the new International will become an irresistible rallying force also for the revolutionary workers of France: it is only necessary to take this banner firmly and confidently into one's hands!

The vast significance of the new orientation for the League—we repeat again—consists in that it makes it possible to get rid of all that is accidental, personal, secondary, that it places squarely the question of principle and unmistakably separates the living and creative elements from hopeless products of circle life.

The problems of the inner regime of the League, of the methods of work and the composition of the leadership, of course, do not lose their importance even now; on the contrary, all these questions are inseparable from the question of the new orientation. It would have been a miserable reaction to attempt to build and rebuild the inner organization of the League
independently of the main task of the new period. From now on only those elements should be and must be admitted to the leadership of the League, as well as of other sections, who have understood the significance of the new orientation, who place it as a basis for their whole activity, who are ready to break all obstacles on the new road, and with ardent zeal lead the organization forward, not permitting inner reactionaries to pull it back.

In close connection with the new orientation, it is necessary to pose in a new manner the questions of organization, discipline and leadership.

Undoubtedly the leadership of the French League, as well as that of a number of other sections, has not acquired the necessary methods of constant ideological contact with the organization, of constant and timely information to all the members of the organization about the proposed important steps, tactical changes, etc. This serious shortcoming in the work inevitably leads to a separation of the leaders of the organization, gives rise to unnecessary misunderstanding and conflicts, and hampers the political education of the members. Correct and timely information is the basis of party democracy. The development of the League is no less harmfully affected by another characteristic of the leadership: passive tolerance of elements known to be alien and of disrupting activity. A revolutionary organization cannot develop without purging itself, especially under the conditions of legal work, when not infrequently chance, alien and degenerate elements gather under the banner of revolution. Since, in addition, the Left Opposition formed itself in the struggle with monstrous bureaucratism, many quasi-oppositionists have concluded that inside the Opposition "everything is permitted." In the French League and on its periphery prevail practices that have nothing in common with a revolutionary proletarian organization. Separate groups and individuals easily change their political position or in general are not concerned about it, devoting their time and effort to the discrediting of the Left Opposition, to personal squabbles, insinuations and organizational sabotage. For the last three years, the Jewish Group\textsuperscript{116} has become an example of such "policy." The impunity of this group and of elements akin to it should be considered as a grave fault of the leadership of the French League, as a manifestation of impermissible weakness and of organizational vagueness.

Any defense measure by the organization against decomposing elements, any appeal to discipline, any repression was described as Stalinism by some members of our own organization. By this they only showed that they are far from under-
standing Stalinism as well as the spirit of a truly revolutionary organization. The history of Bolshevism has been, from its very first steps, the history of educating an organization in the spirit of iron discipline. The Bolsheviks were originally called the "hard," the Mensheviks the "soft," because the former stood for a harsh, revolutionary discipline while the latter replaced it by mutual indulgence, leniency, vagueness. The organizational methods of Menshevism are inimical to a proletarian organization no less than Stalinist bureaucratism. The Jewish Group and the elements connected with it advocate and inculcate purely Menshevik conceptions of organization, discipline and leadership. Such practices are suited to the club of Souvarine and other "democratic" (in spirit, Social Democratic) organizations. Bolshevik-Leninists reject democracy without centralism as an expression of petty-bourgeois content. To be able to cope with the new tasks, it is necessary to burn out with a red-hot iron the anarchist and Menshevik methods from the organizations of the Bolshevik-Leninists.

We are making an important revolutionary turn. At such moments inner crisis or splits are absolutely inevitable. To fear them is to substitute petty-bourgeois sentimentalism and personal scheming for revolutionary policy. The League is passing through a first crisis under the banner of great and clear revolutionary criteria. Under these conditions, a splitting off of a part of the League will be a great step forward. It will reject all that is unhealthy, crippled and incapacitated; it will give a lesson to the vacillating and irresolute elements; it will harden the better sections of the youth; it will improve the inner atmosphere; it will open up before the League new, great possibilities. What will be lost—partly only temporarily—will be regained a hundredfold already at the next stage. The League will finally get the possibility of transforming itself into a fighting organization of the workers.
ABOUT THE UNITED FRONT
WITH GRZEZINSKY . . . 117

(Sep
tember 20, 1933)

L'Humanite of September 19 reproduced the photograph of Grzezinsky,\(^{118}\) the former Social Democratic chief of police of Berlin, in the role of witness before the London countertrial in the case of the burning of the Reichstag. It is clear that the poor editors of l'Humanite did not think about the significance of their printing this photograph. Otherwise, they would have resigned with shame, admitting that they have no right to be in charge of a workers' newspaper.

The London countertrial, which attempts to establish the truth about the burning of the Reichstag, is an act of political struggle against fascism. The judges, witnesses and experts make their appearance at this trial not through compulsion but in order to achieve a definite political aim: the struggle with the bands of Hitler. Grzezinsky detests communism; he proved it in deeds, having shot down Communist workers. However, the same Grzezinsky voluntarily appears at the London countertrial to testify in favor of the Communists: Torgler, Dimitrov\(^{119}\) and others against the fascist Goering\(^{120}\) and Co. By publishing the report of the London countertrial, and in particular the photograph of the witness Grzezinsky, l'Humanite participates in a united front with Grzezinsky against Goering. Is this not clear?

More than two years ago, we wrote that in the struggle against Hitler we are ready to make a united front not only with the devil and his grandmother but even with Grzezinsky himself. The unfortunate editors of l'Humanite and the Cahiers de Bolshevism spilled not a little ink then, trying to prove our complete adherence to social fascism. Truly fate is unmerciful to these people. Grzezinsky could have died by now or could have gone over to fascism so as to lighten somewhat the lot of the ill-fated editors of l'Humanite. But Grzezinsky lived, emigrated and appeared at the trial in favor of the Communists and, thereby, forced l'Humanite to print his photograph as an ally in the united front.
The London countertrial, no matter how modest its political significance, is, nevertheless, very much worthwhile. Perhaps the readers of *l'Humanite*—the editors are hopeless—will surmise that a united front with the Social Democracy should have been started before and not after the victory of Hitler; not when Communists and Social Democrats are routed and Torgler imprisoned but when there was still a full possibility for victory over Hitler.

Had the leaders of the Comintern known the first lessons of the Communist ABC, and not repeated obediently the idiotic formula that Social Democracy and fascism are "twins," sitting in jail would be not Torgler but Goering and Hitler himself. More than that, it is very probable that by now Grzezinsky would have had time to join them, for his forced participation in the struggle against fascism could not free him finally from the responsibility before the proletarian court for the murder of the Berlin workers. Will not the editors of *l'Humanite* have to appear someday before the proletarian court for the systematic confusion of the minds of the workers? They can hope for acquittal only on the basis of the formula: "they knew not what they did."
THE USSR AND THE COMINTERN

(Sepember 24, 1933)

Newspaper dispatches indicate that Washington is preparing to recognize the Soviet government. It is safe to say that in the forthcoming discussion between President Roosevelt and M. Litvinov the possible activities of the Comintern will play an important part. America is entering upon a period of profound social shifts. Under such circumstances, the intervention of the Comintern must appear especially dangerous. Moreover, among well-known circles, even now it is considered an immutable fact that the recognition of the USSR carries with it in reality the recognition of the Comintern. We are justified, in our opinion, in stating that such a view is a most vulgar anachronism, being held by people, especially professional politicians, who are loath to ponder new facts, particularly when the latter run counter to their prejudices.

From the first days of its existence, the Soviet government protested against attempts to identify it with the Comintern. Juridically, these protests were irreproachable, because, despite their community of ideals, the two organizations rested upon different national and international foundations; and in their activities, they remained formally independent of each other. But the statesmen of Europe and America were not reassured by this legalistic distinction. They cited the factual connection between the Soviet government and the Third International. The same people were at the head of both organizations. Neither Lenin nor his closest collaborators hid or desired to hide their leading participation in the life of the Communist International. While the Soviet government of that period deemed it possible to make very great material sacrifices for the sake of preserving peaceful relations with capitalistic governments, Soviet diplomacy was under the strictest instruction not to enter into any discussions relating to the Communist International, to the location of its center in Moscow, to the participation of the leading members of the government in it, etc.
In this sphere, concessions were considered even more impermissible than in the sphere of the fundamental principles of the Soviet regime, its system of government, the nationalization of the means of production, the monopoly of foreign trade, etc. When Chicherin, in a letter to Lenin, hinted at the advisability of making concessions to Wilson in reference to the suffrage laws of the Soviet republic, Lenin replied, by letter, with a counterproposal that Chicherin be sent to a sanatorium for a while, in view of the obvious breakdown of his political balance. Nor is it difficult to conceive how Lenin would have replied had any Soviet diplomat been so bold as to suggest some concession or other to capitalist partners at the expense of the Comintern. So far as I recall, no one ever made any such proposals even in a masked form.

During the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, when he argued for the necessity of accepting the German ultimatum, Lenin reiterated time and again, "It is insanity to stake the conquests of the October Revolution on an obviously hopeless war; if the salvation of the German revolution were concerned, that would be another matter. In that case, we would have to risk the fate of the Soviet republic, because the German revolution is incommensurably more important than our own." Fundamentally, the other leaders of the Soviet republic looked at the matter in the same way. In their own time, their speeches and articles were amply quoted as proof of the organic connection between the Soviet government and the Comintern. Therefore the conservative politicians of Europe and America failed to react to arguments de jure; they referred to the situation de facto.

However, much water has gone under the bridge since the time when the ideas of Lenin and his closest co-workers were the definitive ideas of the Soviet republic and the Comintern. Circumstances have changed; people have changed; the ruling stratum of the USSR has been renovated completely; the old ideas and slogans have been ousted by new ones. What had formerly composed the essence has now become transformed into a harmless ritual. But instead, there remain preserved intentionally the convictions of some statesmen of the West, based on recollections, as to the indissoluble tie between the Soviet government and the Comintern. It is time this view was revised! In the present-day world, so torn by contradictions, there are far too many real bases for enmity to seek artificial reasons for fanning it. It is time to understand that despite the ritualistic phrases employed on holiday occasions, the Soviet government and the Comintern now inhabit different planes. Not only are the present leaders of the USSR
prepared to make no national sacrifices for the sake of the German and, in general, the world revolution, but also they do not hesitate for a moment to take such actions and make such pronouncements as deal the heaviest blows to the Comintern and the workers' movements as a whole. The more the USSR strengthens its international position, the deeper becomes the rift between the Soviet government and the international revolutionary struggle.

The most brilliant moments in the life of the Comintern were its congresses, unfailingly assembled in Moscow. Here, through the exchange of international experience and the clash between various tendencies, were formulated the basic programmatic viewpoints and the tactical methods. The definitive participation of the Soviet leaders in the policies of the Comintern was displayed most convincingly precisely during these congresses. Lenin opened and closed the First Congress of the Comintern. He delivered the most important reports at the Second Congress. At the Third Congress, he headed the struggle against the erroneous policies of Zinoviev, Bela Kun and others. Hardly recovered from the first attack of his illness, Lenin read the report of the New Economic Policy of the Soviets at the Fourth Congress. His mind was as lucid as ever, but at times his blood vessels failed him, and he paused in anguish. . . . To complete the picture, it might be permissible to add that the programmatic manifestos of the first two congresses were written by the author of these lines and that the reporter on the basic tactical questions at the Third and Fourth Congresses was the people's commissar of army and navy.

It is necessary to add to what has been said above that in those days the congresses of the Comintern were convoked every year. During the first four years of the existence of the Third International (1919-22), four congresses took place. But that was the epoch of Lenin. Since the Fourth Congress, eleven years have elapsed. During this entire period, only two congresses have taken place, one in 1924, the other in 1928. It is five-and-a-half years now since the congress of the Comintern has been last convened. This bare chronological summary serves better than any other discussion to throw light upon the actual state of affairs. During the years of civil war, when the Soviet republic was surrounded on all sides by the barbed wire of blockade, and when a trip to the Soviet Union involved not only great difficulties but also mortal dangers, the congresses convened yearly. During recent years, when trips to the USSR have become utterly prosaic matters, the Comintern has been obliged to refrain from congresses altogether. In their stead have come the intimate conferences
of the bureaucratic leaders, which are bereft of even a shade of the meaning that was implicit in the multitudinous and democratically elected congresses. But even in these closed sessions of functionaries, not one of the responsible leaders of the Soviet Union any longer participates. The Kremlin is interested in the work of the Comintern only so far as is necessary to shield the interests of the USSR from any kind of compromising action or pronouncement. The matter no longer touches the juridical limitation of functions, but a political rupture.

This same ideological course can be very convincingly followed through in the evolution of the foreign policy of the Comintern. We shall confine ourselves to counterposing the original policy of the Soviet diplomacy with that of the present day. Lenin called the Brest-Litovsk peace a "breather," i.e., a brief pause in the struggle between the Soviet state and world imperialism. In this struggle, the Red Army was officially and openly avowed to be the same kind of weapon as was the Communist International. The present foreign policy of the Soviet Union has nothing in common with these principles. The supreme achievement of Soviet diplomacy is the Geneva formula, which provides the definitions of aggression and of the aggressor nation, a formula that applies not only to the interrelations between the Soviet Union and its neighbors but also to the interrelations between the capitalist states themselves. In this manner, the Soviet government has assumed officially the duty of safeguarding the political map of Europe, as it has emerged from the Versailles laboratory. Lenin considered the historical danger of a war to be determined by those social forces that oppose each other on the battlefield and by the political goals they pursue. The present Soviet diplomacy springs completely from the conservative principle of maintaining the status quo. Its attitude toward war and the warring sides is determined not by a revolutionary criterion but by the legalistic criterion: which one crosses the foreign boundaries first. Thus the Soviet formula sanctions the defense of national territory against aggression for capitalist nations as well. We shall not discuss how good or bad this is. In general, the purpose of this article is not to criticize the policies of the present Kremlin, but to show the profoundly altered principles of the entire international orientation of the Soviet government, in order thus to eliminate those fictitious barriers that are in the way of the recognition of the USSR.

The plan for building socialism in one country alone is in no way an empty phrase; it is a practical program, embracing in equal degrees economy, internal policies and diplomacy.
The more decisively the Soviet bureaucracy has entrenched itself in its position as to national socialism, the more the questions of international revolution, and with them the Comintern, have been relegated to the background. Every new revolution is an equation with many unknowns, and hence it includes in itself an element of major political risk. The present Soviet government seeks, with might and main, to ensure its internal security against risk connected not only with wars but also with revolutions. Its international policies have been transformed from international-revolutionary policies into those that are conservative.

True, the Soviet leadership cannot openly avow the facts as they are, either to its own workers or to those of other countries. It is shackled by the ideological heritage of the October Revolution, which forms the reservoir for its authority with the working masses. But while the shell of the tradition remains, the content has evaporated. The Soviet government allows the rudimentary organs of the Comintern to maintain their residence in Moscow. But it no longer permits them to convocate international congresses. Since it no longer counts upon the assistance of foreign Communist Parties, it no longer concerns itself in the least with their interests in its own foreign policies. We need only refer to the nature of the reception accorded to the French politicians in Moscow\textsuperscript{127} in order to be hit between the eyes by the contradiction between the epoch of Stalin and the epoch of Lenin!

A recent issue of the French official organ, \textit{Le Temps} (September 24), carries a dispatch from Moscow that is most significant. "The platonic hopes for the world revolution are being expressed [among the ruling circles of the USSR] all the more fervently, the more they are being renounced in practice." \textit{Le Temps} goes on to elucidate, "Since the removal of Trotsky, who with his theory of the permanent revolution represented a genuine international danger, the Soviet rulers, headed by Stalin, have adhered to the policy of building socialism in one country without awaiting the problematic revolution in the rest of the world." The newspaper insistently warns against error those French politicians who still incline to confuse the phantoms of the past with the realities of today. Let us not forget that this involves not a chance publication but the most influential and utterly conservative organ of the ruling class of France. Jaures once said aptly about \textit{Le Temps}, "It is the bourgeoisie turned into a newspaper."

Of all the world governments, the American government has up to now adhered most irreconcilably, in relation to the Soviets, to the principle of capitalistic "legitimacy." In this, the
question of the Comintern played the decisive role; we need only recall the Hamilton Fish\textsuperscript{128} committee! However, if the honorable member of Congress keeps in touch with living facts, which need no testimony of witnesses—for they speak for themselves—he must come to the conclusion that the foreign policy of the Soviet government no longer creates the slightest hindrance toward its recognition, not only \textit{de facto} but \textit{de jure}. 
English Section

Dear Comrades,

Comrade Paton of the ILP offered to place my articles on the ILP in the magazine *Adelphi*. My reply will be clear from the copy of my letter attached hereto.

No doubt you have received the extract from the minutes of the plenum of the International Secretariat from which it is clear that the suggestion to enter the ILP was adopted by the plenum unanimously. I cannot understand who could have supplied you with such false information. At any rate, it was not Comrade Witte, who participated actively in the meetings of the plenum and voted for the general resolution. It is clear, of course, that I am far from the thought that the unanimous opinion of the plenum obligates you to submit to it silently. The plenum adopted not a decision but a proposal. The proposal, however, was considered and discussed very seriously and adopted unanimously.

Comrade Fenner Brockway asked my permission to print in *The New Leader* an article by Comrade Smith relating my conversation with him. Of course, I gave my approval. Thus you will get an idea of the general nature of my conversation, which coincides, however, almost to the dot with the contents of my article sent to you.

I continue to believe that the fate of our British section for the next couple of years depends on a correct attitude toward the ILP. It was Shakespeare who counseled taking advantage of the time of the tides so as not to remain on the strand all life long. With great impatience and concern I am awaiting your final decision in this matter.

Comradely yours,

L. Trotsky
How the Question Is Posed

The break with the Communist International and the orientation toward the new International have posed anew the question of the social character of the USSR. Doesn't the collapse of the Communist International also mean, at the same time, the collapse of that state that emerged from the October Revolution? Here, indeed, in both instances one and the same ruling organization is concerned: the Stalinist apparatus. It has applied identical methods within the USSR as in the international arena. We Marxists were never patrons of the double bookkeeping system of the Brandlerites, according to which the policies of the Stalinists are impeccable in the USSR but ruinous outside the boundaries of the USSR.* It is our conviction that they are equally ruinous in both instances. If so, isn't it then necessary to recognize the simultaneous collapse of the Communist International and the liquidation of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR?

At first sight such reasoning appears to be irrefutable. But it is erroneous. While the methods of the Stalinist bureaucracy are homogeneous in all spheres, the objective results of these methods depend upon external conditions or, to use the language of mechanics, the resistivity of the material. The Communist International represented an instrument that was intended for the overthrow of the capitalist system and the

* Sage American Brandlerites (the Lovestone group) complicate the question; the economic policy of Stalinists, if you please, is impeccable, but the political regime in the USSR is bad—there is no democracy. It does not occur to these theoreticians to ask themselves why then does Stalin liquidate democracy if his economic policies are correct and successful? Isn't it out of fear that if proletarian democracy existed, the party and the working class would express much too restlessly and violently their enthusiasm over his economic policies?
establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Soviet government represents an instrument for the preservation of conquests of an already accomplished overturn. The Communist Parties of the West have no inherited capital. Their strength (in reality, their weakness) lies within themselves and only within themselves. Nine-tenths of the strength of the Stalinist apparatus lies not in itself but in the social changes wrought by the victorious revolution. Still, this consideration alone does not decide the question, but it does bear a great methodological significance. It shows us how and why the Stalinist apparatus could completely squander its meaning as the international revolutionary factor and yet preserve a part of its progressive meaning as the gatekeeper of the social conquests of the proletarian revolution. This dual position—we may add—represents in itself one of the manifestations of the unevenness of historical development.

The correct policies of a workers' state are not reducible solely to national economic construction. If the revolution does not expand on the international arena along the proletarian spiral, it must immutably begin to contract along the bureaucratic spiral within the national framework. If the dictatorship of the proletariat does not become European and worldwide, it must head towards its own collapse. All this is entirely incontestable on a wide historical perspective. But everything revolves around the concrete historical periods. Can one say that the policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy have led already to the liquidation of the workers' state? That is the question now.

Against the assertion that the workers' state is apparently already liquidated there arises, first and foremost, the important methodological position of Marxism. The dictatorship of the proletariat was established by means of a political overturn and a civil war of three years. The class theory of society and historical experience equally testify to the impossibility of the victory of the proletariat through peaceful methods, that is, without grandiose class battles, weapons in hand. How, in that case, is the imperceptible, "gradual," bourgeois counterrevolution conceivable? Until now, in any case, feudal as well as bourgeois counterrevolutions have never taken place organically," but they have invariably required the intervention of military surgery. In the last analysis, the theories of reformism, insofar as reformism generally has attained to theory, are always based upon the inability to understand that class antagonisms are profound and irreconcilable; hence, the perspective of a peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism. The Marxist thesis relating to the catastrophic char-
acter of the transfer of power from the hands of one class into the hands of another applies not only to revolutionary periods, when history sweeps madly ahead, but also to the periods of counterrevolution, when society rolls backwards. He who asserts that the Soviet government has been gradually changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film of reformism.

Our opponents may deny that this is a general methodological proposition and declare that no matter how important in itself it is nevertheless too abstract to solve the question. Truth is always concrete. The thesis of the irreconcilability of class contradictions should and must direct us in our analysis but cannot replace its results. One must probe deeply into the material content of the historical process itself.

We reply, it is true that a methodological argument does not exhaust the problem. But, in any case, it transfers the burden of proof to the opposing side. Critics who consider themselves Marxists must demonstrate in what manner the bourgeoisie that had lost power in a three-years' struggle could resume this power without any battles. However, since our opponents make no attempt to invest their appraisal of the Soviet state with any sort of serious theoretical expression, we shall try to perform this labor for them here.

"The Dictatorship Over the Proletariat"

The most widespread, popular and, at first sight, irrefutable argument in favor of the nonproletarian character of the present Soviet state is based upon the reference to the strangulation of the liberties of proletarian organizations and to the almightiness of the bureaucracy. Is it really possible to identify the dictatorship of an apparatus, which has led to the dictatorship of a single person, with the dictatorship of the proletariat as a class? Isn't it clear that the dictatorship of the proletariat is excluded by the dictatorship over the proletariat?

Such enticing reasoning is constructed not upon a materialistic analysis of the process as it develops in reality but upon pure idealistic schemas, upon Kantian norms. Certain noble "friends" of the revolution have provided themselves with a very radiant conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and they are completely prostrated in the face of the fact that the real dictatorship with all its heritage of class barbarism, with all its internal contradictions, with the mistakes and crimes of the leadership, fails entirely to resemble that sleek image that they have provided. Disillusioned in their most beautiful emotions, they turn their backs to the Soviet Union.

Where and in what books can one find a faultless prescrip-
tion for a proletarian dictatorship? The dictatorship of a class does not mean by a long shot that its entire mass always participates in the management of the state. This we have seen, first of all, in the case of the propertied classes. The nobility ruled through the monarchy before which the noble stood on his knees. The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie took on comparatively developed democratic forms only under the conditions of capitalist upswing when the ruling class had nothing to fear. Before our own eyes, democracy has been supplanted in Germany by Hitler's autocracy, with all the traditional bourgeois parties smashed to smithereens. Today, the German bourgeoisie does not rule directly; politically it is placed under complete subjection to Hitler and his bands. Nevertheless, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie remains inviolate in Germany, because all the conditions of its social hegemony have been preserved and strengthened. By expropriating the bourgeoisie politically, Hitler saved it, even if temporarily, from economic expropriation. The fact that the bourgeoisie was compelled to resort to the fascist regime testifies to the fact that its hegemony was endangered but not at all that it had fallen.

Anticipating our subsequent arguments, our opponents will hasten to rebut: although the bourgeoisie, as an exploiting minority, can also preserve its hegemony by means of a fascist dictatorship, the proletariat building a socialist society must manage its government itself, directly drawing ever-wider masses of the people into the task of government. In its general form, this argument is undebatable, but in the given case it merely means that the present Soviet dictatorship is a sick dictatorship. The frightful difficulties of socialist construction in an isolated and backward country coupled with the false policies of the leadership—which, in the last analysis, also reflects the pressure of backwardness and isolation—have led to the result that the bureaucracy has expropriated the proletariat politically in order to guard its social conquests with its own methods. The anatomy of society is determined by its economic relations. So long as the forms of property that have been created by the October Revolution are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class.

Dissertations upon "the dictatorship of the bureaucracy over the proletariat" without a much deeper analysis, that is, without a clear explanation of the social roots and the class limits of bureaucratic domination, boil down merely to high-faluting democratic phrases so extremely popular among the Mensheviks. One need not doubt that the overwhelming majority of Soviet workers are dissatisfied with the bureaucracy and that a considerable section, by no means the worst, hates it. How-
ever, it is not simply due to repression that this dissatisfaction does not assume violent mass forms; the workers fear that they will clear the field for the class enemy if they overthrow the bureaucracy. The interrelations between the bureaucracy and the class are really much more complex than they appear to be to the frothy "democrats." The Soviet workers would have settled accounts with the despotism of the apparatus had other perspectives opened before them, had the Western horizon flamed not with the brown color of fascism but with the red of revolution. So long as this does not happen, the proletariat with clench teeth bears ("tolerates") the bureaucracy and, in this sense, recognizes it as the bearer of the proletarian dictatorship. In a heart to heart conversation, no Soviet worker would be sparing of strong words addressed to the Stalinist bureaucracy. But not a single one of them would admit that the counterrevolution has already taken place. The proletariat is the spine of the Soviet state. But insofar as the function of governing is concentrated in the hands of an irresponsible bureaucracy, we have before us an obviously sick state. Can it be cured? Will not further attempts at cures mean a fruitless expenditure of precious time? The question is badly put. By cures we understand not all sorts of artificial measures separate and apart from the world revolutionary movement but a further struggle under the banner of Marxism. Merciless criticism of the Stalinist bureaucracy, training the cadres of the new International, resurrecting the fighting capacity of the world proletarian vanguard—this is the essence of the "cure." It coincides with the fundamental direction of historical progress.

During the last few years—appropriately enough—our opponents have told us more than once that we "are losing time in vain" by occupying ourselves with curing the Comintern. We never promised anybody that we would cure the Comintern. We only refused, until the decisive test, to pronounce the sick as dead or hopelessly ill. In any case, we did not waste a single day "curing." We formed revolutionary cadres, and, what is no less important, we prepared the fundamental theoretical and programmatic positions of the new International.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat as an Idealistic Norm

Messrs. "Kantian" Sociologists (we apologize to the shade of Kant) often reach the conclusion that a "real" dictatorship, that is, one that conforms to their ideal norms, existed only in the days of the Paris Commune, or during the first period of the October Revolution, up to the Brest-Litovsk peace or, at best, up to the NEP. This is indeed sharpshooting: aim
a finger at the sky and hit the bull's eye! If Marx and Engels called the Paris Commune "the dictatorship of the proletariat" it was only because of the force of the possibilities lodged in it. But by itself the Commune was not yet the dictatorship of the proletariat. Having seized power, it hardly knew how to use it; instead of assuming the offensive, it waited; it remained isolated within the circle of Paris; it dared not touch the state bank; it did not and indeed could not put through the overturn in property relations because it did not wield power on a national scale. To this must be added Blanquist one-sidedness and Proudhonist prejudices, which prevented even the leaders of the movement from completely understanding the Commune as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The reference to the first period of the October Revolution is not any more fortunate. Not only up to the Brest-Litovsk peace but even up to autumn of 1918, the social content of the revolution was restricted to a petty-bourgeois agrarian overturn and workers' control over production. This means that the revolution in its actions had not yet passed the boundaries of bourgeois society. During this first period, soldiers' soviets ruled side by side with workers' soviets, and often elbowed them aside. Only toward the autumn of 1918 did the petty-bourgeois soldier-agrarian elemental wave recede a little to its shores, and the workers went forward with the nationalization of the means of production. Only from this time can one speak of the inception of a real dictatorship of the proletariat. But even here it is necessary to make certain large reservations. During those initial years, the dictatorship was geographically confined to the old Moscow principality and was compelled to wage a three-years' war along all the radii from Moscow to the periphery. This means that up to 1921, precisely up to the NEP, that is, what went on was still the struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat upon the national scale. And since, in the opinion of the pseudo-Marxist philistines, the dictatorship had disappeared with the beginning of the NEP, then it means that, in general, it had never existed. To these gentlemen the dictatorship of the proletariat is simply an imponderable concept, an ideal norm not to be realized upon our sinful planet. Small wonder that "theoreticians" of this stripe, insofar as they do not denounce altogether the very word dictatorship, strive to smear over the irreconcilable contradiction between the latter and bourgeois democracy.

Extremely characteristic, from the laboratory and not the political point of view, is the Parisian sect of "Communist democrats" (Souvarine and Co.). The very name already implies a break with Marxism. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program*,
Marx rejected the name Social Democracy in view of the fact that it places the revolutionary socialist struggle under the formal control of democracy. It is quite obvious that there is no difference in principle between "communist democrats" and "socialist democrats," Social Democrats, that is. There is no hard and fast partition between socialism and communism. Transgression begins only when socialism and communism as a movement or as a state are subordinated not to the actual course of the class struggle, not to the material conditions of the historical process but to the suprasocial and suprahistorical abstraction, "democracy," which, in reality, is a weapon of self-defense serving the bourgeoisie against the proletarian dictatorship. If during the epoch of the Gotha Program [1875] it was still possible to see in the word Social Democracy only an incorrect and nonscientific name for a proletarian party whose spirit was healthy, then the entire subsequent history of bourgeois and "social" democracy turns the banner of "democratic communism (?)" into the banner of an outright class betrayal.*

Bonapartism

An opponent of the Urbahns type will say that there has been really no restoration of the bourgeois regime as yet but also that there is no longer a workers' state; the present Soviet regime is a supraclass, or an interclass, Bonapartist government. In its own time we settled our accounts with this theory. Historically, Bonapartism was and remains the government of the bourgeoisie during periods of crises in bourgeois society. It is possible and it is necessary to distinguish between the "progressive" Bonapartism that consolidates the purely capitalistic conquests of bourgeois revolution and the Bonapartism of the decay of capitalist society, the convulsive Bonapartism of our epoch (von Papen, Schleicher, Dollfuss, and the candidate for Dutch Bonapartism, Colijn, etc.). Bonapartism always implies political veering between classes; but under Bonapartism in all its historical transmigrations there is preserved the one and the same social base: bourgeois property. Nothing is more absurd than to draw the conclusion of the classless character of the Bonapartist state from the Bonapartist wagging between classes or from the "supraclass" position of the Bonapartist gang. Monstrous nonsense! Bonapartism is only one of the varieties of capitalist hegemony.

* Those who are interested, if there are such, may themselves become acquainted with the "platform" of "communist (!) democrats." From the viewpoint of the fundamentals of Marxism, it is difficult to conceive of a more charlatanistic document.
If Urbahns wants to extend the concept of Bonapartism to include also the present Soviet regime, then we are ready to accept such a widened interpretation—under one condition: if the social content of the Soviet "Bonapartism" will be defined with the requisite clarity. It is absolutely correct that the self-rule of the Soviet bureaucracy was built upon the soil of veering between class forces both internal as well as international. Insofar as the bureaucratic veering has been crowned by the personal plebiscitary regime of Stalin, it is possible to speak of Soviet Bonapartism. But while the Bonapartism of both Bonapartes as well as their present pitiful followers has developed and is developing on the basis of a bourgeois regime, the Bonapartism of Soviet bureaucracy has under it the soil of a Soviet regime. Terminological innovations or historical analogies can serve as conveniences in one manner or another for analysis, but they cannot change the social nature of the Soviet state. 137

"State Capitalism"

During the last period, Urbahns, incidentally, has created a new theory: the Soviet economic structure, it appears, is a variety of "state capitalism." The "progress" lies in that Urbahns has descended from his terminological exercise in the sphere of the political superstructure down to the economic foundation. But this descent—alas!—did him no good.

According to Urbahns, the newest form of self-defense of the bourgeois regime is state capitalism: one need only take a look at the corporate "planned" state in Italy, Germany and the United States. Accustomed to broad gestures, Urbahns also throws in here the USSR. We shall speak of this later. Insofar as the matter touches the capitalist states, Urbahns concerns himself with a very important phenomenon of our epoch. Monopoly capitalism has long since outgrown the private ownership of the means of production and the boundaries of the national state. Paralyzed, however, by its own organizations, the working class was unable to free in time the productive forces of society from their capitalist fetters. Hence arises the protracted epoch of economic and political convulsions. The productive forces pound against the barriers of private property and of national boundaries. The bourgeois governments are obliged to pacify the mutiny of their own productive forces with a police club. This is what constitutes the so-called planned economy. Insofar as the state attempts to harness and discipline capitalist anarchy, it may be called conditionally "state capitalism."

But we should remember that originally Marxists under-
stood by state capitalism only the independent economic enterprises of the state itself. When the reformists dreamed of overcoming capitalism by means of the municipalization or governmentalization of ever-greater numbers of transport and industrial enterprises, the Marxists used to reply in refutation: this is not socialism but state capitalism. Subsequently, however, this concept acquired a broader meaning and began to apply to all the varieties of state intervention into the economy; the French use the word *etatisme* (statification) in this sense.

But Urbahns not only expounds the travails of "state capitalism" but appraises them after his own manner. Insofar as it is generally possible to understand him, he pronounces the regime of "state capitalism" to be a necessary and, moreover, a progressive stage in the development of society, in the same sense as trusts are progressive compared with the disparate enterprises. So fundamental an error in appraising capitalist planning is enough to bury any approach whatsoever.

While, during the epoch of the capitalist upswing to which the war put an end, it was possible to view—under certain political preconditions—the various forms of statification as progressive manifestations, that is, to consider that state capitalism acts to lead society forward and facilitates the future economic labor of the proletarian dictatorship, the present "planned economy" must be viewed as a stage that is reactionary through and through: state capitalism strives to tear the economy away from the worldwide division of labor; to adapt the productive forces to the Procrustean bed of the national state; to constrict production artificially in some branches and to create just as artificially other branches by means of enormous unprofitable expenditures. The economic policies of the present state—beginning with tariff walls upon the ancient Chinese pattern and ending with the episodes of forbidding the use of machinery under Hitler's "planned economy"—attain an unstable regulation at the cost of causing the national economy to decline, bringing chaos into world relations and completely disrupting the monetary system that will be very much needed for socialist planning. The present state capitalism neither prepares nor lightens the future work of the socialist state but, on the contrary, creates for it colossal additional difficulties. The proletariat let slip a series of opportune periods for the seizure of power. Through this it has created the conditions for fascist barbarism in politics and for the destructive work of "state capitalism" in economics. After the conquest of power, the proletariat will have to pay economically for its political lapses.
The Economy of the USSR

However, what interests us most within the limits of this analysis is the fact that Urbahns attempts also to include the economy of the USSR under the term "state capitalism." And while so doing he refers—it is hardly believable!—to Lenin. There is only one possible way of explaining this reference: as the eternal inventor who creates a new theory a month, Urbahns has no time to read the books he refers to. Lenin did actually apply the term "state capitalism" but not to the Soviet economy as a whole, only to a certain section of it: the foreign concessions, the mixed industrial and commercial companies and, in part, the peasant and largely kulak [rich peasant] cooperatives under state control. All these are indubitable elements of capitalism, but since they are controlled by the state, and even function as mixed companies through its direct participation, Lenin conditionally, or, according to his own expression, "in quotes," called these economic forms "state capitalism." The conditioning of this term depended upon the fact that a proletarian, and not a bourgeois, state was involved; the quotation marks were intended to stress just this difference of no little importance. However, insofar as the proletarian state allowed private capital and permitted it within definite restrictions to exploit the workers, it shielded bourgeois relations under one of its wings. In this strictly limited sense, one could speak of "state capitalism."

Lenin came out with this very term at the time of the transition to the NEP, when he presupposed that the concessions and the "mixed companies," that is, enterprises based upon the correlation of state and private capital, would occupy a major position in the Soviet economy alongside of the pure state trusts and syndicates. In contradistinction to the state capitalist enterprises—concessions, etc., that is—Lenin defined the Soviet trusts and syndicates as "enterprises of a consistently socialist type." Lenin envisioned the subsequent development of Soviet economy, of industry in particular, as a competition between the state capitalist and the pure state enterprises.

We trust that it is clear now within what limits Lenin used this term that has led Urbahns into temptation. In order to round out the theoretical catastrophe of the leader of the "Lenin(!)bund," we must recall that, contrary to Lenin's original expectations, neither the concessions nor the mixed companies played any appreciable role whatsoever in the development of the Soviet economy. Nothing has now remained generally of these "state capitalist" enterprises. On the other hand, the Soviet trusts whose fate appeared so very murky
at the dawn of the NEP underwent a gigantic development in the years after Lenin's death. Thus, if one were to use Lenin's terminology conscientiously and with some comprehension of the matter, one would have to say that the Soviet economic development completely bypassed the stage of "state capitalism" and unfolded along the channel of the enterprises of the "consistently socialist type."

Here, however, we must also forestall any possible misunderstandings, and this time of just the opposite character. Lenin chose his terms with precision. He called the trusts not socialist enterprises, as the Stalinists now label them, but enterprises of the "socialist type." Under Lenin's pen, this subtle terminological distinction implied that the trusts will have the right to be called socialist not by type, not by tendency, that is, but by their genuine content—after the rural economy will have been revolutionized, after the contradiction between the city and the village will have been destroyed, after men will have learned to fully satisfy all human wants, in other words, only in proportion as a real socialist society would arise on the bases of nationalized industry and collectivized rural economy. Lenin conceived that the attainment of this goal would require the successive labors of two or three generations and, moreover, in indissoluble connection with the development of the international revolution.

To summarize: under state capitalism, in the strict sense of the word, we must understand the management of industrial and other enterprises by the bourgeois state on its own account, or the "regulating" intervention of the bourgeois state into the workings of private capitalist enterprises. By state capitalism "in quotes," Lenin meant the control of the proletarian state over private capitalist enterprises and relations. Not one of these definitions applies from any side to the present Soviet economy. It remains a deep secret what concrete economic content Urbahns himself puts into his understanding of the Soviet "state capitalism." To put it plainly, his newest theory is entirely built around a badly read quotation.

Bureaucracy and the Ruling Class

There is, however, also another theory concerning the "non-proletarian" character of the Soviet state, much more ingenious, much more cautious, but not any more serious. The French Social Democrat Lucien Laurat, Blum's colleague and Souvarine's teacher, has written a booklet defending the view that the Soviet society, being neither proletarian nor bourgeois, represents an absolutely new type of class organization, be-
cause the bureaucracy not only rules over the proletariat politically but also exploits it economically, devouring that surplus value that hitherto fell to the lot of the bourgeoisie. Laurat invests his revelations with the weighty formulas of *Das Kapital* and, in this manner, gives an appearance of profundity to his superficial and purely descriptive "sociology." The compiler is obviously unaware that his entire theory had been formulated, only with much more fire and splendor, over thirty years ago by the Russo-Polish revolutionist Makhaisky, who was superior to his French vulgarizer in that he awaited neither the October Revolution nor the Stalinist bureaucracy in order to define "the dictatorship of the proletariat" as a scaffold for the commanding posts of an exploiting bureaucracy. But even Makhaisky did not suck his theory out of his thumb; he only "deepened" sociologically and economically the anarchist prejudices against state socialism. Makhaisky, by the way, also utilized Marx's formulas but in a manner much more consistent than Laurat's; according to Makhaisky, the author of *Das Kapital* covered up, with malice aforethought, in his formulas of reproduction (volume II), that portion of surplus value that would be devoured by the socialist intelligentsia (the bureaucracy).

In our own time, a "theory" of this kind, but without an exposure of Marx the exploiter, was defended by Myasnikov, who proclaimed that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union had been supplanted by the hegemony of a new class: the social bureaucracy. In all probability, Laurat borrowed his theory, directly or indirectly, precisely from Myasnikov, investing it only with a pedantically "learned" air. For completeness' sake, it should also be added that Laurat has assimilated all the mistakes (and only the mistakes) of Rosa Luxemburg, among them even those that she herself had renounced.

Let us, however, examine more closely the "theory" itself. The class has an exceptionally important and, moreover, a scientifically restricted meaning to a Marxist. A class is defined not by its participation in the distribution of the national income alone, but by its independent role in the general structure of the economy and by its independent roots in the economic foundation of society. Each class (the feudal nobility, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalist bourgeoisie and the proletariat) works out its own special forms of property. The bureaucracy lacks all these social traits. It has no independent position in the process of production and distribution. It has no independent property roots. Its functions relate basically to the political *technique* of class rule. The existence of
a bureaucracy, in all its variety of forms and differences in specific weight, characterizes every class regime. Its power is of a reflected character. The bureaucracy is indissolubly bound up with a ruling economic class, feeding itself upon the social roots of the latter, maintaining itself and falling together with it.

**Class Exploitation and Social Parasitism**

Laurat will say that he "does not object" to the bureaucracy being paid for its labor insofar as it fulfills the necessary political, economic and cultural functions; but what is involved is its uncontrolled appropriation of an absolutely disproportionate part of the national income; precisely in this sense does it appear as the "exploiting class." This argument, based on undubitable facts, does not, however, change the social physiognomy of the bureaucracy.

Always and in every regime, the bureaucracy devours no small portion of surplus value. It might not be uninteresting, for example, to compute what portion of the national income is devoured by the fascist locusts in Italy or Germany! But this fact, of no small importance by itself, is entirely insufficient to transform the fascist bureaucracy into an independent ruling class. It is the hireling of the bourgeoisie. True, this hireling straddles the boss's neck, tears from his mouth at times the juiciest pieces, and spits on his bald spot besides. Say what you will, a most inconvenient hireling! But, nevertheless, only a hireling. The bourgeoisie abides him because without him, it and its regime would absolutely go to the dogs.

*Mutatis mutandis* [changing what should be changed], what has been said above can be applied to the Stalinist bureaucracy as well. It devours, wastes and embezzles a considerable portion of the national income. Its management costs the proletariat very dearly. In the Soviet society, it occupies an extremely privileged position not only in the sense of having political and administrative prerogatives but also in the sense of possessing enormous material advantages. Still, the biggest apartments, the juiciest steaks and even Rolls Royces are not enough to transform the bureaucracy into an independent ruling class.

Inequality, moreover such crying inequality, would, of course, be absolutely impossible in a socialist society. But contrary to official and semiofficial lies, the present Soviet regime is not socialist but transitional. It still bears within it the monstrous heritage of capitalism, social inequality in particular, not only between the bureaucracy and the proletariat but also within the bureaucracy itself and within the proletariat. At the given stage, inequality still remains, within certain limits,
the bourgeois instrument of socialist progress; differential wages, bonuses, etc., are used as stimuli for emulation.

While it explains the inequality, the transitional character of the present system in no way justifies those monstrous, open and secret privileges that have been arrogated to themselves by the uncontrolled leaders of the bureaucracy. The Left Opposition did not await the revelation of Urbahns, Laurat, Souvarine and Simone Weil,* etc., before announcing that the bureaucracy in all its manifestations is pulling apart the moral tie rods of Soviet society, engendering an acute and a lawful dissatisfaction among the masses and preparing the ground for great dangers. Nevertheless, the privileges of the bureaucracy by themselves do not change the bases of the Soviet society, because the bureaucracy derives its privileges not from any special property relations peculiar to it as a "class," but from those property relations that have been created by the October Revolution and that are fundamentally adequate for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

To put it plainly, insofar as the bureaucracy robs the people (and this is done in various ways by every bureaucracy), we have to deal not with class exploitation, in the scientific sense of the word, but with social parasitism, although on a very large scale. During the Middle Ages, the clergy constituted a class or an estate, insofar as its rule depended upon a specific system of land property and forced labor. The present-day church constitutes not an exploiting class but a parasitic corporation. It would be silly to actually speak of the American clergy as a special ruling class; yet, it is indubitable that the priests of the different colors and denominations devour in the United States a big portion of the surplus value. In its traits of parasitism, the bureaucracy, as well as the clergy, is similar to the lumpen proletariat, which likewise does not represent, as is well known, an independent "class."

* Having fallen into despair over the "unsuccessful" experiments of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Simone Weil has found solace in a new vocation: the defense of her personality against society. The hoary formula of liberalism, vivified with cheap anarchistic exaltation! And think of it—Simone Weil speaks loftily about our "illusions." She and those like her require many years of stubborn perseverance in order to free themselves from the most reactionary, lower-middle-class prejudices. Appropriately enough her new views have found a haven in an organ that bears the obviously ironic name, *La Revolution proletarienne* [The Proletarian Revolution]. This Louzon publication is ideally suited for revolutionary melancholics and political rentiers living on the dividends from their capital of recollections and pretentious philosophers who will perhaps adhere to the revolution . . . after it will have been achieved.
Two Perspectives

The question will stand out before us in bolder relief if we take it not in its static but in its dynamic cross section. Squandering unproductively a tremendous portion of the national income, the Soviet bureaucracy is interested at the same time, by its very function, in the economic and cultural growth of the country: the higher the national income, the more copious its funds of privileges. Concurrently, upon the social foundations of the Soviet state, the economic and cultural uplift of the laboring masses must tend to undermine the very bases of bureaucratic domination. Clearly, in the light of this fortunate historical variant, the bureaucracy turns out to be only the instrument—a bad and an expensive instrument—of the socialist state.

But by squandering an ever-bigger portion of the national income and by disrupting the basic proportions of the economy—it will be said in refutation—the bureaucracy retards the economic and cultural growth of the country. Absolutely correct! The further unhindered development of bureaucratism must lead inevitably to the cessation of economic and cultural growth, to a terrible social crisis and to the downward plunge of the entire society. But this would imply not only the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship but also the end of bureaucratic domination. In place of the workers' state would come not "social bureaucratic" but capitalist relations.

We trust that by thus posing the question in perspective we shall be able, once for all, to probe thoroughly into the controversy over the class nature of the USSR; whether we take the variant of further successes for the Soviet regime or, contrariwise, the variant of its collapse, the bureaucracy in either case turns out to be not an independent class but an excrescence upon the proletariat. A tumor can grow to tremendous size and even strangle the living organism, but a tumor can never become an independent organism.

Finally, we may add for the sake of complete clarity: if in the USSR today the Marxist party were in power, it would renovate the entire political regime; it would shuffle and purge the bureaucracy and place it under the control of the masses; it would transform all of the administrative practices and inaugurate a series of capital reforms in the management of economy; but in no case would it have to undertake an overturn in the property relations, i.e., a new social revolution.

The Possible Paths of Counterrevolution

The bureaucracy is not a ruling class. But the further development of the bureaucratic regime can lead to the inception
of a new ruling class: not organically, through degeneration, but through counterrevolution. We call the Stalinist apparatus *centrist* precisely because it fulfills a dual role; *today*, when there is *no longer* a Marxist leadership, and none forthcoming *as yet*, it defends the proletarian dictatorship with its own methods; but these methods are such as facilitate the victory of the enemy *tomorrow*. Whoever fails to understand this dual role of Stalinism in the USSR has understood nothing.

The socialist society will live its life without a party, just as it will live without a state. Under the conditions of the transitional epoch, the political superstructure plays a *decisive* role. A developed and stable dictatorship of the proletariat presupposes that the party functions in the leading role as a self-acting vanguard, that the proletariat is welded together by means of trade unions, that the toilers are indissolubly bound up with the state through the system of soviets and, finally, that the workers' state is aligned through the International into a fighting unit with the world proletariat. In the meantime, the bureaucracy has strangled the party and the trade unions and the soviets and the Communist International. There is no need to explain here what a gigantic portion of the guilt for the degeneration of the proletarian regime falls upon the international Social Democracy, which is so splotched with crimes and betrayals—and to which, by the way, M. Laurat also belongs.*

But whatever the actual apportionment of the historical responsibility may be, the result remains the same; the strangulation of the party, the soviets and the trade unions implies the political atomization of the proletariat. Social antagonisms instead of being overcome politically are suppressed administratively. These collect under pressure to the same extent that the political resources disappear for solving them normally. The first social shock, external or internal, may throw the

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* This prophet accuses the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists of lacking revolutionary decisiveness. Confusing, in the Austro-Marxist style, revolution with counterrevolution, and the return to bourgeois democracy with the preservation of the proletarian dictatorship, Laurat lectures Rakovsky upon revolutionary struggles. This same gentleman in passing adjudges Lenin to be a "mediocre theoretician." Small wonder! Lenin who formulated in the simplest manner the most complex theoretical conclusions cannot overawe the pretentious philistine who endows his thin and flat generalizations with a cabalistic air.

Layout for a visiting card: "Lucien Laurat: by avocation, a reserve theoretician and strategist of the proletarian revolution . . . for Russia; by profession, assistant to Leon Blum."

The inscription is somewhat long but correct. It is said that this "theoretician" has adherents among the youth. Poor youth!
atomized Soviet society into civil war. The workers, having lost control over the state and economy, may resort to mass strikes as weapons of self-defense. The discipline of the dictatorship would be broken. Under the onslaught of the workers and because of the pressure of economic difficulties, the trusts would be forced to disrupt the planned beginnings and enter into competition with one another. The dissolution of the regime would naturally find its violent and chaotic echo in the village and would inevitably be thrown over into the army. The socialist state would collapse, giving place to the capitalist regime or, more correctly, to capitalist chaos.

The Stalinist press, of course, will reprint our warning analysis as a counterrevolutionary prophecy, or even as the expressed "desire" of the Trotskyites. Toward the newspaper hacks of the apparatus, we have long since had no other feeling save that of silent contempt. In our opinion, the situation is dangerous but not at all hopeless. In any case, it would be an act of abysmal cowardice and of direct betrayal to announce that the greatest revolutionary battle has been lost—before the battle, and without a battle.

Is It Possible To Remove the Bureaucracy "Peacefully"?

If it is true that the bureaucracy has concentrated all power and all the avenues to power in its hands—and it is true—then a question arises of no little importance: how approach the reorganization of the Soviet state? And, is it possible to solve this task with peaceful methods?

We must set down, first of all, as an immutable axiom that this task can be solved only by a revolutionary party. The fundamental historic task is to create the revolutionary party in the USSR from among the healthy elements of the old party and from among the youth. Later we shall deal with the conditions under which it can be solved. Let us assume, however, that such a party is already in existence. Through what ways could it assume power? As early as 1927 Stalin said, addressing the Opposition, "The present bureaucracy can be eliminated only through civil war." This challenge, Bonapartist in spirit, was addressed not to the Left Opposition but to the party. Having concentrated all the levers in its hands, the bureaucracy proclaimed openly that it would not permit the proletariat to raise its head any longer. The subsequent course of events has added great weight to this challenge. After the experiences of the last few years, it would be childish to suppose that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be removed by means of a party or soviet congress. In reality, the last congress of
the Bolshevik Party took place at the beginning of 1923, the Twelfth Party Congress. All subsequent congresses were bureaucratic parades. Today, even such congresses have been discarded. No normal "constitutional" ways remain to remove the ruling clique. The bureaucracy can be compelled to yield power into the hands of the proletarian vanguard only by force.

All the hacks will immediately howl in chorus: 'The "Trotskyites," like Kautsky, are preaching an armed insurrection against the dictatorship of the proletariat. But let us pass on. The question of seizing power will arise as a practical question for the new party only when it will have consolidated around itself the majority of the working class. In the course of such a radical change in the relation of forces, the bureaucracy would become more and more isolated, more and more split. As we know, the social roots of the bureaucracy lie in the proletariat, if not in its active support, then, at any rate, in its "toleration." When the proletariat springs into action, the Stalinist apparatus will remain suspended in midair. Should it still attempt to resist, it will then be necessary to apply against it not the measures of civil war but rather the measures of a police character. In any case, what will be involved is not an armed insurrection against the dictatorship of the proletariat but the removal of a malignant growth upon it.

A real civil war could develop not between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the resurgent proletariat but between the proletariat and the active forces of the counterrevolution. In the event of an open clash between the two mass camps, there cannot even be talk of the bureaucracy playing an independent role. Its polar flanks would be flung to the different sides of the barricade. The fate of the subsequent development would be determined, of course, by the outcome of the struggle. The victory of the revolutionary camp, in any case, is conceivable only under the leadership of a proletarian party, which would naturally be raised to power by victory over the counterrevolution.

The New Party in the USSR

Which is closer: the danger of the collapse of the Soviet power that has been sapped by bureaucratism or the hour of the consolidation of the proletariat around a new party that is capable of saving the October heritage? There is no a priori answer to such a question; the struggle will decide. A major historical test—which may be a war—will determine the relation of forces. It is clear, in any case, that, with the further decline of the world proletarian movement and the further extension of the fascist domination, it is not possible to maintain the Soviet
power for any length of time by means of the internal forces alone. The fundamental condition for the only rock-bottom reform of the Soviet state is the victorious spread of the world revolution.

In the West the revolutionary movement may revive even without a party, but it can conquer only under the leadership of the party. Throughout the entire epoch of the social revolution, that is, for a series of decades, the international revolutionary party has remained the basic instrument of historical progress. Urbahns, by raising the cry that "old forms" are outlived and that something "new" is needed—precisely what?—exposes only the muddle he is in . . . in rather old forms. Trade-union work, under the conditions of "planned" capitalism, and the struggle against fascism and the impending war, will indubitably result in producing new methods and types of fighting organizations. Only, instead of indulging like the Brandlerites in fantasies upon the illegal trade unions, one must study attentively the actual course of the struggle, seizing upon the initiative of the workers themselves, extending and generalizing it. But, first and foremost, a party, i.e., a politically welded core of the proletarian vanguard, is required to accomplish this work. Urbahns's position is subjective: he became disillusioned in the party, after he had successfully wrecked his own "party" on the rocks.

Among the innovators, a few proclaim, we said "long ago" that new parties are needed; now, at last, the "Trotskyites" have also come around to it; in time, they will also understand that the Soviet Union is not a workers' state. Instead of studying the actual historic process, these people are busy making astronomical "discoveries." As early as 1921, Gorter's sect and the German "Communist Workers Party" decided that the Comintern was doomed. Since then, there has been no lack of such announcements (Loriot, Korsch, Souvarine and so forth). However, absolutely nothing came out of these "diagnoses" because they reflected only the subjective disillusion of circles and personalities and not the objective demands of the historical process. It is precisely for this reason that the loud innovators remain on the sidelines right now.*

*By its very nature what has been said above cannot apply to those organizations that have comparatively recently split away from the Social Democracy or that, generally, had their own particular type of development (like the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland) and that naturally refused to link their fate with the fate of the Comintern in the period of its decay. The best of these organizations are now placing themselves under the banner of the new International. Others will follow them tomorrow.
The course of events follows no prearranged route. The Comintern ruined itself by its capitulation before fascism in the eyes of the masses, and not of individuals. But even after the collapse of the Comintern, the Soviet state still exists, true, with its revolutionary authority greatly reduced. One must take the facts as they are given by the actual development and not become capricious and purse one's lips, like Simone Weil; one must not take offense at history nor turn one's back to it.

To build the new parties and the new International, first of all, reliable, principled bases are required and those that stand upon the level of our epoch. We have no illusions concerning the deficiencies and lapses in the theoretical inventory of the Bolshevik-Leninists. However, their ten-years' work has prepared the fundamental theoretical and strategic prerequisites for the building of the new International. Hand in hand with our new allies, we will develop these prerequisites and concretize them upon the basis of criticism in the actual course of the struggle.

**The Fourth International and the USSR**

In the USSR, the core of the new party—in reality, the Bolshevik Party revived under new conditions—will be the group of Bolshevik-Leninists. Even the official Soviet press during the last few months has testified that our adherents have been carrying on their work courageously and not unsuccessfully. But illusions would be out of place here; the party of revolutionary internationalism will be able to free the workers from the decomposing influence of the national bureaucracy only in the event that the international proletarian vanguard will once again appear as a fighting force on the world arena.

From the beginning of the imperialist war, and in developed form since the October Revolution, the Bolshevik Party played the leading role in the world revolutionary struggle. Today this position has been completely lost. This applies not just to the official caricature of a party. The extremely difficult conditions under which the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists work exclude them from the possibility of playing the leading role on the international scale. More than this, the Left Opposition group in the USSR can develop into a new party only as a result of the successful formation and growth of the new International. The revolutionary center of gravity has shifted definitely to the West, where the immediate possibilities of building parties are immeasurably greater.

Under the influence of the tragic experiences of recent years, a great number of revolutionary elements within the proletariat of all countries have gathered who await a clear call
and an unspotted banner. True, the convulsions of the Comi-
tern have almost everywhere impelled new strata of workers
towards the Social Democracy. But precisely this influx of
alarmed masses becomes a mortal danger for reformism; it is
ripping at the seams, disintegrating into factions, and every-
where extruding a revolutionary wing. Such are the immediate
political preconditions for the new International. The corner-
stone has been laid already: it is the declaration of principles
by the four organizations.

The condition for further successes is the correct evaluation
of the world situation, including the class nature of the Soviet
Union. Along this line, the new International will be subjected
to tests from the very first days of its existence. Before it will
be able to reform the Soviet state, it must take upon itself its
defense.

Every political tendency that waves its hand hopelessly at
the Soviet Union, under the pretext of its "nonproletarian"
character, runs the risk of becoming the passive instrument
of imperialism. And from our standpoint, of course, the tragic
possibility is not excluded that the first workers' state, weakened
by its bureaucracy, will fall under the joint blows of its internal
and external enemies. But in the event of this worst possible
variant, a tremendous significance for the subsequent course
of the revolutionary struggle will be borne by the question: where
are those guilty for the catastrophe? Not the slightest
taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists.
In the hour of mortal danger, they must remain on the last
barricade.

Today the rupture of the bureaucratic equilibrium in the
USSR would almost surely serve in favor of the counterrevolu-
tionary forces. However, given a genuine revolutionary Inter-
national, the inevitable crisis of the Stalinist regime would open
the possibility of revival in the USSR. This is our basic course.

Every day the foreign policies of the Kremlin deal new blows
to the world proletariat. Adrift from the masses, the diplomatic
functionaries under the leadership of Stalin trample over the
most elementary revolutionary feelings of the workers of all
countries, first of all, to the greatest detriment of the Soviet
Union itself. But in this, there is nothing unexpected. The for-
ign policies of the bureaucracy supplement the domestic. We
fight as much against the one as the other. But we wage our
struggle from the standpoint of defending the workers' state.

The functionaries of the decomposing Comintern, in different
countries, continue to swear their loyalty to the Soviet Union.
It would be an act of inexcusable stupidity to build anything
upon these oaths. For the majority of these people, the noisy
"defense" of the USSR is not a conviction but a profession. They do not fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat; they mop up the tracks of the Stalinist bureaucracy (see, for example, l'Humanite). In the hour of crisis, the Barbussized Comintern will be capable of offering no greater support to the Soviet Union than the opposition it had offered to Hitler. But it is otherwise with the revolutionary internationalists. Ingloriously hounded for a decade by the bureaucracy, they indefatigably call the workers to the defense of the Soviet Union.

On that day when the new International will demonstrate to the Russian workers not in words but in action that it, and it alone, stands for the defense of the workers' state, the position of the Bolshevik-Leninists inside the Soviet Union will change within twenty-four hours. The new International will offer the Stalinist bureaucracy a united front against the common foe. And if our International represents a force, the bureaucracy will be unable to evade the united front in the moment of danger. What then will remain of the many years' encrustation of lies and slander?

Even in the event of war, the united front with the Stalinist bureaucracy will not imply a "holy alliance" after the manner of bourgeois and Social Democratic parties who during the time of an imperialist brawl suspend mutual criticism in order to better dupe the people thereby. No, even in the event of war, we will maintain a critical irreconcilability toward bureaucratic centrism, which will not be able to cover up its incapacity to lead a genuine revolutionary war.

The problem of the world revolution as well as the problem of the Soviet Union may be summed up in one and the same brief formula: The Fourth International.
TO DISPEL MISUNDERSTANDINGS

(October 2, 1933)

Editors
The New Leader

Dear Comrades:

In the Daily Worker of September 14, I found the letter of Comrade C.A. Smith, who defends the ILP from the accusation that its delegates have participated in Paris in the building of a Two-and-a-Half International. I have no basis whatsoever to interfere in the essence of this polemic. I must point out, however, that from the letter of Comrade Smith the conclusion might be drawn that in Paris there was actually laid the foundation for a Two-and-a-Half International, although without the participation of the ILP. I consider it necessary to dispel any misunderstandings that readers of The New Leader might have on this score.

It is true that certain organizations that occupy an intermediary position between the Second and the Third International, such as the Norwegian Labor Party, the French PUP, the Italian Maximalists and others, participated in the Paris conference. But precisely all these organizations have expressed themselves against the new International. For the creation of the new International, not a Two-and-a-Half but a Fourth International, were the following organizations: the International Left Opposition, the Socialist Workers Party (SAP) of Germany and two Dutch parties, the Independent Socialist Party and the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

I urge the readers of The New Leader, as well as, however, the readers of the Daily Worker, to acquaint themselves with the declaration of the named organizations "On the Necessity and Principles of a New International." Here I shall quote only one paragraph (no. 8) out of eleven.

"While ready to cooperate with all the organizations, groups and factions that are actually developing from reformism or
bureaucratic centrism (Stalinism) towards revolutionary Marxist policy, the undersigned, at the same time, declare that the new International cannot tolerate any conciliation towards reformism or centrism. The necessary unity of the working-class movement can be attained not by the blurring of reformist and revolutionary conceptions nor by adaptation to the Stalinist policy but only by combating the policies of both bankrupt Internationals. To remain equal to its task, the new International must not permit any deviation from revolutionary principles in the questions of insurrection, proletarian dictatorship, soviet form of the state, etc."

In conclusion I allow myself to say that the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninist) is much further removed from centrism (that is, Two-and-a-Halfism) than the present Barbussized Comintern.

With revolutionary greetings,
L. Trotsky
Dear Comrades:

I received the copy of your letter of September 5 and allow myself to express a few additional considerations on the question of entry into the ILP.

1. We do not exaggerate the significance of the ILP. In politics as in the physical world, everything is relative. In comparison with your small group, the ILP is a big organization. Your small lever is insufficient to move the Labour Party but can have a big effect on the ILP.

2. It seems to me that you are inclined to look at the ILP through the eyes of the Stalinist party, that is, to exaggerate the number of petty-bourgeois elements and minimize the proletarian elements of the party. But if we should estimate that the workers make up only 10 percent (an obvious underestimation since you ignore the [illegible words], 147 even then you will get one thousand revolutionary-minded workers, and in reality many more.

3. The jump from a thousand to ten thousand is much easier than the jump from forty to one thousand.

4. You speak of the advantages of influencing the ILP from the outside. Taken on a wide historical scale, your arguments are irrefutable, but there are unique, exceptional circumstances that we must know how to make use of by exceptional means. Today the revolutionary workers of the ILP still hold on to their party. The perspective of joining a group of forty, the principles of which are little known to them, can by no means appeal to them. If within the next year they should grow disappointed with the ILP, they will go not to you but to the Stalinists, who will break these workers' necks.

If you enter the ILP to work for the Bolshevik transformation of the party (that is, of its revolutionary kernel), the workers will look upon you as upon fellow workers, comrades,
and not as upon adversaries who want to split the party from outside.

5. Had it been a question of a formed, homogeneous party with a stable apparatus, entry in it would not only be useless but fatal. But the ILP is altogether in a different state. Its apparatus is not homogeneous and, therefore, permits great freedom to different currents. The revolutionary rank and file of the party eagerly seek solutions. Remaining as an independent group, you represent, in the eyes of the workers, only small competitors to the Stalinists. Inside the party you can much more successfully insulate the workers against Stalinism.

6. I believe (and this is my personal opinion) that even if you should give up your special organ you will be able to use to advantage the press of the ILP, *The New Leader* and the discussion organ. The American *Militant* as well as the *International Bulletin* could well supplement your work.

7. Should all the members of your group enter the ILP? This is a purely practical question (if your members who work inside the Communist Party of Great Britain have a wide field for their activity, they can remain there longer, although I personally believe that the useful effect of their work would be, under the present conditions, a few times greater in the ILP).

8. Whether you will enter the ILP as a faction or as individuals is a purely formal question. In essence, you will, of course, be a faction that submits to common discipline. Before entering the ILP you make a public declaration: "Our views are known. We base ourselves on the principles of Bolshevism-Leninism and have formed ourselves as a part of the International Left Opposition. Its ideas we consider as the only basis on which the new International can be built. We are entering the ILP to convince the members of that party in daily practical work of the correctness of our ideas and of the necessity of the ILP joining the initiators of the new International."

In what sense could such a declaration lower the prestige of your group? This is not clear to me.

Of course, the International Secretariat did not intend to and could not intend to force you by a bare order to enter the ILP. If you yourselves will not be convinced of the usefulness of such a step, your entry will be to no purpose. The step is an exceptionally responsible one; it is necessary to weigh and consider it well. The aim of the present letter, as well as of the foregoing ones, is to help in your discussion.\textsuperscript{148}

With best comradely greetings,

L. Trotsky
Dear Comrade W.,

1. In my last letter I raised a certain reproach against you—that you did not differentiate between the NAP "as it is" and the NAP "as it should be." And I said that this was an incorrect way of looking at things. In making this criticism I relied on the following important sentence in your August 23 letter: "From a revolutionary standpoint it is perfectly clear that the NAP in its present form and with its present politics is useless for the new International" (my emphasis—L. T.). But since you signed a common declaration with the NAP, which set the revolutionary regeneration of the workers' movement as its goal, it must be assumed that you are counting on the NAP in its future form with its future politics, that is—not with what exists but with what you would like to have exist. I will be only too happy if I have misunderstood you. But the common declaration with the NAP still lacks an explanation and a justification.

2. Further in your letter of August 23 you maintain that the uselessness of the NAP for the new International "is not yet at all clear to many valuable people in the ILP, within the NAP, and probably this goes for the OSP in Holland as well. . . ." Quite possible. But it is precisely through an alliance with the NAP on questions of principle that you lead these "valuable people" astray. Since the Social Democratic nature of the NAP is "not yet at all clear" to them, you must explain it to them. This is what I have just done. You raise this effort toward clarification as a reproach against me. You call it "unwise." From a Marxist point of view, wisdom is what corresponds to reality and its tendencies of development. For that reason we hold to the motto: "Say what is."

3. I have just been informed that the NAP has left the IAG. This fact—if it is true—can only strengthen the authority of those who did not want to issue common declarations of principle with the NAP. Even if the report is not true, the NAP will only add validity to our evaluation by its whole future conduct. Collaboration with the NAP not because I consider
it worthy of an alliance but because others retain this prejudice, that is the fatal politics of continual adaptation to the right.

4. In your letter of September 4 you introduce a long citation from your August 22 letter to the SAP leadership concerning the NAP. This very fine citation characterizes the NAP as by nature a Social Democratic party that tolerates the bourgeois government and thus betrays and deceives the workers. Correct, good, straight to the point! But you only say this in a private letter to the party leadership. Why haven't you said the same thing publicly? Because, if you had publicly expressed your real thoughts on the NAP—which in my opinion is the duty of every revolutionary—your ties with the NAP would seem incomprehensible and impermissible. You've quoted to me from Brandler: "We are politicians, not seekers after truth." By this Brandler means that our public declarations do not have to be at all in keeping with our principled convictions (as for example with respect to the Stalinists). In other words—we can deceive the workers for their own good. This is pure casuistry, a philosophy for bureaucrats. From our conversation I am absolutely convinced that you have not adopted this contemptible philosophy. But I must call your attention to the fact that there is a huge gap between your evaluation of the NAP and your public relationship to it, a gap which can have dire consequences for the SAP.

5. You have said several times that there is nothing in the Declaration of Seven (together with the NAP) that we cannot defend. Dear friend! That is a purely legalistic—I might say a petitifogger's—way of looking at the question, not a political or revolutionary way. In this case it is not a question of what the declaration says, but of what it leaves unsaid. Even the correct things it says only serve to cause confusion because they create the impression that there is agreement between the SAP and the NAP on the most burning questions of the international workers' movement. You write to the party leadership: "The NAP is for the unification of the Second and Third Internationals, we are for the creation of a new International, a communist International. This difference cannot be overlooked. Sooner or later it must be brought out."

But your joint resolution overlooks this difference quite deliberately, i.e., puts a brake on revolutionary development instead of furthering it.

6. It seemed sectarian to many comrades that we wanted to hammer home to all and sundry the falseness in principle of
the Anglo-Russian Committee. But I must tell you that you are presently pursuing a policy toward the NAP that is the same as the Stalinists' policy toward the General Council of the British trade unions. In a specific situation one can conclude a very specific agreement with a specific goal even with the likes of the General Council riffraff. But the Stalinists fabricated meaningless resolutions that were acceptable to Citrine, Purcell, etc., because they placed no obligations on them. These resolutions, meetings, etc., were of the greatest service to the General Council riffraff. Their friendship with Stalin-Tomsky provided these highly placed strikebreakers with indispensable cover during the greatest crises they had to go through: the general strike and the coal miners' strike of 1926. Thus documents and testimonials that, formally speaking, may be unassailable—although they are meaningless from a revolutionary standpoint—are ripe for grandiose historical crimes. For this reason I think the comrades of the SAP have the greatest interest in diligently studying this historical parallel.

7. You refer to the fact that the Left Opposition has a reputation as a "disruptive element" as it is and that we must try not to substantiate this bad reputation even further. The fact that the Left Opposition desires to disrupt the opportunist organizations is quite correct and I confidently assume that the SAP pursues the same goal. Many found the conduct of our Paris delegation "disruptive." Your know my opinion: I credit them with far too much lenience. But this is not the most important point. You will grant, I hope, that without the Left Opposition the Declaration of Four would not have come about. And this declaration is a major political fact, not disruptive but creative revolutionary work.

If we really want to make the Declaration of Four the point of departure for major constructive action, then we cannot at the same time set ourselves the goal of regenerating the workers' movement together with the NAP. These two acts are mutually exclusive. The workers need clarity, now more than ever.

I would find it extremely advisable if a discussion were instituted among the comrades of both organizations on the basis of our exchange of letters, since we do not polemicize for our own satisfaction but rather in order to contribute to the political education of broader circles.

With my best and most sincere regards,

Yours, L. T.
A FALSE UNDERSTANDING OF
THE NEW ORIENTATION\textsuperscript{150}

(October 8, 1933)

To the International Secretariat

Dear Comrades:

On the eve of the conference of the [French] League, I addressed a personal letter to Comrade Witte in which I tried to restrain Comrade Witte from further movements on the path he is traveling, which can bring no good to the International Opposition, to the Greek section or to Comrade Witte personally. I recalled to Comrade Witte that his splitting conspiracy in the Paris League would inevitably have an international repercussion and would reflect badly particularly on the Greek section.

If he engages in an open and sharp struggle, the two sections will inevitably defend their point of view before all the sections included. The manner of his advance will make it quite obvious to the overwhelming majority of the sections, who have carried on the struggle against Landau, Mill, Well\textsuperscript{150} and others, that it is a reproduction of the struggle of these people, only in a worse form. In the last analysis, it will reduce itself so that Comrade Witte, after suffering a defeat in the League and in our entire international organization, will inevitably endeavor to oppose the Greek section to our whole international organization. This attempt will inevitably lead, by the very logic of the situation, to the disintegration of the Greek section and to its transformation into a national section of Witte's. This analysis, a perspective briefly formulated in my letter, is interpreted by Witte in his answer as an attempt on my part "to eliminate" the Greek section. I do not think that Witte understands the meaning of my letter. His interpretation is meant, not for me, nor for the International Opposition generally, but for the Greek section. In other words, Witte is already completely taken up with counterposing the
Greek section to the International Opposition and does not hesitate to employ disloyal insinuations.

Although Witte speaks of his Bolshevik "orthodoxy" in his letter, I personally, on the basis of all the experience with Witte, have come to the conclusion that, although he has assimilated this or that theoretical or strategical formula of the Left Opposition, he is very alien to the methods of Bolshevism. He has manifested this particularly in a letter written to me in which, attributing to me the monstrous attempt "to eliminate" the Greek section, he writes pathetically: "While the Left Opposition orients itself toward the left socialists, we are intolerant and hostile toward the Bolshevik organization in Greece." In other words, Witte develops Giacomi's theme: we are making a turn to the right, and that is why we are compelled to break with the real Bolsheviks.

I do not believe it would be worth the effort to take time out to answer this assertion, if behind it were not hidden the radically false understanding of our whole new orientation. Witte probably believes that it means more conciliatory relations towards centrism, Menshevism, etc. In reality this circumstance of the left socialist organizations approaching us obliges us to be doubly vigilant of the strictest principled tenacity and internal discipline; it is only on this condition that our less numerous cadres can have a healthy revolutionary influence on the left-centrist parties. Thus the new orientation demands closer cohesion of our own ranks and more intransigence towards vacillations of all kinds, of Menshevik organizational methods and personal intrigues and insinuations.

The response of Comrade Witte shows that my attempt to appeal to his revolutionary responsibility was a mistake. I am correcting this by bringing this whole episode officially to the attention of the International Secretariat as the leading body directing our international organization.

G. G. [Leon Trotsky]
To the Belgian Section

Dear Comrades,

It is with great interest that I read through Number 10 of your internal bulletin, which confirms the report of the negotiations with the League of Communist Internationalists. I rejoiced at the accuracy with which my friends put the questions. On the other hand, the words of Comrade Hennaut produced a most unfortunate impression on me. As he is now, he represents at least a complete model of theoretical and political confusion. There is not a single question to which he contributes anything but doubts, hesitations and fears. This is the most fatal condition for a man who wishes to be a revolutionary!

The first four congresses of the Comintern! But in them there was "something" erroneous, since the results have been so lamentable. Just what was wrong? Hennaut does not know. In fact, the fault is entirely on the part of Comrade Hennaut. He thinks that the fate of the Comintern is determined not by the struggle of living social forces but by some original "error" that has to be discovered—as if it were a matter of mathematical calculation. Why not go further and say: three Internationals were born of the teachings of Marx, and all three were born to collapse—therefore we must find a "fundamental error" in Marx. We can go even further and say that in spite of science people continue to suffer and undergo calamities; it is clear there is some "fundamental error" in science. The problem is approached not historically or dialectically but dogmatically, in the spirit of the Catholic Church, which explains all human ills by original sin. Souvarine's theory about the Comintern is also the theory of original sin. And Hennaut—alas!—has become the disciple of the sterile scholastic that Souvarine is.

According to the same Hennaut (that is to say, Souvarine), our political line in Germany was wrong from start to finish. It is necessary to have a fair amount of impertinence to make such an assertion. And wherein lies our error? Not in our
Doubts, Hesitations and Fears

analysis, nor in our prognosis, nor in our directives, but in the fact that we called on the Communist workers to bring pressure on their party to force it onto the path of correct policies. Instead of this, we should have said to the workers: Don't waste your efforts; it is of no consequence; the Comintern is sunk. At the same time, Hennaut thinks: The time was not ripe to create the new International. Then what practical proposal were we to make to the German workers—to reject the old International without building a new one? Then we could all go to sleep. Our error—these pedants, divorced from reality, see error in the fact that, without hiding anything from the workers, we did not discourage them but be-stirred ourselves to help them make the most out of the situation. Any strike leader would act in the same way. Otherwise, he is no leader, but an untrustworthy capitulator! Hennaut thinks the road to health is to start a "discussion" with Souvarine, the Bordigists, Urbahns and other hopeless groups. As if this discussion had not been conducted during the past years, as if it had not undergone the test of events, as if a round-table discussion at a "conference" could add anything to political experience already clarified by a long theoretical discussion!

We must see, says Hennaut, if there is not "something" correct in Souvarine and all the "communist" groups and group-lets. Hennaut himself cannot make up his mind to say clearly and simply just what he has found about them that is correct. He recommends that we "search." But all our daily labor is to search out for each question the most exact answer. We have elaborated our methods; we have our answers; we have our criticisms of other points of view. Hennaut does not grant this enormous collective labor his approval, passes by all that we have done and proposes to busy himself with "researches" and "discussion" as if we were just born today. A sterile position, entirely impregnated with the spirit of Souvarinism!

It is particularly naive to say that our participation in the Paris conference, when we were "seated at the same table" with the PUPists and others, represents an "opportunistic error." Thus, for Hennaut, what unites is not Marxist principles, but—the table! He does not say a word about the contents of our declaration and our resolution that received four signatures. He forgets or he cannot understand that we have preserved complete freedom of action and of criticism of our allies. The fact that the SAP and the OSP voted for the resolution of the seven without reservations and consequently entirely wrongly shows surely that our allies have not arrived at the clarity indispens-
able for Marxists. But were we not the first to herald this error in our press? Through joint labors as well as through criticism we can help our allies to attain the necessary clarity.

Hennaut's arguments against the struggle for the Fourth International are no less false and removed from life than the rest of his rationalizations. "For the creation of the Third International," he says, "the war and the Russian Revolution were needed." Many repeat this formula without reflection and without reservation. The war did not facilitate but, on the contrary, rendered enormously more difficult the work of the revolution, especially internationally. That is why all skeptics like Hennaut considered the slogan for the Third International "inopportune" and even "absurd" during the war. Now, to a certain extent, fascism plays the role played by the war in 1914-18, all the more since fascism is preparing a new war. But—says Hennaut—to create the Third International the Russian Revolution was needed. A remarkable discovery! But did the Russian Revolution fall from heaven? For the October victory of the proletariat, the Bolshevik Party was necessary, permeated not with the spirit of Stalin-Kamenev (March 1917) but with the spirit of Lenin. In other words, it was necessary for Lenin, even at the beginning of the war under the most difficult and unfavorable circumstances, to begin the struggle for the Third International without reckoning with the skeptics, those who hinder and confuse everything. The creation of the Communist International took place not at the First Congress in 1919 (that was a pure formality) but in the preliminary processes of preparation, under the flying colors of the Third International. The deductions for our immediate tasks flow automatically from this historical analogy.

By this letter I do not in the least intend to interfere in your negotiations. If Hennaut's group, or a part of it, joins with our section, I can only rejoice. But Hennaut's idea that the condition of future success is the reunion of all the oppositional wreckage from the Third International is radically wrong. It is necessary to weigh and appraise this wreckage, not by names and pretensions, but by actual theoretical and political content. Anyone who has something to say does not wait for a general conference of unknown date but publishes his ideas in the form of a program, of theses, articles and discourses. Whoever appeals to a future conference to save him, a conference that is to find "something," discover "something," only demonstrates that he has no ideas whatsoever. I have no doubt that this is as plain to you as it is to me.

With warmest good wishes for your success,

G. Gourov [Leon Trotsky]
ON THE SAAR QUESTION\textsuperscript{155}

(Published November 4, 1933)

The stand of the official [Communist] party as well as the KPO (Brandlerites) on the Saar question\textsuperscript{156} appears to me the cowardice of pseudoradicalism, a by-no-means rare species of cowardice. Naturally we must come out for a Soviet Saar, that is, teaching the need for the conquest of power. The date of this conquest has not, however, been fixed anywhere, while the date of the referendum has been fixed quite precisely in the Versailles Treaty. That means that the party that fights for a Soviet Saar owes the workers an answer to the question: how should they vote in the year 1935?

To rally to Hitlerite Germany in practice, i.e., through the referendum, means, theoretically speaking, to put national mysticism above the class interest and psychologically to conduct a really cur-like policy.

Naturally, only traitors can demand annexation at present, for that means to sacrifice the most concrete and vital question of the German workers in the Saar territory to the abstract, national factor.
OUR PRESENT TASKS

(November 7, 1933)

The victory of National Socialism in Germany has brought about in other countries the strengthening not of communist but of democratic tendencies. In an especially clear form we see this in the examples of England and Norway. But the same process is undoubtedly taking place in a series of other countries as well. It is very possible that the Social Democracy in Belgium in particular will in the nearest future go through a period of a new political ascent. That reformism is the worst brake on historic development and that the Social Democracy is doomed to failure—this is ABC to us. But the ABC alone does not suffice. In the general historic decline of reformism, just as in the decline of capitalism, periods of temporary rise are inevitable. The candle burns most brightly before it goes out. The formula, either fascism or communism, is absolutely correct, but only in the final historic analysis. The destructive policy of the Comintern, supported by the authority of the workers' state, not only has compromised revolutionary methods but also has given to the Social Democracy, defiled by crimes and treacheries, the opportunity of raising up again over the working class the banner of democracy as the banner of salvation.

Tens of millions of workers are alarmed to the very depth of their hearts by the danger of fascism. Hitler showed them again what the destruction of working-class organizations and of elementary democratic rights means. The Stalinists kept on asserting for the last couple of years that there is no difference between fascism and democracy, that fascism and Social Democracy are twins. Through the tragic experience of Germany, the workers of the whole world convinced themselves of the criminal absurdity of such assertions. Hence, the further decline of the Stalinist parties, under conditions exceptionally favorable for the revolutionary wing. Hence, also, the desire of the workers to hold on to their mass organizations and their
Our Present Tasks

democratic rights. Thanks to the ten-year criminal policy of the Stalinized Comintern, the political problem presents itself to the consciousness of the many million working-class masses not in the form of a decisive alternative: the dictatorship of fascism or the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in the form of a more primitive and vague alternative: fascism or democracy.

We must take the resultant political situation as it is, without creating any illusions. Of course, we remain always true to ourselves and to our banner; always and under all conditions we say openly who we are, what we want and where we are going. But we cannot force our program upon the masses mechanically. The experience of the Stalinists on this score is sufficiently eloquent. Instead of coupling their locomotive to the train of the working class and accelerating its movement forward, the Stalinists set their locomotive with a loud whistle toward the train of the proletariat and sometimes even collide with it, so that only scrap is left of the small locomotive. The consequences of such a policy are evident: in some countries the proletariat has fallen a defenseless victim of fascism; in others it has been thrown back to the positions of reformism.

There can be no thought, of course, of a serious and protracted regeneration of reformism. It is really a question not of reformism in the wide sense of the word but of the instinctive desire of the workers to safeguard their organizations and their "rights." From this purely defensive and purely conservative position, the working class, in the process of struggle, can and must go over to a revolutionary offensive along the whole line. The offensive, in its turn, must make the masses more susceptible to great revolutionary tasks and consequently to our program. But to achieve this we must go through the period opening up before us together with the masses, in their first ranks, without dissolving in them but also without detaching ourselves from them.

The Stalinists (and their miserable imitators, the Brandlerites) declared that democratic slogans are prohibited for all the countries of the world: for India, which did not as yet accomplish its liberating national revolution; for Spain, where the proletarian vanguard must yet find the ways for transforming the creeping bourgeois revolution into a socialist one; for Germany, where the crushed and atomized proletariat is deprived of all that it achieved during the last century; for Belgium, the proletariat of which does not take its eyes off its eastern borders and, suppressing a deep mistrust, supports the party of democratic "pacifism" (Vandervelde and Co.).
The Stalinists deduce the bare renunciation of democratic slogans in a purely abstract way from the general characteristic of our epoch, as an epoch of imperialism and of socialist revolution.

Thus presented, the question contains not even a grain of dialectics! Democratic slogans and illusions cannot be abolished by decree. It is necessary that the masses go through them and outlive them in the experience of battles. The task of the proletariat consists in coupling its locomotive to the train of the masses. It is necessary to find the dynamic elements in the present defensive position of the working class; we must make the masses draw conclusions from their own democratic logic; we must widen and deepen the channels of the struggle. And on this road, quantity passes over into quality.

Let us recall once more that in 1917, when the Bolsheviks were immeasurably stronger than any one of the present sections of the Comintern, they continued to demand the earliest convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the lowering of the voting age, the right of suffrage for soldiers, the election of officers, etc., etc. The main slogan of the Bolsheviks, "All Power to the Soviets," meant from the beginning of April up to September 1917, all power to the Social Democracy (Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries). When the reformists entered into a governmental coalition with the bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks put forth the slogan, "Down with the Capitalist Ministers." This signified again: Workers, force the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries to take the whole power into their hands! The political experience of the only successful proletarian revolution is perverted and falsified by the Stalinists beyond recognition. Our task, here also, consists in reestablishing the facts and drawing from them the necessary conclusions for the present.

We Bolsheviks consider that the real salvation from fascism and war lies in the revolutionary conquest of power and the establishing of the proletarian dictatorship. You socialist workers do not agree to this road. You hope not only to save what has been gained but also to move forward along the road of democracy. Good! As long as we have not convinced you and attracted you to our side, we are ready to follow this road with you to the end. But we demand that you carry on the struggle for democracy not in words but in deeds. Everybody admits—each in his own way—that in the present conditions a "strong government" is necessary. Well, then, make your party open up a real struggle for a strong democratic government. For this it is necessary, first of all, to sweep away
all the remnants of the feudal state. It is necessary to give suffrage to all men and women who have reached their eighteenth birthday, also to the soldiers in the army. Full concentration of legislative and executive power in the hands of one chamber! Let your party open up a serious campaign under these slogans; let it arouse millions of workers; let it conquer power through the drive of the masses. This, at any rate, would be a serious attempt of struggle against fascism and war. We Bolsheviks would retain the right to explain to the workers the insufficiency of democratic slogans; we could not take upon ourselves the political responsibility for the Social Democratic government; but we would honestly help you in the struggle for such a government; together with you we would repel all attacks of bourgeois reaction. More than that, we would bind ourselves before you not to undertake any revolutionary actions that go beyond the limits of democracy (real democracy) so long as the majority of the workers has not consciously placed itself on the side of revolutionary dictatorship.

For the coming period, this should be our attitude toward socialist and nonparty workers. Having taken, together with them, the initial positions of democratic defense, we must immediately impart to this defense a serious proletarian character. We must firmly say to ourselves, we shall not allow that which occurred in Germany! It is necessary that every class-conscious worker imbue himself thoroughly with the thought of not allowing fascism to raise its head. It is necessary systematically and persistently to encircle the hearths of fascism (newspapers, clubs, fascist barracks) with a proletarian blockade. We must make fighting agreements with political, trade-union, cultural, sport, cooperative and other working-class organizations for common actions in defense of the institutions of proletarian democracy. The more serious and thoughtful, the less noisy and boastful the character of the work, the sooner will we gain the confidence of the proletariat, beginning with the youth, and the surer will it lead to victory.

That is the way I picture the basic characteristics of a truly Marxist policy for the coming period. In different countries of Europe, this policy will, of course, assume a different form, depending on national circumstances. To follow attentively all the changes in the situation and all the shifts in the consciousness of the masses, and to put forth at every new stage slogans flowing from the whole situation—in this consists the task of revolutionary leadership.
In her open letter, published by the newspaper Unser Wort, Maria Reese spoke the harsh and bitter truth about the party to which she belonged until very recently. The German agency of the Comintern bureaucracy understood nothing, foresaw nothing, prepared nothing. It replaced revolutionary work with hollow phrases and boastfulness. It fooled the workers and the party year in and year out. The Central Committee fooled even its own apparatus. People who occupied responsible posts in the party, like Torgler, head of the parliamentary fraction, or Maria Reese herself, deputy of the Reichstag, believed honestly to the last moment that the Central Committee had its plans, that it had prepared the necessary fighting forces, that the Comintern knew whither it was leading the German workers. With Hitler's coming to power, and especially with the burning of the Reichstag by Goering's agents, the revolutionary illusions of the best elements of the party fell into dust. The Central Committee left the party to the mercy of fate, without leadership, without slogans, even without explanations. Another such treachery on the part of the leaders is unknown in the history of the revolutionary struggle. It is not hard to imagine the dark despair of the betrayed masses and the frightful helplessness of the party apparatus.

The emigrant activity of Muenzenberg, Heckert and Co., false reports, lying correspondence, hollow and sham congresses intended to throw dust into the eyes, could not but appear to Maria Reese as an unbearable contrast to the inner events in Germany. Maria Reese demanded a discussion on what occurred. She tried to obtain a change from the policy of masquerades to that of the revolutionary mobilization of the world proletariat against fascism. At her every attempt she met just a blank wall. Reese then drew all the conclusions for herself; she broke with the Comintern and placed herself under the banner of the Fourth International.

After that, the Stalinist bureaucracy, which had nothing more
to lose politically, "expelled" Reese from the Comintern. But also into this act these bankrupts introduced all the traits of vengeful and lying impotence characteristic of them. The main accusation against Comrade Reese consists in the fact that she joined the camp of "counterrevolutionary Trotskyism." This estimation is not a new one! The "revolutionary" work of Stalinists consists in systematic aid to Chiang Kai-shek, Pilsudski, Citrine, Wels, Hitler. According to this logic, Marxist criticism of these crimes is "counterrevolutionary" work. But this is not all. The resolution adopted in the name of the German Communist Party, that is, by a few bankrupts hiding in emigration, accuses Maria Reese of "rendering aid to the government of Hitler and thus delivering to the latter party members and sympathizers." The awakened German proletariat will brand this base accusation on the forehead of the accusers!

Maria Reese is "expelled" for her courageous open letter and only after the appearance of this letter, that is, after she herself broke with the Comintern. To call the bankrupts openly by the name of bankrupts is the direct duty of a true and sincere revolutionary. If Reese's letter can have any influence on the fate of the Communists persecuted by Hitler, and particularly on the course of the Reichstag trial, it is only as invaluable testimony in favor of the accused. From the letter it is clear even to the blind how far removed the official party was from the thought of insurrection, from the preparation for an insurrection and, consequently, from such "signals" to insurrection as the Reichstag fire!

The Stalinist bureaucracy takes revenge for the fact that a responsible comrade who found herself until very recently in its ranks has openly and honestly spoken the truth about the leadership, the regime and the practices of the Comintern. The bureaucracy forgives cowardice, forgery, treachery and betrayals under one condition: to bring no tales out of school. For these people, the laws of mutual responsibility have long replaced the laws of revolution and of Marxism. The fight for inflated personal prestige, for posts and for an assured livelihood have pushed to the background the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. Maria Reese convinced herself of it on the tragic experience of the German proletariat. Together with her, thousands and tens of thousands of betrayed revolutionaries have gone through the same experience. In jails and concentration camps, they are drawing a balance from the catastrophe they lived through. The letter of Maria Reese calls them to courageous revolutionary conclusions. It is the duty of every revolutionary in the whole world to publish, reprint and circulate the letter of Maria Reese in all the languages in which the exploited and the revolutionaries speak.
Q. What is the explanation of the crisis, and what effect will it have on American life?

A. All theories that attempt to explain the crisis by temporary or incidental causes, such as the result of war, nationalist epidemics, false tariff or monetary policies, etc., I consider absolutely false. All these facts and processes may, of course, sharpen the crisis but they themselves have only a derivative character. The war itself was an attempt, first of all, on the part of German capitalism to forestall the approaching colossal crisis. The primary cause of the present crisis lies in the fact that the productive forces of modern society are in an irreconcilable contradiction with private ownership of the means of production as well as with the borders of national states. The productive forces demand a planned organization on an all-European and then on a world scale. Without this and until this, conjunctural changes are, of course, possible and inevitable; but the first improvement in the conjuncture will lead soon to a new and perhaps an even more painful crisis. The gist of the matter lies in the fact that we are faced now not simply with one of the conjunctural crises of the normal capitalist cycle. No, we have entered into the social crisis of capitalism as a system. All attempts to refute or gloss over this fact are useless.

Q. Will inflation bring prosperity comparable to that of 1929?

A. No.

Q. Is a planned economy possible in a democracy?

A. It is not a question of "democracy" but of private ownership of the means of production. A system of planned economy is incompatible with a system of private ownership.

Q. It is possible to prolong the life of the capitalist system by limiting profits?

A. With the aid of this and similar measures it is possible
perhaps to prolong the convulsions of the capitalist system but not to bring back its viability.

Q. Is it possible to preserve the principle of "free competition" in a planned economy?
A. The answer follows from the above.

Q. Do you consider the "five-year plan" a success?
A. We cannot speak of a complete success. The contradictions of Soviet economy are very great and in some respects have even sharpened. But only the blind cannot see the gigantic force of the planned method based on nationalized property.

Q. Do you consider the USSR a communist country?
A. The USSR is as yet neither a communist nor a socialist state. It is a transition system from capitalism to socialism. Between it and socialism lies a long and difficult road.

Q. What has been the prime international contribution of the USSR?
A. The practical demonstration that successful economic work is possible without the capitalist class.

Q. What has been its biggest mistake?
A. The mistakes of the Soviet government are numerous. I have frequently criticized them in the press but would be at a loss to indicate the biggest one. Despite these mistakes, the USSR remains, however, the herald of a new social system and a serious peace factor.

Q. Can Hitler last?
A. Hitler must be overthrown. It is impossible to do this without a revolution. It is necessary that the masses recover from the defeat. It is necessary that a new revolutionary party place itself at the head of the masses. All this demands a certain time.

Q. Why does Hitler persecute the Jews?
A. This is the sole thing left him as far as "solving" the internal problems is concerned. Defending capitalism which he has promised to destroy, Hitler is forced to distract the attention of the masses from social questions to national and race problems.

Q. Is German National Socialism an international menace?
A. Most certainly.

Q. Do you expect war soon? Will it involve America?
A. A great war (I do not speak of a small, preventive war) is hardly possible in Europe in less than three or four years, which is the time needed for the complete rearmament of Germany. At the expiration of this period, war will even become inevitable. In the Far East where the Japanese war camarilla completely lost its head, war is possible at any moment. I consider that the rapprochement between the United States
and the Soviet Union should bring the militarists of Tokyo to reason and in this sense it is a factor of peace.

Q. Do you, in general, feel optimistic in regard to the course that Western history is taking? What role does America play?

A. The history of the whole humanity, also that of the United States, is approaching a turning point. Violent convulsions and great difficulties lie ahead, perhaps even a temporary decline of culture. But I do not doubt that humanity will finally raise itself to new heights.

Q. Do you think that the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is a question of years or of generations?

A. Of generations.
HITLER THE PACIFIST\textsuperscript{164}

(November 23, 1933)

Hitler wants peace. His speeches and his interviews on this theme are constructed on an ancient formula: war is incapable of solving a single question; war threatens the extermination of the superior races; war brings the ruin of civilization in its wake. The classic argumentation of the pacifists for hundreds of years! All the more consoling is the fact that the chancellor of the Reich [Hitler] has already succeeded in convincing several foreign journalists of his absolute sincerity. It is true that another pacifist, whose sincerity is not open to the least suspicion, Carl Ossietzki,\textsuperscript{165} can ask why he continues to remain in a concentration camp, if the leader of the present government applies his fundamental theme assiduously, if not with very much talent. But Ossietzki is imprisoned for the very reason that he should not be able to pose embarrassing questions.

The arguments of Hitler are convincing in the degree that they have volume. All the ministers, all the orators, all the journalists swear that the Third Reich has been called into being to realize the fraternity of people. If all of National Socialist Germany is learning to handle arms, it is only in order the better to become impregnated with hatred for them. Even von Papen, who, as early as May 13, still preached that the true German ought to die young on the field of battle and not from hardening of the arteries, does not cease to repeat now that there is nothing more worthy than to give up the ghost peacefully, surrounded by one's grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The peoples of Europe passionately want the preservation of peace. No wonder that they lend an ear full of hope to the bulky argumentation from Berlin. It is not very easy to dispel their doubts. Many are asking: and what is to be thought, for instance, of Hitler's autobiography, which is entirely built upon the irreconcilability of the interests of France and Ger-
many? An appealing explanation has already been given: the autobiography was written in prison, when the author's nerves were disordered, and it is only through an obvious negligence of the minister of propaganda that this disturbing book continues to this day to serve as the basis for national education.

Once the question of "equality of rights" is determined in favor of the Third Reich, Hitler will prepare the publication of a new, more reassuring edition. If the book has been called up to now *My Struggle*, the principal object of *My Struggle* being the Versailles Treaty, in the future it is very probable that it will be called *My Peace* and that they will append to it a report of the National Socialist physicians attesting that the nerves of the author are in better order. And the Leipzig trial shows that the medico-legal expert testimony of the Nazis merits unbounded confidence. If in this world there existed only sincerity and love of peace, life would probably be made an eternal delight. But, unfortunately, side by side with these virtues, stupidity and credulity still live on. Who will have to pay for them?

The author of these lines has already at one time attempted to draw the reader's attention to a remarkable document, the "Open Letter" from Hitler to the then chancellor of the Reich, von Papen. Unfortunately, our weak voice obviously has not reached its destination. The "Open Letter" has not become, as we had hoped, the brief of all editors and all diplomatic chancelleries. And it is well deserving of that. The recently published political documents of German propaganda are also, incontrovertably, very instructive. But they have the drawback of being secrets. One can always suspect a falsification.

The "Open Letter" is not a secret document. This pamphlet was officially published by the Nazi Party on October 16, 1932, three months before Hitler's seizure of power. His nervous system by that time should have succeeded, we must believe, in completely recovering from the tests of 1923. Hitler already felt himself almost in the government. There remained only the hurdling of the last obstacles. The ruling classes looked towards him hopefully, but not without fear. They were particularly apprehensive of any adventure in "romantic" chauvinism. The aim of the "Open Letter" was to assure the possessing classes, the bureaucracy, the generals, the immediate retinue of Hindenburg, that he, Hitler, contrary to the light-minded avenger, von Papen, would pursue his ends with the greatest caution. The "Open Letter" discloses a complete system of foreign policy, which only now assumes its full importance. The withdrawal of Germany from the League of Nations was received throughout the entire world as an un-
expected and unreasonable improvisation. However, it is stated with absolute precision in the "Open Letter" why Germany would leave Geneva and how it would be necessary to arrange this break.

The exceptional value of this letter consists in that Hitler, who was still forced in those days to battle and polemic, rashly unveiled the secret springs of his future foreign policy. The point of departure of the "Letter" is the same as that of the autobiography: the interests of France and Germany are absolutely irreconcilable; on its own inclination France cannot come to an agreement on the basis of a change of relationship of forces in favor of Germany; Germany cannot hope to obtain "equality of rights" by means of discussion in international conferences; in order that international diplomacy recognize Germany's right to rearm, the Germans must rearm beforehand. But that is precisely why it is impossible to demand aloud the rearmament of Germany, as von Papen does. It is the slogan of a "popular movement," but in no case of diplomacy. A government conscious of its responsibilities—that is, the government of Hitler and not of von Papen—should demand only the disarmament of France. And since France in no case could agree to that, Germany should leave the League of Nations in order thus to free its hands. So as to make war? No. Germany is still too weak for its government to speak in the near future in any other language than that of pacifism.

Invoking the "danger" that threatens it in the East and utilizing the antagonisms among the states of the West, Germany should re-create the basis of its militarism gradually, by proceeding from the general to the particular, to the special. In order to conduct this work to a successful end, there must be a national conspiracy of silence; above all, the Ossietzkis must be kept under lock and key! A government conscious of its responsibilities must take the instruments of pacifism into its own hands. By following this path, they will succeed, in the course of several years, in preparing a radical change in the relation of forces. After that they will be able to pass anew from My Peace to My Struggle and even to My War.

Such is Hitler's plan. The plan flows from the whole situation, external and internal. Hitler himself has taken care to give humanity a key—or, to use a more precise expression, a master key—in order to penetrate the secrets of his future international policy. With all due respect to the testimony of the deeply moved journalists, we prefer to base ourselves on the declarations of Hitler himself, supported by an imposing system of direct and indirect proofs.
From a fact, even a strongly established one, different practical conclusions can be drawn. Various answers can be given to the question of the policy of Hitler. Least of all is it the intention of the present article to give any counsel whatsoever to those who decide the fate of Europe; they know themselves what they have to do. But the premise of a realistic policy, whatever its aims and methods, is an understanding of the situation and the forces at work in it.

We must see what is. Hitler has left the League of Nations not under the blow of a nervous improvisation, but in conformance with a coldly calculated plan. Hitler has himself assured the "national" conspiracy of silence. He carries on his work in the direction of a radical change in the relationship of military forces. It is precisely now, when this work has already begun but is still far from having given decisive results, that Hitler must employ the greatest caution in the European arena. Do not frighten anyone; do not irritate anyone; on the contrary, open wide the arms. Hitler is ready to cover the walls of the war factories with pacifist speeches and nonaggression pacts. Paris vaut bien une messe! [Paris is worth a mass!] If a clear, simple, nondiplomatic formula of the pacifist offensive is necessary, it is the following: for the next two or three years, Hitler must painstakingly avoid a preventive war on the part of his opponents. Within these limits his pacifism is absolutely sincere. But only within these limits.
The Reichstag fire trial is nearing its climax. What sort of decision will be dictated to the judges from above? The government is in a predicament. If one looked for historical precedents, one would most naturally pause on the Dreyfus case in France and the Beilis trial in czarist Russia. Captain Dreyfus was successfully condemned to Devil's Island despite the lack of evidence, thanks to the fact that the court-martial proceeded behind closed doors. In the Beilis trial, which was open to the public and in which the press actively participated, the rulers proved powerless to force through the conviction of a Jewish shop clerk for the murder of a Christian boy. But the court did bring in a verdict to the effect that the murder could have been committed for ritualistic purposes.

Will Hitler, perhaps, be compelled to seek inspiration in the classic decision of Kiev justice? Because it is impossible to sustain in any way whatever the charge against the Communists who were fortuitously seized, the Leipzig court may decree that the crime was committed by the Communist Party through criminals unknown. Goering, of course, would like very much to hang Dimitrov. But it is of utmost importance to the government that roasted its chestnuts in the flames of the Reichstag to establish that this fire was perpetrated, if not by these, then by some other Communists. That is the political task. However, it is precisely in its political aspect that the Leipzig trial is weakest. Not only is the indictment false juridically but it is absurd politically.

With what end in mind did the Communist Party supposedly set fire to the Reichstag? The official answer reads: it was intended as a signal for insurrection. Through continued use, this formula appears to have acquired a semblance of content. But it is really hollow. A signal is a signal only if its meaning is clear to those for whom it is intended. For example, during the October insurrection in Petrograd, the leaders had arranged beforehand that a blank shot would be fired by the cruiser
Aurora when a red lantern appeared on the spire of the Peter and Paul fortress. Should the Winter Palace fail to surrender in response to the blank shot, then a bombardment would be begun by the artillery in the Peter and Paul fortress. The red lantern was a signal to the artillerymen of the Aurora; the blank shot of the Aurora was a signal to the artillerymen in the fortress. In this case the signal had a specific technical meaning comprehensible to those for whom it was intended.

From the nature of the matter, it is obvious that the method of signaling must be as simple as possible and easy to achieve technically. The instruments for the signal must be directly within the reach of the leaders. Lighting a red lantern is a very different thing from setting fire to the Reichstag. Is it conceivable that anyone could count upon the possibility that the Reichstag could be set on fire at whatever moment might be required and that the flames would not be extinguished immediately, but would succeed in spreading? An undertaking of this sort is bound up with too great a quantity of unknowns to make possible its selection as an ordinary "signal."

Let us, however, admit—for reasons that do not occur to us and that up to now no one has even thought of explaining—that the Communist commanders did decide to announce the hour of attack by means of a gigantic conflagration in the heart of the capital. To gain its ends, in any case, the central staff must have issued instructions to the regional staffs that they take possession of the streets with arms in hand just as soon as the dome of the Reichstag burst into flames. Very many people must have been initiated beforehand into the secret of the fire. In general, such a colossal signal as a parliamentary building in flames could have been intended not for a handful—a telephone would have sufficed for them—but for thousands, if not tens and hundreds of thousands.

Why, then, is this most important aspect of the case completely submerged in the court shadows? Since the time of the fire, tens of thousands have managed to desert from the ranks of the Communist Party to the Nazis in order to escape the terror. Such turncoats have figured in the trial as chief witnesses for the prosecution. In several concentration camps, the majority of the prisoners voted for Hitler. If from among these "repenters" there have not been found witnesses—not hundreds or thousands but even isolated individuals—to disclose in court the secret of the signal, then this is irrefutable evidence that there was no such secret. The conclusion is clear: a signal concerning which no one knows anything is no signal. The flaming dome of the Reichstag proclaimed nothing and issued a call for nothing.
But perhaps the matter involves not a technical but, so to speak, a "spiritual" signal? The task of the incendiaries, the prosecutor will say, was to deal a bold offensive blow that would uplift the mood of the masses and impel them to the road of insurrection. In other words, the fire was not a signal in the real meaning of the word but an act of revolutionary terrorism. However, this version cannot withstand the breath of criticism either. If at least a Nazi headquarters or, say, a police prefecture, were involved, then setting fire to the building might have had a semblance of political meaning—provided, of course, the act had been accompanied by other aggressive actions prepared in advance. But the burning of a "neutral" building like the Reichstag, open to all parties, could say absolutely nothing to the masses. In fact, a fire might well have originated accidentally. How and why should a red glare over the dome of the Reichstag invoke in the masses an arbitrary association with the idea of immediate insurrection?

In planning any action, a terrorist party, such as, for example, the Russian Social Revolutionaries in the era of czarism, is mainly concerned with making its blow as clear and attractive to the national masses as possible. Even prior to the terrorist act, the party would issue manifestos by means of which it would seek to center the hatred of the populace upon a given person or institution. The act itself would be accompanied by the publication of proclamations explaining its revolutionary meaning. We do not find a single one of these necessary conditions of political terrorism in Berlin toward the end of February. During those days the Communists were busy agitating in favor of elections to the Reichstag, and not at all in favor of burning it. Neither on the night of the fire nor subsequently did there appear in Germany a single proclamation explaining to the masses the meaning of this mysterious event. Small wonder that with the exception of Goering and his agents no one has interpreted the fire as a signal for insurrection.

Ignoring the very nature of political terrorism, the prosecutor asserts that the Communist Party, like all criminals in general, naturally seeks to hide its participation in the crime. One could maintain with equal success that Herostratus, intending to immortalize himself by burning the temple at Ephesus, sought at the same time to hide his name in order to escape the responsibility for arson. Since no organization openly assumes the responsibility for the work of destruction, explains its meaning and calls the masses to action, there remains only the charred hall of sessions—but the political
act disappears. In its irrational zeal, the prosecution tears a political trial out of its political axis. An insurrectionary staff could no more give the national masses an anonymous signal for insurrection than a government could declare war anonymously. A revolutionary party prepared to go out on the streets for the armed overthrow of the existing system would not shy away from assuming the responsibility for a few burned desks and rugs, should these be necessary in the course of insurrection.

Here we naturally come to consider the persons held as "incendiaries." They are five: an unemployed Dutchman, the chairman of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, and three Bulgarian Communists. The first question that arises is: why was the signal for the uprising of German workers given by four foreigners? A witness for the prosecution sought to provide an explanation to this enigma by stating that the Communist Party wished to "draw attention away from itself" by putting foreigners to the front. Once again we meet with the same absurdity: a party that, for the aims of insurrection, should have concentrated the attention of the masses upon itself was busy "drawing attention away from itself." But if the aim was to hide participation, after perpetrating a politically anonymous and therefore aimless fire, then how and why did the chairman of the Communist fraction, i.e., the most outstanding and responsible representative of the party within the walls of the Reichstag, come to be involved in it, and, moreover, not as one of the political leaders of an act of terrorism but as a direct incendiary?

Still more astounding, if that is possible, is Dimitrov's alleged participation in the fire—Dimitrov who is an old revolutionist and who was the general secretary of the Bulgarian trade unions as early as 1910, when the author of these lines first met him in Sofia. According to his testimony in court, Dimitrov settled in Berlin in order to devote himself with greater convenience to Bulgarian matters; and precisely because of this, he avoided any kind of connection with the activities of the German Communist Party. Even his enemies have no reason to doubt his word. It is not difficult to understand that a responsible politician, directing from Berlin the work of his party in Bulgaria, would not incur the risk of arrest and exile for the sake of a second-rate participation in German affairs. For Bulgaria, Dimitrov was unique; for Germany, he could only be one among many. But even if this irrefutable consideration were left aside, the question would still remain why the German Communist Party could find no assistant for van der Lubbe other than a member of the presidium of the Communist International. Moreover, Dimitrov's participation
might perhaps have been explicable if the aim had been not to "draw attention away from the party," but, on the contrary, to show that the fire was the work of the Communist International as a whole. Since Dimitrov, together with the other two Bulgarians, had arrived in Germany from Moscow, their participation in the Reichstag fire would, at the same time, have served to reveal the hand of the Soviets to the whole world. Even assuming that someone required such a demonstration, it could not have been, in any case, either the German Communists or Moscow. Why then did the choice fall upon Dimitrov? And whose choosing was it? From the standpoint of the political ends of the trial, it must be conceded that this was the worst possible choice.

In the hands of the organizers of this trial, there were exceptional methods of staging—an unlimited supply of witnesses for the prosecution ready to testify to anything ordered; panic among the potential witnesses for the defense; the complete absence of criticism on the part of the press; and a complete subservience to the orders of the rulers by the police, the prosecutors, the judges and even the attorneys for the defense. It might appear that the success of any indictment would be assured beforehand under such conditions. Nevertheless, the trial has entered its third "political" phase as a cause lost by Hitler. The key to the riddle is simple: the Communist Party of Germany did not take to the road of insurrection. It was not wrecked in battle, like the Paris Commune in 1871 or the Russian proletariat in 1905; it turned out to be incapable of struggle. Discounting its purely symbolic call for a "general strike"—a printed scrap of paper to which not a single man responded—the Communist Party was and remained a passive object throughout the tragic events that changed the face of Germany. Let him who still doubts this read the letter of Maria Reese, the popular Communist deputy in the Reichstag who broke with her party precisely because it was revealed to be powerless not only to assume the offensive but even to wage a defensive struggle; because it could not foresee anything, was unable to prepare for anything, and had neither the resources nor reasons for giving revolutionary signals to the masses.

If in its place there had been another party capable of assuming the defensive, it would have had a choice of different ways and methods of struggle, but none of them would have led to the burning of the Reichstag. And if, contrary to all sound political sense, a revolutionary party did decide to set fire to the Reichstag, it would not have chosen for this work a mysterious, unemployed Dutchman who could only under-
stand one with difficulty and upon whom no dependence could be placed; nor the chairman of a parliamentary fraction always in the public eye; nor a member of the presidium of the Communist International personifying Moscow; nor two young Bulgarians unable to speak German. Finally, if a Communist Party had set fire to the Reichstag through the medium of such a fantastic group of incendiaries, it would at least have explained to the workers the political meaning of this arson. No testimony of witnesses, no "clues," no curses by Goering, are capable of sustaining the internal political insufficiency of this accusation. Let the prosecutor assert with the brazenness that distinguishes him in this brazen trial: it was so. The impregnable logic of politics replies in refutation: it could not have been!
Italian fascism has proclaimed national "sacred egoism" as the sole creative factor. After reducing the history of humanity to national history, German fascism proceeded to reduce nation to race, and race to blood. Moreover, in those countries that politically have not risen—or rather, descended—to fascism, the problems of the economy are more and more being forced into national frameworks. Not all of them have the courage to inscribe "autarchy" openly upon their banners. But everywhere policy is being directed toward as hermetic a segregation as possible of national life away from world economy. Only twenty years ago, all the school books taught that the mightiest factor in producing wealth and culture is the worldwide division of labor, lodged in the natural and historic conditions of the development of mankind. Now it turns out that world exchange is the source of all misfortunes and all dangers. Homeward ho! Back to the national hearth! Not only must we correct the mistake of Admiral Perry, who blasted the breach in Japan's "autarchy," but a correction must also be made of the much bigger mistake of Christopher Columbus, which resulted in so immoderately extending the arena of human culture.

The enduring value of the nation, discovered by Mussolini and Hitler, is now set off against the false values of the nineteenth century: democracy and socialism. Here, too, we come into an irreconcilable contradiction with the old primers and, worse yet, with the irrefutable facts of history. Only vicious ignorance can draw a sharp contrast between the nation and liberal democracy.

As a matter of fact, all the movements of liberation in modern history, beginning, say, with Holland's struggle for independence, had both a national and a democratic character. The awakening of the oppressed and dismembered nations, their
struggle to unite their severed parts and to throw off the foreign yoke, would have been impossible without a struggle for political liberty. The French nation was consolidated in the storms and stresses of democratic revolution at the close of the eighteenth century. The Italian and German nations emerged from a series of wars and revolutions in the nineteenth century. The powerful development of the American nation, which had received its baptism of freedom in its uprising in the eighteenth century, was finally guaranteed by the victory of the North over the South in the Civil War. Neither Mussolini nor Hitler is the discoverer of the nation. Patriotism in its modern sense—or, more precisely, its bourgeois sense—is the product of the nineteenth century. The national consciousness of the French people is, perhaps, the most conservative and the most stable of any; and to this very day it feeds from the springs of democratic traditions.

But the economic development of mankind, which overthrew medieval particularism, did not stop within national boundaries. The growth of world exchange took place parallel with the formation of national economies. The tendency of this development—for advanced countries, at any rate—found its expression in the shift of the center of gravity from the domestic to the foreign market. The nineteenth century was marked by the fusion of the nation's fate with the fate of its economic life; but the basic tendency of our century is the growing contradiction between the nation and economic life. In Europe this contradiction has become intolerably acute.

The development of German capitalism was of the most dynamic character. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the German people felt themselves stifled in the cages of several dozen feudal fatherlands. Less than four decades after the creation of the German Empire, German industry was suffocating within the framework of the national state. One of the main causes of the [First] World War was the striving of German capital to break through into a wider arena. Hitler fought as a corporal in 1914-18 not to unite the German nation but in the name of a supranational, imperialistic program that expressed itself in the famous formula—"Organize Europe!" Unified under the domination of German militarism, Europe was to become the drill ground for a much bigger enterprise—the organization of the entire planet.

But Germany was no exception. She only expressed in a more intense and aggressive form the tendency of every other national capitalist economy. The clash between these tendencies resulted in the war. The war, it is true, like all the grandiose upheavals of history, stirred up various historical questions and in passing gave the impulse to national revolutions in
the more backward sections of Europe—czarist Russia and Austria-Hungary. But these were only the belated echoes of an epoch that had already passed away. Essentially, the war was imperialist in character. With lethal and barbaric methods, it attempted to solve a problem of progressive historic development—the problem of organizing economic life over the entire arena that has been prepared by the worldwide division of labor.

Needless to say, the war did not find the solution to this problem. On the contrary, it atomized Europe even more. It deepened the interdependence of Europe and America at the same time that it deepened the antagonism between them. It gave the impetus to the independent development of colonial countries and simultaneously sharpened the dependence of the metropolitan centers upon colonial markets. As a consequence of the war, all the contradictions of the past were aggravated. One could half-shut one's eyes to this during the first years after the war, when Europe, aided by America, was busy repairing her devastated economy from top to bottom. But to restore productive forces inevitably implied the reinvigorating of all those evils that had led to the war. The present crisis, in which are synthesized all the capitalist crises of the past, signifies above all the crisis of national economic life.

The League of Nations attempted to translate from the language of militarism into the language of diplomatic pacts the task that the war left unsolved. After Ludendorff had failed to "organize Europe" by the sword, Briand attempted to create "the United States of Europe" by means of sugary diplomatic eloquence. But the interminable series of political, economic, financial, tariff and monetary conferences only unfolded the panorama of the bankruptcy of the ruling classes in face of the unpostponable and burning task of our epoch.

Theoretically this task may be formulated as follows: how may the economic unity of Europe be guaranteed, while preserving complete freedom of cultural development to the peoples living there? How may unified Europe be included within a coordinated world economy? The solution to this question can be reached not by deifying the nation but, on the contrary, by completely liberating productive forces from the fetters imposed upon them by the national state. But the ruling classes of Europe, demoralized by the bankruptcy of military and diplomatic methods, approach the task today from the opposite end, that is, they attempt by force to subordinate the economy to the outdated national state. The legend of the bed of Procrustes is being reproduced on a grand scale. Instead of clearing away a suitably large arena for the operations of modern
technology, the rulers chop and slice the living organism of economy to pieces.

In a recent programmatic speech, Mussolini hailed the death of "economic liberalism," that is, the reign of free competition. The idea itself is not new. The epoch of trusts, syndicates and cartels has long since relegated free competition to the back­yard. But trusts are even less reconcilable with restricted national markets than are the enterprises of liberal capitalism. Monopoly devoured competition in proportion as the world economy subordinated the national market. Economic liberalism and economic nationalism became outdated at the same time. Attempts to save economic life by inoculating it with virus from the corpse of nationalism result in blood poisoning that bears the name of fascism.

Mankind is impelled in its historic ascent by the urge to attain the greatest possible quantity of goods with the least expenditure of labor. This material foundation of cultural growth provides also the most profound criterion by which we may appraise social regimes and political programs. The law of the productivity of labor is of the same significance in the sphere of human society as the law of gravitation in the sphere of mechanics. The disappearance of outgrown social formations is but the manifestation of this cruel law that determined the victory of slavery over cannibalism, of serfdom over slavery, of hired labor over serfdom. The law of productivity of labor finds its way not in a straight line but in a contradictory manner, by spurts and jerks, leaps and zigzags, surmounting on its way geographical, anthropological and social barriers. Whence so many "exceptions" in history, which are in reality only specific refractions of the "rule."

In the nineteenth century, the struggle for the greatest productivity of labor took mainly the form of free competition, which maintained the dynamic equilibrium of capitalist economy through cyclical fluctuations. But precisely because of its progressive role, competition has led to a monstrous concentration of trusts and syndicates, and this in turn has meant a concentration of economic and social contradictions. Free competition is like a chicken that hatched not a duckling but a crocodile. No wonder she cannot manage her offspring!

Economic liberalism has completely outlived its day. With less and less conviction, its Mohegans appeal to the automatic interplay of forces. New methods are needed to make skyscraper trusts correspond to human needs. There must be radical changes in the structure of society and economy. But new methods come into clash with old habits and, what is infinitely more important, with old interests. The law of the productivity
of labor beats convulsively against barriers that it itself set up. This is what lies at the core of the grandiose crisis of the modern economic system.

Conservative politicians and theorists, taken unawares by the destructive tendencies of national and international economy, incline towards the conclusion that the overdevelopment of technology is the principal cause of present evils. It is difficult to imagine a more tragic paradox! A French politician and financier, Joseph Caillaux, sees salvation in artificial limitations on the process of mechanization. Thus the most enlightened representatives of the liberal doctrine suddenly draw inspiration from the sentiments of those ignorant workers of over a hundred years ago who smashed weaving looms. The progressive task of how to adapt the arena of economic and social relations to the new technology is turned upside down and is made to seem a problem of how to restrain and cut down productive forces so as to fit them to the old national arena and to the old social relations. On both sides of the Atlantic, no little mental energy is wasted on efforts to solve the fantastic problem of how to drive the crocodile back into the chicken egg. The ultramodern economic nationalism is irrevocably doomed by its own reactionary character; it retards and lowers the productive forces of man.

The policies of a closed economy imply the artificial constriction of those branches of industry that are capable of fertilizing successfully the economy and culture of other countries. They also imply an artificial planting of those industries that lack favorable conditions for growth on national soil. The fiction of economic self-sufficiency thus causes tremendous overhead expenditures in two directions. Added to this is inflation. During the nineteenth century, gold as a universal measure of value became the foundation of all monetary systems worthy of the name. Departures from the gold standard tear the world economy apart even more successfully than do tariff walls. Inflation, itself an expression of disordered internal relationships and of disordered economic ties between nations, intensifies the disorder and helps to turn it from a functional into an organic one. Thus the "national" monetary system crowns the sinister work of economic nationalism.

The most intrepid representatives of this school console themselves with the prospect that the nation, while becoming poorer under a closed economy, will become more "unified" (Hitler) and that as the importance of the world market declines the causes for external conflicts will also diminish. Such hopes only demonstrate that the doctrine of autarchy is both reactionary and utterly utopian. The fact is that the breeding places
of nationalism also are the laboratories of terrific conflicts in the future; like a hungry tiger, imperialism has withdrawn into its own national lair to gather itself for a new leap.

Actually, theories about economic nationalism, which seem to base themselves on the "eternal" laws of race, show only how desperate the world crisis really is—a classic example of making a virtue of bitter need. Shivering on bare benches in some godforsaken little station, the passengers of a wrecked train may stoically assure each other that creature comforts are corrupting to body and soul. But all of them are dreaming of a locomotive that would get them to a place where they could stretch their tired bodies between two clean sheets. The immediate concern of the business world in all countries is to hold out, to survive somehow, even if in a coma, on the hard bed of the national market. But all these involuntary stoics are longing for the powerful engine of a new world "conjuncture," a new economic phase.

Will it come? Predictions are rendered difficult, if not altogether impossible, by the present structural disturbance of the whole economic system. Old industrial cycles, like the heartbeats of a healthy body, had a stable rhythm. Since the war, we no longer observe the orderly sequence of economic phases; the old heart skips beats. In addition, there is the policy of so-called state capitalism. Driven on by restless interests and by social dangers, governments burst into the economic realm with emergency measures, the effects of which in most cases they cannot themselves foresee. But even leaving aside the possibility of a new war that would upset for a long time the elemental work of economic forces as well as conscious attempts at planned control, we, nevertheless, can confidently foresee the turning point from the crisis and depression to a revival, whether or not the favorable symptoms present in England and to some degree in the United States prove later on to have been first swallows that did not bring the spring. The destructive work of the crisis must reach the point—if it has not already reached it—where impoverished mankind will need a new mass of goods. Chimneys will smoke, wheels will turn. And when the revival is sufficiently advanced, the business world will shake off its stupor, will promptly forget yesterday's lessons, and will contemptuously cast aside self-denying theories along with their authors.

But it would be the greatest delusion to hope that the scope of the impending revival will correspond to the depth of the present crisis. In childhood, in maturity and in old age, the heart beats at a different tempo. During capitalism's ascent, successive crises had a fleeting character and the temporary
decline in production was more than compensated at the next stage. Not so now. We have entered an epoch when the periods of economic revival are short-lived, while the periods of depression become deeper and deeper. The lean cows devour the fat cows without a trace and still continue to bellow with hunger.

All the capitalist states will be more aggressively impatient, then, as soon as the economic barometer begins to rise. The struggle for foreign markets will become unprecedentedly sharp. Pious' notions about the advantages of autarchy will at once be cast aside, and sage plans for national harmony will be thrown in the wastepaper basket. This applies not only to German capitalism, with its explosive dynamics, or to the belated and greedy capitalism of Japan, but also to the capitalism of America, which still is powerful despite its new contradictions.

The United States represented the most perfect type of capitalist development. The relative equilibrium of its internal and seemingly inexhaustible market assured the United States a decided technical and economic preponderance over Europe. But its intervention in the World War was really an expression of the fact that its internal equilibrium had already been disrupted. The changes introduced by the war into the American structure have, in turn, made entry into the world arena a life-and-death question for American capitalism. There is ample evidence that this entry must assume extremely dramatic forms.

The law of the productivity of labor is of decisive significance in the interrelations of America and Europe, and in general in determining the future place of the United States in the world. That highest form that the Yankees gave to the law of the productivity of labor is called conveyor, standardized or mass production. It would seem that the spot from which the lever of Archimedes was to turn the world over had been found. But the old planet refuses to be turned over. Everyone defends himself against everybody else, protecting himself by a customs wall and a hedge of bayonets. Europe buys no goods, pays no debts and, in addition, arms herself. With five miserable divisions, starved Japan seizes a whole country. The most advanced technique in the world suddenly seems impotent before obstacles basing themselves on a much lower technique. The law of the productivity of labor seems to lose its force.

But it only seems so. The basic law of human history must inevitably take revenge on derivative and secondary phenomena. Sooner or later American capitalism must open up ways for itself through the length and breadth of our entire planet.
By what methods? By all methods. A high coefficient of productivity denotes also a high coefficient of destructive force. Am I preaching war? Not in the least. I am not preaching anything. I am only attempting to analyze the world situation and to draw conclusions from the laws of economic mechanics. There is nothing worse than the sort of mental cowardice that turns its back on facts and tendencies when they contradict ideals or prejudices.

Only in the historic framework of world development can we assign fascism its proper place. It contains nothing creative, nothing independent. Its historic mission is to reduce to an absurdity the theory and practice of the economic impasse.

In its day democratic nationalism led mankind forward. Even now, it is still capable of playing a progressive role in the colonial countries of the East. But decadent fascist nationalism, preparing volcanic explosions and grandiose clashes in the world arena, bears nothing except ruin. All our experiences on this score during the last twenty-five or thirty years will seem only an idyllic overture compared to the music of hell that is impending. And this time it is not a temporary economic decline that is involved but complete economic devastation and the destruction of our entire culture, in the event that toiling and thinking humanity proves incapable of grasping in time the reins of its own productive forces and of organizing those forces correctly on a European and a world scale.
1. Without any doubt the old controversy "between Lenin and Trotsky" over the perspectives of the Russian Revolution is only of historical interest, and in any case membership in the Left Opposition is not conditional upon taking sides in the controversy. Whoever wants to take a definite position, however, must analyze it in connection with the concrete course of the class struggle and the revolutionary groupings in Russia at that time.

2. The epigones have deduced from the old disputes, which went through various stages, a few general rules of revolutionary strategy and laid them down in the form of an antithesis between Leninism and Trotskyism. But the latter is no longer a question of history, but of the present and the future. Comrade L. P. declares himself (at least in principle) in agreement with those strategic principles that the Stalinists have declared to be "Trotskyism" but that are in reality the application of Marxism to the conditions of our epoch. This solidarity, as tested by experience, is much more important than the difference of opinion over a long-since-settled controversy.

3. However, where Comrade L. P. refers in his theses back to the historical controversy, he makes a number of mistakes. "In reality," he writes, "the overthrow of czarism was in fact the work of the worker and peasant masses." In this he sees the proof that Lenin's view was correct as against mine. In this connection, however, there existed no dispute between us. Already in the polemic with Radek, I sought to point out that every "great" revolution, i.e., a true people's revolution, was and is the doing of the proletarian (preproletarian) and peasant (petty-bourgeois) masses. This thesis formed the common ground in the dispute. The only question was which class
would assume the leading position and consequently come
to power. L. P. admits that the Russian proletariat actually
seized power sooner than the Western European proletariat;
but he calls attention to the fact that this happened not in
the "revolution against czarism, but in the second revolution
against the bourgeoisie." What does this imply? By a bour­
geois revolution, the Russian Marxists worthy of the name
meant, above all, the solution of the agrarian question. This
concept, which differentiated them from the liberals and from
the Mensheviks, represented a basic viewpoint common to both
Lenin and Trotsky (see the minutes of the Fourth Party Con­
gress). The fact that in February the propertied classes, among
them the nobility, including the princes, surrendered (tempo­
rarily) the monarchy in the interest of self-preservation was
an episode that no prognosis could predict. After the abdi­
cation of Nicholas II, the land problem, i.e., the problem
of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, occupied next to the
war problem the predominant position in political life. It was
precisely on the basis of this revolution that the proletariat
came to power.

4. It follows then that in countries where, despite backward­
ness, the division into basic classes (the bourgeoisie, the petty
bourgeoisie, the proletariat) cuts through the whole nation
(China, India), the national-emancipation and bourgeois-demo­
cratic revolution cannot be brought to a conclusion without
the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is precisely in this that
the continuity (permanence) between the bourgeois and the
socialist revolution lies. The revolution in China passed through
a number of stages; its road in India will be no less compi­
lcated and tortuous. We shall, of course, follow and analyze
each stage. But the task of strategic prognosis is not to deduce
the concrete stages and episodes but to formulate the basic
tendency of revolutionary development. This basic tendency
is indicated by the formula of the permanent revolution, which
is based upon three concepts:

a. The national bourgeoisie, which during the initial stages
seeks to utilize the revolution for itself (Kuomintang, Gan­
dhi), invariably goes over to the other side of the barri­
cades, to the feudal classes and the imperialist oppressors,
in the course of further development of the revolution.

b. The petty bourgeoisie (peasantry) can no longer play
a leading role in the bourgeois revolution and, consequently,
cannot take power. Hence flows the rejection of the slogan
of the bourgeois-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and
peasantry.

c. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the bourgeois-
there the socialist revolution, which can triumph only as a link in the world revolution.

The transgression of these principles has already resulted in great damage in China, India, Japan and other countries.

5. The theory of the permanent revolution stands refuted, according to Comrade L.P., by the fact that the peasantry has failed in sixteen years to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat, contrary to the old fears of Trotsky. This argument, too, goes wide of the mark. Not only before but also after the October Revolution Lenin expressed dozens of times the thought that without the speedy support of the world proletariat the Soviet power would be overthrown. It was a question of estimating empirically numerous and contradictory factors, which it is impossible to forecast according to the calendar. If, power has maintained itself for sixteen years in a single country, that is as little evidence against the international character of the revolution as it is against the fact that the power of resistance of the proletarian dictatorship is the weaker the more numerous the peasantry.

6. Comrade L.P. approaches very closely the long-refuted argument of Bukharin that on an international scale the proportion between workers and peasants is not more favorable than it is within the borders of the Soviet Union. This is scholasticism. The question is decided not by static but by social forces, not by the average percentage of workers in the entire world but by the order in which the individual countries are drawn into the revolution. If, for example, the Brandler leadership had not wrecked the German Revolution in 1923, the statistical proportions between proletariat and peasantry on a world scale would have naturally remained unchanged, but the forces of the proletarian revolution would have been multiplied many times. Soviet Germany would have pulled Europe headlong into the revolution. The transformation of Europe into a socialist fortress would have changed the relationship of forces in the entire world. The backward countries would have entered into the revolution under the most favorable circumstances; the counterrevolutionary convulsions would have been infinitely less dangerous.

7. As regards the question of socialism in one country, Comrade L.P. offers a number of ambiguous formulations. He begins by adducing without comment the famous quotation from Lenin's article, in the year 1915, on the possibility of "the victory of socialism at first in a few countries or even in a single country." As is well known, Stalin deduced his
entire theory from this quotation. In the literature of the Left Opposition, however, it is proven irrefutably that Lenin in this, as in many other cases, implied by "the victory of socialism" the seizure of power by the working class, i.e., the creation of the socialist state, but not the erection of a socialist society. Or is Comrade L.P. the least bit in doubt on this score? A careful reading of this quotation will dispel his doubts.

8. Comrade L.P. attempts to reduce the theory of socialism in one country to a hollow abstraction. If intervention from abroad and counterrevolution at home fail to materialize, the technology of the Soviets will keep on growing, the standard of living and the culture of the masses will continue to rise steadily, and socialism can be realized. But as Comrade L.P. concedes, this abstract possibility is unrealizable in the face of the extreme sharpness of class antagonisms on a world scale. In his opinion, Russia's "backwardness" has nothing to do with the case. National backwardness may be overcome without overcoming the sharpening of the class war in the entire world.

But that is just the point. To overcome backwardness takes a long time; in the meantime the development of the world class struggle does not grant the USSR an unlimited respite. Moreover, the overcoming of backwardness puts terrific burdens upon the toiling masses. The fact that the Russian workers sixteen years after the revolution have not enough to eat frightens off the workers of other countries, hinders the development of world revolution and increases the danger to the USSR.

9. How is the abstract "possibility" of the building of socialism in one country to be understood at all? If Russia were alone in the world, there would have been no October Revolution in 1917. If one dismisses in his mind the world economy after the October Revolution, then Russia left to herself would have reverted back to capitalism. For within the framework of the Soviet Union capitalism had far from exhausted its possibilities as yet. In the field of production, the Soviet regime is only now "catching up" to the capitalist countries. The dictatorship of the proletariat maintains itself in the USSR because the world economy, of which Russian capitalism was a part, drove into a blind alley. But mortal danger (fascism) threatens the dictatorship from that very same source.

10. The real question "is not the possibility of socialism in one country but the international unity of the revolutionary class struggle." In this formula L.P. transforms international unity into the same sort of an abstraction as he previously did with the building of socialism in one country. If one teaches the workers that the warding off of military intervention guar-
Contribution Toward a Discussion

167

... the complete and final victory of socialism in the USSR, then the question of world revolution loses its significance, and foreign policy comes down to the prevention of intervention. In this way the Stalinist bureaucracy has ruined the Comintern and can ruin the Soviet state. The theory of socialism in one country and the international unity of the proletarian struggle exclude each other in reality.

11. The bureaucracy in the USSR is neither a moral nor a technological factor but a social one, i.e., a class factor. The struggle between the socialist and capitalist tendencies assumed primarily the character of a struggle between the social interests represented by the state and the personal interests of the consumers, the peasants, the civil employees and the workers themselves. In the given situation, the overcoming of class antagonisms means the harmonizing of the social interests of production with the personal interest of the consumers, while during the present stage of development personal interest still remains the prime mover of the economy. Has this harmonizing been accomplished? No! The growth of bureaucratism reflects the growth of the contradiction between the private and social interests. Representing the "social" interests, the bureaucracy identifies them to a large measure with its own interests. It draws the distinction between the social and the private in accordance with its own private interests. This creates a still greater tension between the contradictions and consequently leads to a further growth of bureaucratism. At the bottom of these processes lie the backwardness of the USSR and its isolation in its capitalist environment.

12. The empiricists say that for sixteen years the Soviet power has been making rapid strides, and should this continue socialism will most certainly be completed. We reply to this that "should this continue" the process must inevitably lead to an internal explosion, most probably with the aid of a shock from outside, but possibly also without one. Military intervention is, generally speaking, only dangerous to the extent that, first, it finds within the Soviet Union an extreme sharpening of the contradictions and, secondly, that military intervention creates a breach for the intervention of cheap capitalist goods. Both of these conditions show that the problem of socialism is not solved and—insofar as it is a question not in the domain of abstraction but in the sphere of reality—that it will not be solved without the international revolution.

13. From these considerations, some especially clever people draw the conclusion that we are robbing the Russian workers of their "perspectives." Others go still further and accuse us
of denying the usefulness and necessity of socialist construction in the USSR; why indeed build if nothing (!!) results anyway (!). It is hardly worthwhile to reply to such an absurdity. If I say that the human organism cannot live without breathing fresh air, I do not deny, thereby, the benefits of nutrition nor the importance of the stomach as an organ of digestion.

14. Regarding the USSR and the Comintern, what Comrade L.P. says about the dependence of the Comintern upon the political interests of the Soviet bureaucracy is, by and large, correct and has been, contrary to his assertions, repeatedly stated in the literature of the Left Opposition. Nevertheless, even here Comrade L.P. permits himself ambiguous formulations, if not mistakes. Thus he says that the Soviet bureaucracy has artificially transferred its internal controversies into the Comintern. If one disregards the criminal methods of the bureaucracy (the throttling of criticism, fraud, forgery, framed accusations and venality), the fact nevertheless remains that the factional groupings within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were essentially of international significance. This is especially true of the Left Opposition. True, it developed on the immediate basis of the Russian questions: the tempos of industrialization and the regime in the party. But even these questions immediately came to assume international importance. The problem of bureaucratism affected the Comintern immediately and directly. Back in 1924-25, the struggle centered entirely around the question of the German Revolution (Lessons of October). In 1926 the struggle became acute on the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee and the Pilsudski coup d'etat in Poland. The year 1927 stands completely under the sign of the Chinese Revolution. Through all these years runs the struggle on the question of the "workers' and peasants' parties" for the East, on the Krestintern (and by the way, where has it disappeared to?), etc. 1928 is the year of the struggle over the program of the Comintern. 1929-33: ultraleftism in the economic policy of the USSR, the "third period," the Spanish revolution, the problem of fascism. The Communist Right Opposition (KPO) ignored the most important questions of international revolutionary strategy, and unfortunately this reflects itself today quite negatively in the SAP leadership.

15. On centrism Comrade L.P. makes a major methodological mistake when he refuses to recognize the apparently "Russian" division of the Communist camp into Lefts, centrists and Rights. In his opinion the Rights in Russia are actually liquidators. In the West, however, the percentage of liquidators among the Rights is not large. "The course of the best section
of the KPO, which by way of the SAP has come around very close to the Left Opposition... speaks clearly enough for itself." All these considerations, apart from whether they are essentially correct or not, do not refute but support our classification, especially the division of the centrists into Rights and Lefts. In order for the SAP to approximate the ideas of the Left Opposition, its members had to split away from the left wing of the Social Democracy while its leaders had to break with the Brandlerites. Ideologically, however, this process is not yet completed.

If Comrade L.P. wants to say that not all the Brandlerites are lost for the revolution, we will gladly admit this. To take the path of revolution (under the present historical conditions, the path of the new International), they must break with the right centrist and especially with the centrist peculiarities and methods (the disdainful attitude toward theory, the inadequate understanding of the international organization, and the disregard for problems of revolutionary strategy or the supplanting of them by questions of tactics, etc.).

One may state it as a general rule that antipathy toward the concept centrism and toward all further subdivisions of centrism is typical of tendencies that are either centrist themselves or have not yet finally freed themselves from their intellectual amorphousness.

16. The collapse of the German Social Democracy and the German Communist Party ushered in a whole period of degeneration, fermentation and recrystallization within the proletarian vanguard. But in the given case "fermentation" means nothing else than passing through intermediate or centrist stages of development. Whether in any individual case we have to deal with degeneration or revolutionary recrystallization depends upon the direction in which the movement in question takes place; from left to right, or from right to left, and so on. Hence flows the necessity to differentiate between right centrism, left centrism, etc. These concepts, of course, are nothing absolute. But relative as they are, they are quite indispensable for Marxist orientation, in contradistinction to a vulgar and empirical orientation. Proletarian politicians can as little dispense with them as the mariners with the map and compass.

17. Let us take two examples: the Norwegian Labor Party (NAP) and the Swedish Independent Communist Party. The NAP is steering a course from centrism to reformism. To complete this development without internal explosions, Tranmael needed a mask and a cover. This covering was supplied him by his connection with the independent socialist parties of other countries. Today, feeling himself firmly in the saddle, he is
beginning to repay by kicking those who held his stirrups; an experience by no means new.

It is a grave, opportunistic mistake for the SAP and OSP leaders to have signed together with Tranmael the resolution for a joint fight for the rebirth of the revolutionary (!) movement; this mistake resulted from a vulgarly empirical attitude toward the task of gathering forces and a lack of Marxist evaluation of their tendencies and course of development.

The Swedish Independent Communist Party, as far as I am able to judge on the basis of extremely meager material, is developing from the Brandler position toward the left. It goes without saying that every revolutionary internationalist will strive with might and main in order that this development may lead to a rapprochement and to common endeavors on the basis of the principles of the new International. But it is impermissible to pass off hopes for actual facts by substituting a possible tomorrow for today. The Swedish party not only voted for the same resolution as Tranmael but also refused to sign the declaration for the Fourth International. Although they are agreed upon the necessity of a new International in principle, the party leaders consider its proclamation to be "premature." Actually a centrist vacillation lies behind this attitude. Today it is not a question of proclaiming the new International but of proclaiming the necessity for the new International and for formulating its basic principles before the eyes of the working class of the world.

Inasmuch as under these circumstances the SAP and OSP signed the declaration for the new International with one hand and with the other signed the declaration together with Tranmael, Balabanov, Paul Louis and others, they hinder the formation of necessary clarity; they set the vacillators a new example of vacillation; they retard the revolutionary development of the Swedish party as well as that of a number of other organizations. One cannot be guided solely by the ambition to amass as much as possible. One has to keep a political chart and a compass before oneself. Mass quantity can be the result only of principled quality.

18. Comrade L. P. is quite correct when he insists that the sections of the old Left Opposition should cease to consider themselves only as an opposition or only as auxiliaries to the Russian Opposition. They must act as cadres (a part of the cadres) of the new national parties and new International. Comrade L. P. differentiates himself favorably in this question from those empiricists who do not understand the vanguard role of the Left Opposition, because they allow themselves to be guided at bottom by a purely trade-union criterion (the
criterion of bare numbers), instead of by a Marxist criterion, which proceeds from the decisive role of theory, principles and methods.

19. The idea of Comrade L. P. that we should keep a catalogue of the dead and living sections of the Comintern is false. This question has been sufficiently dealt with in our discussion. If in this or that country we shall be able to capture the majority in the national section, then it will be not through the idea of reform, but through openly establishing the new International. Thus did the Third International in its own day capture the majority of the French Social Democracy.

20. It is quite correct that in the literature of the Left Opposition very important questions of most modern economic and political developments have not been treated. Treatises of such nature presuppose the growth of the cadres, the assimilation of new forces, a broader division of labor, including the theoretical work.

On the other hand, one must realize that the theoretical work of the various tendencies as well as the immediate development of world economy and politics during the last decade has produced nothing in contradiction to the most important programmatic and strategic principles of the Left Opposition and its revolutionary perspective. In this lies the greatest guarantee for the success of the future construction.
Koltzov in Paris

By means of telegraphic dispatches from Paris, Koltzov, the correspondent of Pravda, keeps the Russian workers informed about the course of the Leipzig trial. Here is what he writes:

"The former Trotskyite, the present Nazi deputy in the Reichstag, Karwahne, takes the witness stand. His present role befits his past most properly. . . . What is most remarkable about Karwahne's deposition is that it is entirely devoted to the defense of the position of the Trotskyite Katz group who fought, if you please, against the impossible internal regime of the German Communist Party. A fascist deputy championing Trotskyite theses during a fascist trial and in the presence of Communist fighters who are being condemned to death—there you have the proper and befitting harvest that has sprung from the seeds of Trotskyite teachings!"

Stalinists by tens of thousands have deserted and are deserting to National Socialism. Many of them passed in review as witnesses during the Leipzig trial. Among the renegades, of course, there could have been a former Left Oppositionist. But neither the group of Ivan Katz nor Karwahne ever had the slightest connection with "Trotskyism."

not only the ideas of the Communist Party, of which he was one time a member, but also the semianarchist ideas of Ivan Katz's group. Koltzov, however, refuses to forgive Karwahne his past. Koltzov is adamant as regards the past. Is it, perhaps, because his own past is not entirely unblemished?

No, that is not the reason why. Koltzov is the consummation of the appointed-careerist type. During the period of the October Revolution, he was the most rabid foe of the Bolsheviks; during the years of the civil war, he prowled in the Ukraine, working for Petlura's and other White Guardist papers. After
the Red Army had cleared the Whites out of the Ukraine, he arrived in Moscow. Knowing full well that he had no choice, Koltzov offered his sprightly pen to the services of the proletarian dictatorship, naturally with the proviso that he receive rooming quarters and a privileged payok [rations card]. The then editor of Pravda, Bukharin, was in a considerable quandary. "His pen is sprightly enough," said he, "but his personality is awfully dirty."

After the inception of the Left Opposition, Koltzov did not know for a long time which way to turn, and he tried to secure himself with both camps. Moreover, because of his congenital makeup, he had become very much accustomed to wagging his tail before Sosnovsky, the outstanding and most influential of Soviet journalists. The moment the leaders of the Left Opposition were sent into exile (December 1927), Koltzov began spreading gossip about Sosnovsky in order to purify himself completely in the eyes of the rulers.

He did not get off scot-free. Sosnovsky's wife slapped his face in the Bolshoi Theater at Moscow. Not only the Left Oppositionists but even the most hidebound bureaucrats welcomed warmly the "gesture" of the energetic revolutionist; everybody without exception concurred that never had a slap in the face reached its destination so expeditiously and so appropriately.

After this bit of biographical information, we trust that Koltzov's Parisian communiques regarding the "Trotskyism" of Karwahne will not require any further commentaries.

A Pumpkin in the Director's Office

Pravda falls into raptures describing how a director in charge of a plant producing precision instruments is busy at the same time with a garden, a dairy, a rabbit farm and so forth. "This summer," writes the newspaper, "during the drought, the workers at the close of the working day came to the gardens of the Sovkhoz [state farm] with their pails and watered . . . the plants, in order to save them from withering away." We are here told about a factory garden. But what happens, in this event, to the seven-hour working day? Pravda, still enraptured, reports the results of the double labor: "the factory kitchens will be completely supplied with vegetables . . . no small portion of the crop will be allotted to the workers for individual use." What a fearful tenseness in the foodstuffs situation peeps out at us from this pathetic article!

"Not Only, But Also"

In 1920, in order to save the transportation system from collapse, the party congress, upon Trotsky's recommendation,
instituted the so-called political-sections over the railroads, that is, specially picked and militarized party organs placed over the transport trade unions and the local party organizations. This emergency measure produced results: transportation was improved. But the workers took a hostile attitude to these polit-sections that infringed upon trade-union democracy. At the beginning of 1921, these polit-sections were removed, and the normal order restored.

Today the polit-sections once again rule over transportation, and this time with unrestricted powers. In a public report, the head of the political directorate, Zimin, was not at all optimistic in describing the situation in the railroads, and in particular the results that have been achieved by restoring the polit-sections. Everywhere Zimin uncovers the activities of the Whites, enemies and saboteurs; and after each exposure, he never fails to point out that "all this took place under the very eyes of Communists."

The reporter does not offer any explanations for this unconcern on the part of Communists. As Zimin puts it, the administrative reforms introduced by the polit-sections meet with resistance at every step. "It must be stressed," says he, "that sabotage is current not only among the links below but also within the directing apparatus of the roads and the NKPS [People's Commissariat of Transportation]." In this casually tossed off phrase, there is impeccably expressed the soul of the present Soviet regime. During the initial years after the overturn, the havens of sabotage were the bureaus, departments and administrative organs and staffs of all sorts, which were manned by the old specialists. The struggle against sabotage was led by means of control from below, through the rank-and-file workers, that is. Today this interrelationship has been stood on its head: what incenses Zimin is that sabotage takes place not only amid the workers—this, so to speak, is in the nature of things— but also in the highest staffs, whose mission it is to preserve the regime. Without desiring to do so, the political dictator of transportation has defined faultlessly the political bases of the entire Stalinist dictatorship.

**The Drive for Quality**

The editors of *Pravda* explain nothing, criticize nothing, but sit on a high horse. They "call to attention," "place in full view" and "demand immediate explanations." Since the question relating to the quality of products is on the agenda (or, to put it more precisely, has been for a number of years), *Pravda*, in a tone that brooks no contradiction, issues regulations on how to improve steel and calico and transportation.
But what about the quality of *Pravda* itself? Evidently there is no one around to "call [it] to attention" and "place [it] in full view." In the meantime, the quality of this newspaper, which has at its disposal exceptional resources and possibilities, is extremely low. It is printed on paper of the worst sort; from among the pile of newspapers over the entire world, *Pravda* stands out by its ashy color and porous tissue. The print is dreadful, the typography ferocious. But, worst of all, is the newspaper itself as a newspaper. Instead of news—an incessant din. Instead of political articles—administrative decrees. Every column seeps with fulsome fawning to the "genius leader," the "greatest theoretician" and so forth. And all this is written in the style of a frustrated functionary who has been put in charge of "ideology" because he is good for nothing else.

The Class Enemy

Toward the end of October, the engineers, technologists and workers of the mine, Butovka, in the Don region, made public the successes they had achieved, in a letter addressed to Stalin. "The first victory," they wrote, "did not come easily; the agents of the class enemy, disguised in a miner's blouse, offered us rabid opposition, and in the darkness of the mines they worked their dark deeds, trying to put the machines out of order, to flood the shaft and to obstruct the veins."

"The class enemy disguised in a miner's blouse" is none other than the dissatisfied worker. The extract from the letter shows with tragic eloquence that here the matter touches not isolated and demoralized elements but a mass struggle, a civil war in the mines. If the victory over sabotage did not come easily, it was because the victors did not have mass support. The authors of the letter cherish no illusions as to how stable the "victory" is under such conditions. "We are not letting matters rest here," they write, "and we cannot let them rest. We know that the class enemy and the saboteurs have not been crushed. They have gone into hiding in order to bide opportune time to execute their destructive work."

Despite the Byzantine terminology that they are compelled to use, the authors of the letter point out clearly how and why the worker is turned into a class enemy. Enumerating the victories, the letter admits casually that "in the sphere of improving the living and cultural conditions . . . we still continue to lag behind." What is hidden behind these words? We may gather a partial answer from their inventory of successes and victories: "Individual gardening has been widely extended in our mine. . . . Our cadres are fully assured of vegetables for the entire winter." This last phrase is printed in bold type
in the newspaper to stress the extent of the victory. Individual gardens imply that after a hard day's labor, the worker must dig away at a little plot of land in the manner of a Chinese peasant; as a consequence of this double labor, the working cadres, the mining aristocracy, that is, are assured of vegetables for the entire winter.

Such is reality even when it is seen through the prism of laudatory official dispatches!

**Purging the Party**

A good crop in the Ukraine was needed and Roosevelt had to recognize the Soviet government before the Stalinist bureaucracy would graciously consent to call a party congress, after an interval of three-and-a-half years. The party congress is intended not to determine the policies to be pursued under the difficult conditions but to sing hosannas to the leaders upon these episodic successes.

But even given the conditions that we mentioned above, a preparatory purge of the party was felt necessary prior to the calling of the congress. The purge took place under various criteria. No doubt, a certain number of rascals and agents of the class enemy were cleaned out. Under the present regime, it is impossible to judge the percentage that has remained in the party. But the chief aim of the *chistka* [purge] was to terrorize the party prior to the congress. Of course, the party is sufficiently cowed even without this. But who can tell? Might not the dissatisfaction brewing and collecting in the masses break out into the open in the form of a discussion before the congress? . . . Therefore, to prepare for the congress, what was in order was not a discussion but a purge. This time, everybody was to be kicked out who had ever evinced the slightest inclination toward party discussion.

One needs at least three pairs of spectacles to judge the course of the *chistka* by *Pravda*. These people have become so attuned to lying that they cannot halt their proclivities even in those instances where a minute pinch of truth would rebound to their advantage. But, in any case, one thing is clear: "Trotskyism" won't let the bureaucracy rest in peace. "Trotskyism" is no longer referred to as crushed, buried and so forth; on the contrary, the tendency is rather to exaggerate its forces.

Through all the articles and notices on the *chistka*, there runs the red thread of "Trotskyism," and thereto in a double guise; on the one hand, enrolled as "Trotskyites" are those bureaucrats who have been the most compromised and whose hides can no longer be saved; and, on the other hand, all criticism of bureaucratism in general falls under the category
of "Trotskyism." The two symptoms mutually exclude each other. But the Stalinist apparatus can dispense with neither of them; it is necessary that the guilt for the crimes of the Stalinists who are most hated by the populace be loaded upon Trotskyism; but, on the other hand, it is equally necessary to remind those who have a tendency to reflect and to be critical and who are courageous that if they let themselves be carried away, they will be dealt with as befits Trotskyites.

Pravda, in summing up the results of the purge, bewails the obstacles that the apparatus has to meet with on the part of the enemies of the party. "It is characteristic," writes the paper, "that in all these activities a very active role is played by those Trotskyites who did not disarm. They stream to the chistkas from different places and in groups, and they are ready to crawl out of their skins in order to whitewash their cronies, saving them for the future work. Commonly, they resort to masked methods. Instead of coming out openly, they sow their seeds of counterrevolution in the guise of asking questions, interjecting remarks, offering explanations and so forth."

These words ring with the inimitable indignation of a frightened bureaucracy: the enemy sows the "seeds of counterrevolution" by means of ordinary questions, remarks and explanations. How tense must be—how saturated with lies, that is—the interrelations between the workers and Messrs. Purgers if it is necessary so viciously to hound ordinary questions the moment that they threaten to unveil the mechanics of the leadership!

Incapable of Learning

The resolution of the Thirteenth Plenum of the ECCI (which is discussed in detail elsewhere in this issue) instructs us, among other things, in the wisdom that "Soviet power is the state form of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, which assures that the bourgeois-democratic revolution will grow over into the socialist one (China, etc.)." A democratic dictatorship, as distinct from a socialist one, is a bourgeois (or, let us grant, a petty-bourgeois) dictatorship. A bourgeois dictatorship cannot "grow over" into a proletarian one; a proletarian revolution must come in between them. On a previous occasion the Comintern bent all its efforts toward the end of having the Kuomintang "grow over" into the dictatorship of the proletariat. The result of that policy was the complete crushing of the proletariat by the Kuomintang. No other fate is being prepared for the peoples of the Orient by Comintern policies even now. The Shanghai tragedy taught the blockheads of the Lux Hotel nothing at all.
A CONFERENCE OF THE
BLOC OF FOUR\textsuperscript{185}

(December 30, 1933)

At the end of December, a preparatory conference was held of the four organizations (International Communist League, the Socialist Workers Party of Germany, the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland and the Independent Socialist Party of Holland) that had signed in August of last year a declaration in support of a Fourth International.

The representatives of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninists) submitted the following proposal, which was accepted in substance:

"At the August conference in Paris, the Bloc of Four organizations (three national and one international) was formed with the aim of preparing the unification of the international proletarian vanguard in a new International. The common declaration of the four organizations said: 'The undersigned obligate themselves to direct all their forces to the formation of this International in the shortest possible time on the firm foundation of the theoretical and strategic principles laid down by Marx and Lenin.'

"In the same declaration, the four organizations declared they would set up a permanent commission and get down to working out the programmatic documents of the new International.

"Soon after the Paris conference, attempts were made—not limiting ourselves to the declaration—to follow the strategy of fusing corresponding organizations: the SAP and the section of the International Communist League in Germany, the OSP and the RSP in Holland. Both these attempts, at this stage, did not achieve the desired goal. In itself that fact is no cause for discouragement. If it turned out to be impossible to realize unification immediately, then it is necessary to prepare it conscientiously by way of principled discussion, on the one hand, and practical agreements, on the other. Of course, it would be completely unforgivable, not to say criminal, to
remain on the path of estrangement and hostility because a complete unification has turned out to be unattainable at the present moment.

"The setting up of the permanent commission proved hitherto unrealizable to a significant degree for the reasons stated above: attention had been concentrated mainly on the problem of complete unification. However, we consider that now when the prospect of complete unification has taken on a practical character, the setting up of the permanent commission cannot be further delayed. At this stage of our joint work, the commission could still not claim the role of the leading political center but could and must ensure the continuous exchange of information, articles, etc., prepare conferences like the present one, facilitate practical joint work in every case where this is possible and, finally, see that discussion is held in loyal, comradely fashion.

"In the sphere of working out programmatic documents, essential preparatory work has been done. Apart from the Declaration of Four, which we consider to be a document of the highest political importance, we have in our portfolio at the present time:

"a. a draft devoted to the problem of the economic and social reasons for the collapse of reformism (presented by a member of the SAP);

"b. a survey of the evolution of American capitalism (from the governing body of the Communist League of America);

"c. 'The Fourth International and the USSR' (from the Russian section of the Bolshevik-Leninists);

"d. 'War and the Fourth International' (a survey by the International Secretariat of the International Communist League);

"e. a series of works devoted to different problems of revolution ('Fascism and Democracy,' by the Italian section of the International Communist League; 'The Situation in Belgium,' by the Belgian section of the International Communist League; etc.);

"f. the draft of the unification platform of the OSP and RSP. Although this document has not directly achieved its practical goal, it nevertheless retains its main significance, pointing out the future path.

"If the working out of the programmatic documents of the future International is going more slowly than we at first suggested and wanted, nevertheless it is going forward without interruption. In any event, we can with full confidence tell ourselves that the work we are doing of a programmatic-tactical kind is the only main work preparing the new international
unification of the proletariat. Everything that the Second and Third Internationals put out in this period represents documents of bureaucratic self-justification, lacking in any theoretical or revolutionary value whatsoever.

"We consider that future work on programmatic documents must be organized more correctly. For this it is necessary to start a bulletin of the four organizations devoted to information and discussion. This bulletin must pave the way for a future theoretical organ.

"We attach very great significance to the initiative shown by the OSP in the person of its youth organization in the matter of calling an international conference of youth. The facts testify that working youth in different countries are much more sympathetic to the idea of a Fourth International than those official parties to which their youth are attached. It is not necessary to elucidate that this circumstance in itself contains an important promise of our future successes. One of the most important tasks of the Bloc of Four, and in particular of the present conference, is to help our youth organizations to call as many broad-based international conferences as possible, which must become an important stage in the setting up of a new youth International.

"Such are the tasks we, for our part, put before the present conference.

"Representatives of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninist)"
For the last decade, political events have swept us apart and placed us in different camps, so that I have been able to keep up with the fortunes of Lunacharsky only through the newspapers. But there were years when we were bound by close political ties and when our personal relations, while not exceptionally intimate, were of a very friendly character.

Lunacharsky was four or five years younger than Lenin and about as many years older than I. Though in itself not very great, this age difference nevertheless meant that we belonged to different revolutionary generations. When he entered political life as a high school student in Kiev, Lunacharsky could still be influenced by the last rumblings of the terrorist struggle of the "People's Will" [Narodnaya Volya]187 against czarism. For my closer contemporaries, the struggle of the "People's Will" was already only a legend.

From his student years on, Lunacharsky astonished people with his many-sided talent. He wrote verses, of course; he easily grasped philosophical ideas, performed excellently at student cultural soirees, was an unusually good orator, and showed no lack of colors on his literary palette. As a twenty-year-old youth he was able to deliver lectures on Nietzsche, argue about the categorical imperative, defend Marx's theory of value, and compare Sophocles and Shakespeare. His exceptional gifts were organically combined with the wasteful dilettantism of the aristocratic intelligentsia, which at one time had found its highest journalistic expression in the person of Alexander Herzen.188

Lunacharsky was connected with the revolution and socialism for a period of forty years, i.e., for his whole conscious life. He passed through prisons, exile and emigration, remaining all the while an unshakable Marxist. During these long years, thousands upon thousands of his former comrades-in-arms from the same circles of the aristocratic and bourgeois intelligentsia migrated into the camp of Ukrainian nationalism, bourgeois liberalism or monarchist reaction. For Lunacharsky,
the ideas of the revolution were not a youthful enthusiasm: they entered into his nerves and blood vessels. This is the first thing that must be said over his fresh grave.

However, it would be incorrect to represent Lunacharsky as a man of firm will and stern temper, as a fighter who was never distracted. No. His steadfastness was very—it seemed to many of us, excessively—elastic. Dilettantism possessed not only his intellect but also his character. As an orator and writer, he readily strayed from the subject. A literary image not infrequently drew him far from the development of his basic thought. As a politician, too, his glance wandered right and left. Lunacharsky was too receptive to each and every philosophical and political novelty to fail to be attracted by it and to play with it.

Undoubtedly, this dilettantish generosity of his nature weakened his inner critical sense. His speeches were most frequently improvisations and, as always in such circumstances, were free neither of prolixity nor banality. He wrote or dictated with extraordinary freedom and barely corrected his manuscripts. His intellectual concentration, his ability to censor himself, were not sufficient for him to create those works of more lasting and indisputable value for which his talent and knowledge were fully adequate.

But however Lunacharsky digressed, he returned every time to his basic thought, not only in particular articles and speeches but also in all of his political activity. His various and sometimes unexpected fluctuations had a limited scope; they never went outside the boundaries of the revolution and socialism.

As early as 1904, about a year after the split of the Russian Social Democracy into the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, Lunacharsky, who had arrived in the emigre movement directly from penal exile within Russia, adhered to the Bolsheviks. Lenin, who just before that had broken with his teachers (Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich) and his closest cothinkers (Martov, Potresov) was very much alone in those days. He was painfully in need of a collaborator to do work in the field, something that Lenin did not like to waste his powers on—nor was it in him to do so. Lunacharsky arrived as a true gift of fate. He had hardly stepped down from the railway carriage before he threw himself into the noisy life of the Russian emigration in Switzerland, France and all of Europe: he gave lectures, debated, polemicized in the press, led study circles, made jokes and witticisms, sang off-key, and captivated young and old with his many-sided education and his sweet reasonableness in personal relations.
Anatole V. Lunacharsky (center) is next to Lenin at a ceremony in 1920; at left is Olga Kameneva, Trotsky’s sister, then an official in Lunacharsky’s department.

Lunacharsky (center) with K. S. Stanislavsky and George Bernard Shaw in 1931.
A compliant softness was a not unimportant feature in this man's character. He was a stranger to petty vanity, but also to a matter of much greater concern: defending what he himself recognized as the truth, from friend as well as enemy. Throughout his life, Lunacharsky would fall under the influence of people who were not infrequently less knowledgeable and talented than he but of a firmer cast of mind. He came to Bolshevism through his older friend Bogdanov. The young scholar—scientist, doctor, philosopher, economist—Bogdanov\(^\text{190}\) (whose real name was Malinovskiy) assured Lenin ahead of time that his younger friend Lunacharsky, on arriving abroad, would without fail follow his example and adhere to the Bolsheviks. The prediction was fully confirmed. But that same Bogdanov, after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, drew Lunacharsky away from the Bolsheviks to a small group of superintransigents that combined a sectarian "refusal to acknowledge" the victorious counterrevolution with abstract preaching of a "proletarian culture" cooked up by laboratory methods.

In the dark years of reaction (1908-12), when there was an epidemic collapse into mysticism on the part of wide circles of the intelligentsia, Lunacharsky, together with Gorky,\(^\text{191}\) to whom he was bound by a close friendship, paid tribute to the mystical searchings. While not breaking with Marxism, he began to represent the socialist ideal as a new form of religion and seriously occupied himself with the search for a new ritual. The sarcastic Plekhanov called him "the blessed Anatole." The nickname stuck for a long time. Lenin no less unmercifully flogged his former and future collaborator. Although it gradually softened, the enmity lasted until 1917, when Lunacharsky, not without resistance and not without strong external pressure, this time from me, again adhered to the Bolsheviks. He entered a period of tireless agitational work, which became the period of his political culmination. At this time, too, there was no lack of impressionistic leaps. Thus, he almost broke with the party in the most critical moment, in November 1917, when a rumor arrived from Moscow that the Bolshevik artillery had destroyed St. Basil's Church. A connoisseur and admirer of art could not forgive such vandalism! Fortunately, Lunacharsky, as we know, was amiable and agreeable; and besides, St. Basil's Church did not suffer at all in the days of the Moscow insurrection.

In his position of people's commissar of education, Lunacharsky was irreplaceable in relations with the old university circles, and pedagogical circles in general, who were convinced that they could expect the complete liquidation of science and art from the "ignorant usurpers." Lunacharsky, effortlessly
and enthusiastically, showed this shut-in milieu that the Bolsheviks not only respected culture but were not unacquainted with it. More than one academic druid had to stare open-mouthed at this vandal, who could read half a dozen modern languages and two ancient ones and, in passing, unexpectedly displayed such a many-sided erudition as to suffice without difficulty for ten professors. To Lunacharsky belongs much of the credit for reconciling the patented, diploma-bearing intelligentsia to Soviet power. But in the actual effort of organizing the educational system, he proved to be hopelessly incapable. After the first ill-fated attempts, in which dilettantish fantasy was woven together with administrative helplessness, Lunacharsky himself ceased to pretend to practical leadership. The Central Committee provided him with assistants, who, screened by the personal authority of the people's commissar, firmly held the reins in their hands.

This gave Lunacharsky all the more leisure time to devote to art. The minister of the revolution not only appreciated and understood the theater but also was a prolific playwright. His plays disclose the variety of his knowledge and interests, the surprising ease of his insight into the history and culture of various countries and epochs and, finally, an unusual ability to combine invention and borrowing. But no more than that. They do not bear the stamp of authentic artistic genius.

In 1923, Lunacharsky published a small volume entitled *Silhouettes* dedicated to the characterization of the leaders of the revolution. The book appeared at a very inappropriate time: suffice it to say that Stalin's name was not even mentioned in it. By the following year *Silhouettes* had been withdrawn from circulation, and Lunacharsky himself felt he was half in disgrace. But here, too, he was not abandoned by his fortunate trait: compliancy. He quickly reconciled himself to the transformation in the personal composition of the leadership or, in any event, fully subordinated himself to the new masters of the situation. Nevertheless he remained to the end an alien figure in their ranks. Lunacharsky knew the past of the revolution and the party too well, pursued too many different interests, was, in the final analysis, too educated, not to be out of place in the bureaucratic ranks. Removed from the post of people's commissar, in which, by the way, he succeeded in fully accomplishing his historic mission, Lunacharsky remained almost without duties, right up to his assignment as ambassador to Spain. But he did not succeed in occupying his new post: death overtook him in Menton. Neither friend nor honest opponent will deny respect to his shade.
CARDINAL QUESTIONS
FACING THE ILP

(January 5, 1934)

I am informed that the ILP has weakened considerably in the last period. Its membership, it is claimed, has fallen to four thousand. It is possible, even very probable, that this report is exaggerated. But the general tendency does not seem to me improbable. I will say more: the leadership of the ILP bears a considerable share of responsibility for the weakening of the organization before which all the conditions opened up and—I want to hope—still open up a wide perspective.

If a worker barely awakened to political life seeks a mass organization, without distinguishing as yet either programs or tactics, he will naturally join the Labour Party. A worker disillusioned with reformism and exasperated by the betrayals of the political and trade-union leaders has attempted more than once—and to some extent is attempting even now—to join the Communist Party, behind which he sees the image of the Soviet Union. But where is the worker who will join the ILP? And exactly what political motives will impel him to take this step?

It seems to me that the leaders of the ILP have as yet not given themselves a clear answer to this cardinal question. Working masses are not interested in shadings and details but in great events, clear slogans, farseen banners. What is the situation with the ILP's banner? Not well. I say this with great regret. But it must be said. To suppress or embellish the facts would be rendering a poor service to your party.

The ILP broke away from the Labour Party. That was correct. If the ILP wanted to become the revolutionary lever, it was impossible for the handle of this lever to be left in the hands of the thoroughly opportunist and bourgeois careerists. Complete and unconditional political and organizational independence of a revolutionary party is the first prerequisite for its success.

But while breaking away from the Labour Party, it was
necessary immediately to turn toward it. Of course, this was not to court its leaders, or to pay them bittersweet compliments, or even to suppress their criminal acts—no, only characterless centrists who imagine themselves revolutionaries seek a road to the masses by *accommodating* themselves to the leaders, by humoring them and reassuring them at every step of their friendship and loyalty. A policy of this sort is a road that leads down to the swamp of opportunism. One must seek a way to the reformist masses not through the favor of their leaders, but against the leaders, because opportunist leaders represent not the masses but merely their backwardness, their servile instincts and, finally, their confusion. But the masses have other, progressive, revolutionary traits that strive to find political expression. The future of the masses is most clearly counterposed to their past in the struggle of programs, parties, slogans and leaders. *Instinctively* working masses are always "for unity." But besides class instinct there is also political wisdom. Harsh experience teaches the workers that a break with reformism is the prerequisite for real unity, which is possible only in *revolutionary action*. Political experience teaches all the better and faster, the more firmly, logically, convincingly and clearly the revolutionary party interprets the experience to the masses.

The Leninist method of the united front and political fraternization with reformists exclude each other. *Temporary practical fighting* agreements with mass organizations even headed by the worst reformists are inevitable and obligatory for a revolutionary party. Lasting political alliances with reformist leaders without a definite program, without concrete duties, without the participation of the masses themselves in militant actions, are the worst type of opportunism. The Anglo-Russian Committee remains forever the classic example of such a demoralizing alliance.

One of the most important bridges to the masses is the trade unions, where one can and must work without accommodating to the leaders in the least, on the contrary, struggling irreconcilably against them, openly or under cover, depending on the circumstances. But besides the trade unions, there are numerous ways of participating in the daily life of the masses—in the factory, on the street, in sport organizations, even in church and saloon, under the condition that the greatest heed be paid to what the masses feel and think, how they react to events, what they expect and what they hope for, how and why they let themselves be deceived by reformist leaders. Observing the masses constantly and most thoughtfully, the revolutionary party must not, however, adapt itself passively to
them (*chvostism* [tail ending]); on the contrary, it must counterpose their judgment to their prejudices.

It would be particularly wrong to ignore or minimize the importance of parliamentary work. Of course, parliament cannot transform capitalism into socialism or improve the conditions of the proletariat in rotting capitalist society. But revolutionary work in parliament and in connection with parliament, especially in England, can be of great help in training and educating the masses. One courageous exclamation of McGovern\(^{193}\) refreshed and stirred the workers, who had been deceived or stupefied by the pious, hypocritical, flag-waving speeches of Lansbury, Henderson\(^{194}\) and other gentlemen of "His Majesty's opposition" of flunkeys.

Unfortunately, having become an independent party, the ILP turned not toward the trade unions and the Labour Party, not toward the masses altogether, but toward the Communist Party, which had during a number of years conclusively proven its bureaucratic dullness and absolute inability to approach the class. If even the German catastrophe taught these people nothing, then the doors of the Comintern should bear the same inscription as the entrance to hell: *Lasciate ogni speranza* [Leave all hope behind].

The ILP had not freed itself by far of all the defects of the left wing of the Labour Party (theoretical vagueness, lack of a clear program, of revolutionary methods, of a strong organization) when it hastened to take upon itself the responsibility for the incurable failings of the Comintern. It is clear that in this situation new revolutionary workers will not join the ILP; rather, many of its old members will leave it, having lost patience. If semireformists, petty-bourgeois radicals and pacifists leave the ILP, we can only wish them a happy journey. But it is a different matter when discontented workers quit the party.

The causes for the enfeeblement of the ILP are seen with special clarity and precision when the problem is approached from the international point of view, which is of decisive importance in our epoch. Having broken with the Second International, the ILP approached the Third, but did not join it. The ILP is simply hanging in midair. Meanwhile, every thinking worker wants to belong to the kind of party that occupies a definite international position: in the unbreakable union with cothinkers of other countries he sees the confirmation of the correctness of his own position. True, the ILP enters the so-called London Bureau.\(^{195}\) But the chief characteristic of this bureau consists, unfortunately, in the absence of all position. It would suffice to say that the Norwegian Labor Party, which
under the leadership of the treacherous opportunist Tranmael goes ever more openly along the Social Democratic road, belongs to this bureau. Tranmael and Co. need the temporary alliance with the ILP and with other left organizations to pacify their own left wing and gradually to prepare for themselves the way to the Second International. Now Tranmael is approaching the harbor.

On the other side, the Socialist Workers Party of Germany (SAP) and the Independent Socialist Party of Holland (OSP) also belong to the London Bureau. Both these organizations stand on the point of view of the Fourth International. Their adherence to the bureau merely reflects their past. We, the International Communist League (Left Opposition), have considered and now consider it a great mistake of our allies, the SAP and the OSP, that they have not yet broken openly and decisively with Tranmael and with the London Bureau in general. We do not doubt, however, that the hour of such a rupture is near.

What is the position of the ILP? Entering the London Bureau, it becomes by this very fact an ally of Tranmael, that is, essentially of the Second International. Through the SAP and the OSP, it becomes a sort of ally, or semially, of the Fourth International. This is not all—outside the London Bureau, the ILP finds itself in a temporary alliance with the British Communist Party, that is, with the Third International. Are there not somewhat too many Internationals for one party? Can the English worker make head or tail out of this confusion?

At the Paris conference, the ILP delegates said that they did not lose hope of attracting the Comintern to participate in the building of a broad revolutionary International. Nearly a half year has elapsed since then. Is it possible that no answer has come yet? How much time do the leading comrades of the ILP need to understand that the Comintern is incapable of making one step forward, that it is completely ossified, that as a revolutionary party it is dead? If the ILP wants to continue waiting for miracles, that is, to live in hopes on the Comintern, or to remain outside of the main historic currents, its own members will inevitably lose confidence in it.

The same fate awaits the Swedish Independent Communist Party. For fear of making an error, it abstains from all decision, not realizing that precisely this is the greatest error. In general, there are not a few politicians who consider evasiveness and waiting for problems to solve themselves as the highest wisdom. "Do not hurry with the Fourth International," they say, "now is not the time." It is a matter not of bureaucratical-
ly "proclaiming" the new International but of uninterrupted struggle for its preparation and building. "Not to hurry" means in practice to lose time. "Perhaps the new International will not be needed, perhaps a miracle will happen, perhaps . . . ."

This policy, which seems to some people very realistic, is the worst type of utopianism, spun out of passivity, ignorance and belief in miracles. If the Swedish Independent Communist Party will not shake off its pseudorealistic superstitions, it will weaken, waste away and finally be torn between three Internationals.

"But the masses," object some pseudorealists, "are as afraid of a new International as of a new split." This is absolutely natural. The masses' fear of a new party and of a new International is a reflection (one of the reflections) of the great catastrophe, the terrible defeat, the disillusionment of the masses, their bewilderment, their disbelief in themselves. How long these moods will last depends mainly on the course of events but to a certain extent also on us. We do not bear any responsibility for the course of events, but we answer fully for our own attitude. The advantage of the vanguard over the masses is that we illuminate theoretically the march of events and foresee its future stages. The formless, passive longing for "unity" will receive blow after blow. The rottenness of the Second and Third Internationals will be revealed at each step. Events will confirm our prognosis and our slogans. But it is necessary that we ourselves not be afraid to unfurl our banner right now.

Lassalle used to say that a revolutionary needs the "physical power of thought." Lenin liked to repeat these words, although, in general, he did not like Lassalle much. The physical power of thought consists in analyzing the situation and perspectives to the very end and, having come to the necessary practical conclusions, defending them with conviction, courage, intransigence, not fearing someone else's fears, not bowing before prejudices of the masses but basing oneself on the objective course of development.

The ILP of Great Britain must place itself right now under the banner of the Fourth International, or it will disappear from the scene without leaving a trace.
Dear Comrades:

Needless to say, in the last few days I studied with the greatest attention the newspapers, magazines, minutes and letters sent by you. Thanks to a very fine selection of material, I was able to acquaint myself in a comparatively short time with the question as a whole and with the essence of the differences that arose in your organization. The strictly principled character of your discussion, free from any personal exaggerations, gives a most favorable impression of the whole spirit of your organization and of its moral-political level. It remains only to express the hearty wish that this spirit not only will be preserved and strengthened in the Belgian section but also will become the prevalent one in all our sections without exception.

The considerations that I wish to express on the question in dispute itself cannot pretend either to fullness or completeness. I am removed from the theater of action. Such important factors as the mood of the masses cannot be grasped through newspaper reports and documents alone; it is necessary to feel the pulse of workers' meetings, which, alas, is beyond my reach. However, inasmuch as it is a question of general suggestions on principles, the position of an outside observer has perhaps certain advantages as it enables detachment from details and concentration on the main thing.

I shall go over now to the matter itself.

First of all—and I consider this the central point—I do not see any reason that would impel us to withdraw the slogan: "Let the Belgian Labor Party (POB) take power!" When we first advanced this slogan, we were all, of course, fully aware of the character of the Belgian Social Democracy, which does not want to struggle and does not know how to struggle, which for a number of decades had been used to playing the role of a bourgeois brake on the proletarian locomotive, which
fears power outside of a coalition, as it needs bourgeois allies to be able to reject the demands of the workers.

We know all this. But we also know that not only the capitalist regime as a whole but also its parliamentary state machinery entered into a stage of an acute crisis that bears in itself the possibility of quick (relatively) changes of mood of the masses, as well as quick successions of parliamentary and government combinations. If it should be taken into consideration that the Belgian Social Democracy together with the reformist trade unions dominate absolutely the proletariat, that the Belgian section of the Comintern is utterly insignificant and the revolutionary wing extremely weak, it would become clear that the whole political situation must suggest to the proletariat the thought of a Social Democratic government.

We considered beforehand that the setting up of such a government would be undoubtedly a step forward. Of course, not in the sense that the government of Vandervelde, de Man and Co. would be capable of playing any progressive role in the replacement of capitalism by socialism, but in the sense that under the given conditions the experiment of a Social Democratic government would be of progressive importance in the revolutionary development of the proletariat. The slogan of a Social Democratic government is thus calculated not on some exceptional conjuncture but on a more or less lengthy political period. We could give up this slogan only if the Social Democracy—before its coming to power—should begin greatly to weaken, ceding its influence to a revolutionary party; but, alas, today such a perspective is purely theoretical. Neither the general political situation nor the relation of forces within the proletariat permits the withdrawal of the slogan "power to the Social Democracy!"

The plan of de Man, bombastically called the "Labor Plan" (it would be more correct to call it "the plan to deceive the toilers"), certainly cannot make us abandon the central political slogan of this period. The "labor plan" will be a new or a renovated instrument of bourgeois-democratic (or even semi-democratic) conservatism. But the whole point of the matter lies in the fact that the extreme intensity of the situation, the imminence of dangers, threatening the very existence of the Social Democracy itself, forces it against its will to seize the double-edged weapon, very unsafe though it is from the point of view of democratic conservatism.

The dynamic equilibrium of capitalism is gone forever; the equilibrium of the parliamentary system is cracking and crumbling. And finally—this is a link of the same chain—the con-
servative equilibrium of reformism, which is forced to denounce the bourgeois regime publicly in order to save it, is beginning to shake. Such a situation is replete with great revolutionary possibilities (together with dangers). We must not retract the slogan "power to the Social Democracy," but, on the contrary, give this slogan an all-the-more-militant and sharp character.

In our midst there is no need to say that this slogan must not contain even a shadow of hypocrisy, pretense, softening of contradictions, diplomatizing, pretended or qualified trust. Let the left Social Democrats use butter and honey (in the spirit of Spaak\(^{199}\)). We will use as heretofore vinegar and pepper.

In the material sent to me, there is expressed the opinion that the working masses are absolutely indifferent to the Labor Plan and are in general in a state of depression and that under such conditions the slogan "power to the Social Democrats" can only create illusions and produce disappointment later on. Unable from here to get a clear idea of the moods of the different layers and groups of the Belgian proletariat, I fully allow, however, for the possibility of a certain nervous exhaustion and passivity of the workers. But, in the first place, this mood itself is not final: it must be rather of an expectant than of a hopeless nature. No one of us thinks, of course, that the Belgian proletariat is already incapable of struggle for years to come. Within the proletariat there are plenty of moods of bitterness, hatred and resentment, and they are seeking a way out. To save itself from ruin, the Social Democracy needs a certain movement of the workers. It must frighten the bourgeoisie to make it more agreeable. It is certainly mortally afraid that this movement might go over its head. But with the absolute insignificance of the Comintern, the weakness of the revolutionary groups and under the fresh impression of the German experience, the Social Democracy expects immediate danger from the right and not from the left. Without these prerequisites, the slogan "power to the Social Democracy" would, in general, be meaningless.

None of us can have any doubts that the plan of de Man and the agitation of the Social Democracy connected with it will sow illusions and provoke disappointment. But the Social Democracy, with its influence on the proletariat and its plan, its Christmas congress and its agitation, are objective facts: we can neither remove them, nor skip over them. Our task is twofold: first, to explain to the advanced workers the political meaning of the "plan," that is, decipher the maneuvers of the Social Democracy at all stages; secondly, to show in practice to possibly wider circles of workers that insofar as the bourgeoisie tries to put obstacles to the realization of the plan we
fight hand in hand with the workers to help them make this experiment. We share the difficulties of the struggle but not the illusions. Our criticism of the illusions must, however, not increase the passivity of the workers and give it a pseud theoretical justification but, on the contrary, push the workers forward. Under these conditions, the inevitable disappointment with the "Labor Plan" will not spell the deepening of passivity but, on the contrary, the going-over of the workers to the revolutionary road.

To the plan itself I shall devote in the next few days a special article. Because of the extremely urgent character of this letter, I am forced to limit myself here to just a few words. First of all, I consider it incorrect to liken the plan to the economic policy of fascism. Insofar as fascism advances (before the conquest of power) the slogan of nationalization as a means of struggle with "supercapitalism," it simply steals the phraseology of the socialist program. In de Man's plan we have—under the bourgeois character of the Social Democracy—a program of state capitalism that the Social Democracy itself passes off, however, for the beginning of socialism and that may actually become the beginning of socialism, in spite of and against the opposition of the Social Democracy.

Within the limits of the economic program ("Labor Plan"), we must, in my opinion, advance the following three points:

1. On repurchase. Considered abstractly, the socialist revolution does not exclude any and all sorts of repurchase of capitalist property. There was a time when Marx expressed the thought that it would be good to "pay off that gang" (the capitalists). Prior to the World War, this was still more or less possible. But taking into consideration the present disruption of the national and world economic system and the impoverishment of the masses, we see that compensation is a ruinous operation that would create for the new regime from the very start utterly unbearable hardships. We must and can bring this fact home to every worker with figures in hand.

2. Simultaneously with expropriation without compensation, we must advance the slogan of workers' control. Despite de Man (see Le Mouvement Syndical Belge, 1933, no. 11, p. 297), nationalization and workers' control do not exclude each other at all. Even if the government were an extremely left one and full of the best intentions, we would stand for the control of workers over industry and circulation; we do not want a bureaucratic management of nationalized industry; we demand direct participation of the workers themselves in control and administration through shop committees, trade unions,
etc. Only in this way can we lay the supporting bases for proletarian dictatorship in economy.

3. The plan says nothing concerning *landed property* as such. Here we need a slogan adapted to agricultural workers and the poorest peasants. I shall endeavor to take up separately this involved question.

It is necessary now to take up the political side of the plan. Two questions come naturally to the fore here: (1) the method of struggle for the realization of the plan (in particular the question of legality and illegality) and (2) the attitude toward the *petty bourgeoisie* of the city and village.

In his programmatic speech published in the trade-union organ, de Man rejects categorically the revolutionary struggle (general strike and insurrection). Can anything else be expected of these people? No matter what the individual reservations and changes intended mainly for the consolation of left simpletons may be, the official position of the party remains that of *parliamentary cretinism*. The main blows of our criticism should be aimed along this line—not only against the party as a whole, but also against its left wing (see below). This side of the question—of the methods of struggle for nationalization—is pointed out with equal precision and correctness by both sides in your discussion, so there is no need for me to dwell on it much longer.

I wish to bring out only one "small" point. Can these people earnestly think of revolutionary struggle when in their hearts they are . . . monarchists? It is a great mistake to think that the king's power in Belgium is a fiction. First of all, this fiction costs money and should be eliminated if only out of economic considerations. But this is not the principal side of the matter. In time of social crisis, ghosts frequently take on flesh and blood. The same role that Hindenburg, Hitler's hostler, played in Germany before our very eyes may be played by the king in Belgium—following the example of his Italian colleague. A series of gestures made by the Belgian king in the last period clearly indicate this road. Whoever wants to struggle against fascism must begin with the struggle for the *liquidation of the monarchy*. We must not permit the Social Democracy to hide itself in this question behind all sorts of tricks and reservations.

Posing questions of strategy and tactics in a revolutionary manner does not mean at all, however, that our criticism should not also follow the Social Democracy to its parliamentary hideaway. New elections will take place only in 1936; until that time capitalist reactionaries in alliance with hunger can break the neck of the working class three times over. We
must pose this question in all its sharpness to the Social Demo-
cracic workers. There is only one way to speed up new elec-
tions: to make the functioning of the present parliament im-
possible by sharp opposition to it, which merges into parlia-
mentary obstruction. Vandervelde, de Man and Co. must be
branded not merely because they do not develop the revolu-
tionary extraparliamentary struggle but also because their
parliamentary activity does not at all serve to prepare and
bring nearer and realize their own "Labor Plan." Contradic-
tions and hypocrisy in this sphere will be clearly understood
even by the average Social Democratic worker who has not
yet grown to the understanding of the methods of proletarian
revolution.

The question of the attitude to the intermediary classes is of
no less importance. It would be foolish to accuse the reform-
ists of placing themselves on "the road of fascism" because
they want to win over the petty bourgeoisie. We too want to
win over the petty bourgeoisie. This is one of the essential con-
ditions for the full success of the proletarian revolution. But
there are fagots and there are fagots, as Moliere says. A street
peddler or a poor peasant is a petty bourgeois, but a pro-
fessor, an average official bearing a distinction badge, an av-
erage engineer, is also a petty bourgeois. We must choose be-
tween them. Capitalist parliamentarism (and no different par-
lamentarism exists) leads to Messrs. Lawyers, Officials, Jour-
nalists coming out as the licensed representatives of the starv-
ing artisans, street peddlers, small clerks and semiproletarian
peasants. And finance capital leads by the nose or simply
bribes the parliamentarians from the sphere of petty-bourgeois
lawyers, officials and journalists.

When Vandervelde, de Man and Co. talk of attracting the
petty-bourgeoisie to the "plan," they have in mind not the mass-
es but their licensed "representatives," that is, the corrupted
agents of finance capital. When we speak of winning over the
petty bourgeoisie, we have in mind the liberation of the ex-
posed, submerged masses from their diplomaticized political
representatives. In view of the desperate position of the petty-
bourgeois masses of the population, the old petty-bourgeois
parties (democratic, Catholic and others) burst along all seams.
Fascism understood it. It did not seek and does not seek any
coalitions with the bankrupt "leaders" of the petty bourgeoisie
but tears the masses from under their influence, that is, it per-
forms in its way and in the interests of reaction that work
that the Bolsheviks performed in Russia in the interests of the
revolution. Precisely in this way the question now presents it-
selx also in Belgium. The petty-bourgeois parties, or the petty-
bourgeois flanks of big capitalist parties, are doomed to disappearance together with parliamentarism, which sets up for them the necessary stage. The whole question lies in who will lead the oppressed and deceived petty-bourgeois masses, the proletariat under revolutionary leadership or the fascist agency of finance capital.

Just as de Man does not want a revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and fears a courageous opposition policy in parliament that could lead to a revolutionary struggle, so he does not want and fears a real struggle for the petty-bourgeois masses. He understands that in its depths are hidden stores of protest, bitterness and hatred, which may turn into revolutionary passions and dangerous "excesses," that is, into revolution. Instead of this, de Man seeks parliamentary allies, shabby democrats, Catholics, blood relatives from the right who are needed by him as bulwark against possible revolutionary excesses of the proletariat. We must know how to make this side of the question clear to the reformist workers in the daily experience of facts. For a close revolutionary union of the proletariat with the oppressed petty-bourgeois masses of the city and village but against government coalition with political representatives and traitors of the petty bourgeoisie!

Some comrades express the opinion that the very fact that the Social Democracy comes out with the "labor plan" must shake up the intermediary classes and, with the passivity of the proletariat, ease the work of fascism. Of course, if the proletariat will not fight, fascism will be victorious. But this danger follows not from the "plan" but from the great influence of the Social Democracy and the weakness of the revolutionary party. The protracted participation of the German Social Democracy in the bourgeois government paved the way for Hitler. Blum's purely passive abstention from all participation in the government will also create the prerequisites for the growth of fascism. Finally, the announcement of the attack on finance capital without a corresponding mass revolutionary struggle will inevitably speed up the work of Belgian fascism. It is, therefore, a question not of the "plan" but of the treacherous function of the Social Democracy and of the fatal role of the Comintern. Insofar as the general situation and in particular the fate of the German Social Democracy force upon its younger, Belgian sister the policy of "nationalization," this, together with the old dangers, opens up new revolutionary possibilities. It would be the greatest error not to see them. We must learn to strike the enemy with his own weapons.

The new possibilities can be utilized only under the condition that we continue tirelessly to stress to the workers the fascist
danger. For the realization of no matter what plan, workers' organizations must be preserved and strengthened. It is necessary, therefore, first of all to defend them from fascist gangs. It would be the worst stupidity to hope that a democratic government, even headed by the Social Democracy, could save the workers from fascism by a decree prohibiting the fascists to organize, to arm, etc. No police measures will help if the workers themselves will not learn to deal with fascists. The organization of proletarian defense, the creation of workers' militia is the first, unpostponable task. Whoever fails to support this slogan and does not carry it out in practice does not deserve the name of a proletarian revolutionist.

There remains only to say something on our attitude towards the left Social Democracy. Least of all here do I want to say something final, as until now I was unable to follow the evolution of this grouping. But what I read in the last few days (a series of articles by Spaak, his speech at the party congress, etc.) did not produce a favorable impression.

When Spaak wants to characterize the interrelation between the legal and illegal struggle, he quotes . . . Otto Bauer as an authority, that is, the theoretician of legal and illegal impotence. "Tell me who your masters are and I will tell you who you are." But let us leave the sphere of theory and turn to actual political questions.

SpaaK took de Man's plan as the basis of the campaign and voted for it without any reservations. It may be said that Spaak did not want to give Vandervelde and Co. the opportunity to bring the matter to a split, that is, to eject the weak and still unorganized left wing from the party; Spaak retreated the better to jump. Perhaps such were Spaak's intentions, but in politics we judge not by intentions but by actions. The careful attitude of Spaak at the conference, his pledge to struggle with all determination for the carrying-out of the plan, his statement on discipline, would have in themselves been comprehensible considering the position of the left opposition in the party. But Spaak did something else: he expressed moral confidence in Vandervelde and political solidarity with de Man not only on the abstract aims of the plan but also with regard to the concrete methods of struggle.

The words of Spaak, to the effect that we cannot demand that the leaders of the party tell us openly of their plan of action, their forces, etc., had an especially inadmissible character. Why can't we? For confidential reasons? But even if Vandervelde and de Man have confidential matters, it is not with the revolutionary workers against the bourgeoisie but with the bourgeois politicians against the workers. And no
one demands that confidential matters be made public at the congress! It is necessary to give the general plan of the mobilization of the workers and the perspective of struggle. By his declaration, Spaak really helped Vandervelde and de Man to evade the answer to the most important questions of strategy. We can legitimately speak here of secrets between the leaders of the opposition and the leaders of the majority against the revolutionary workers. The fact that Spaak also carried away the Young Socialist Guard to the road of centrist trustfulness only aggravates his guilt.

The Brussels federation introduced at the congress a "left" resolution on constitutional and revolutionary struggle. The resolution is very weak, has a legalistic and not a political character, is written by a lawyer and not by a revolutionary ("if the bourgeoisie will violate the constitution, then we also . . ."). Instead of earnestly posing the question of the preparation of revolutionary struggle, the "left" resolution makes a literary threat in the direction of the bourgeoisie. But what happened at the congress? After the most inane declarations of de Man, who, as we know, considers the revolutionary struggle a harmful myth, the Brussels federation meekly retracted its resolution. People who are so easily satisfied with empty and lying phrases cannot be considered earnest revolutionists. Punishment was not late in coming. On the very next day, *Le Peuple* commented on the congress resolution to the effect that the party will stay strictly within constitutional lines, that is, it will "struggle" within the limits indicated to it by finance capital aided by the king, judges and police. The organ of the lefts, *Action Socialiste*, actually wept bitter tears: Why, yesterday, just yesterday, "all" were unanimous with regard to the Brussels resolution, why then today? . . . Ridiculous lamentations! "Yesterday" the lefts were fooled to make them retract the resolution. And "today" the experienced bureaucratic dodgers gave the ill-fated opposition a little fillip on the nose. Serves them right! These matters are always handled so. But these are only the buds; the fruit will come later.

It has occurred more than once that the Social Democratic opposition has developed an extremely left criticism as long as it does not obligate itself to anything. But when the decisive hours come (mass strike movement, menace of war, danger of a government overthrowal, etc.), the opposition lowers its banner immediately, opening up to the besmirched leaders of the party a new credit of confidence, proving by this that it is itself only flesh of the flesh of reformism. The Socialist opposition of Belgium is now going through its first serious test. We are forced to say that it slipped up badly right away. We must follow attentively and without prejudice its further steps,
without exaggerating in criticism, without losing ourselves in senseless chatter on "social fascism" but also without making any illusions on the real theoretic and fighting temper of this grouping. To help the better elements of the left opposition to move forward, it is necessary to say what is.

I hurry greatly with this letter so that it might yet reach you before the conference of January 14; therefore, its incompleteness and possibly a certain lack of systematic exposition. In conclusion I allow myself to express the hearty conviction that your discussion will end in a harmonious decision that will insure complete unity of action. The whole situation predetermines a serious growth of your organization in the next period. If the leaders of the Social Democratic opposition should capitulate completely, the direction of the revolutionary wing of the proletariat will rest entirely on you. If, on the contrary, the left wing of the reformist party should advance to the side of Marxism, you will find in them a militant ally and a bridge to the masses. With a clear and unanimous policy your success is fully assured. Long live the Belgian section of the Bolshevik-Leninists!

G.G. [Leon Trotsky]
Dear Comrades,

In your letter of December 27, you raise some questions, both specific and general. I shall try to answer them as fully as possible.

The history of the inception and development of the SAP is known to you. After splitting from the [German Social Democratic] party, the opposition wing of the Social Democracy gained the possibility of progressive development. Splitting away from their organization [KPO], a minority of the Brand- lerites gained the possibility of moving forward. These two groups were drawn together both by their progressive sides (their break with the old bureaucracy) and by their negative sides (their theoretical amorphousness, lack of clear strategic conception and so forth). However, the evolution of the SAP was mechanically cut short by the Nazi overturn. But from it, certain leaders of the SAP have drawn absolutely erroneous notions as regards the political significance of their own experience and the conditions for the formation of a revolutionary party in general.

The fight of the SAP against the Communist League does not bear a progressive character; it is conservative; it is a fight to preserve its own amorphousness and its privilege not to think out political ideas to their conclusion. As always happens in such cases, this struggle is refracted in the consciousness of the comrades of the SAP and appears to them as a struggle against our "sectarianism." A revolutionary organization whose cadres have not absorbed into their blood and bones the strategic lessons of the last decade cannot possess, under present conditions, the necessary force of resistance to the decomposing tendencies; and, in any case, it will prove incapable of leading real masses.

In defining sectarianism, the leaders of the SAP resort not to the Marxist criterion but to the trade unionist, that is, to the measure of bare numbers, "the mass." They have failed
to grasp the laws that govern the transition of a principled quality into a mass quantity; they have not pondered over the objective and subjective preconditions that are necessary for such a transition.

This is how comrades of the SAP often put the question: Why is it that, with correct principles, with a Marxist analysis of events and so forth, the Left Opposition remains so isolated? The answer is clear: because it lacks the skill of keeping quiet about its own principles and of adapting itself to different ones. Such an argument exposes completely the anti-historical, antdialectical and vulgar thinking of the critics themselves. Our great teachers, Marx and Engels, remained in a state of frightful political isolation from 1850 to 1864. The Russian revolutionists, with Lenin at their head, were cruelly isolated from 1907 to 1912, and as late as July 1914 their isolation assumed a character almost hermetic. Our critics, who are little given to meditation, have overlooked the following facts of no little importance:

1. The Russian Left Opposition, which expressed the most consistent, dynamic tendencies of the Russian proletariat, must have become weakened in proportion as the bureaucracy grew out of the revolution and pushed the proletariat into the background.

2. The Left Opposition, which expressed the connection between the October Revolution and the international revolution, must have become weakened in proportion as the weakness of the international revolution manifested itself.

3. The Left Opposition was dealt the first cruel blow immediately after the capitulation of the German Communist Party in 1923; the defeat of the Polish proletariat and of the English General Strike in 1926, by weakening the world proletarian vanguard, weakened the Left Opposition, the vanguard of the vanguard; the collapse of the Chinese Revolution of 1927 swung the scales decisively in favor of the theory and practice of "socialism in one country"; and finally, without dwelling on a whole series of intermediate events of the same type, the German catastrophe of 1933 dealt the cruelest blow to the world proletariat. With these unheard-of historical defeats as a background, the Opposition was able to educate by its theoretical analysis numerically small cadres, but could not lead the masses.

4. The decline and the demoralization of the Comintern could not but compromise, in the eyes of the masses, all revolutionary groupings, especially those that were connected with the Comintern by their origin.

5. Finally, one must add the eleven years' campaign of
slander organized by the Stalinist bureaucracy over the whole world. In the entire political history of mankind, there is hardly to be found a persecution so rich in financial resources and in apparatus, so systematic and persistent, so poisoned in content, and that, at the same time, was covered by the authority of the first workers' state.

The leaders of the SAP shut their eyes to all these "trifles." And in addition, they forget to point out where is to be found another revolutionary grouping besides ours that has disclosed its ability to lead the masses during this period. If some organization or other, the SAP in particular, did achieve partial, purely empirical, in the nature of things, episodic and, besides, extremely unstable "successes," it is indebted for this to a great degree to the critical and political work of the Left Opposition.

Finally—and at the present time this is of the utmost practical importance—there are facts by the hundred and the thousand that demonstrate to those who are able to decipher political symptoms that the Left Opposition has already broken through the blockading ring. The Left Opposition is penetrating into diverse working-class circles and preparing the triumph of revolutionary Marxism on a new historical stage. Among the number of such symptoms is the behavior of the SAP itself. While with its right hand, the SAP, together with Tranmael, signed the equivocal, diplomatic and also harmful resolution, with its left hand, it found itself compelled to sign, together with us, the declaration in favor of the Fourth International—the only progressive revolutionary document of the last period. Obviously this document could not result in immediate miracles; but it will find its way despite the vacillations of even those who are among the number of signatories.

To have a basis for their right to ideological amorphousness, the leaders of the SAP have invented a special theory, which may be summed up in the phrase, "don't speak about things as they are." Contrary to everything we have been taught by Marx, Engels and Lenin, and flying in the face of what our own experience teaches us, this principle is based upon an unconscious or semiconscious confusion of a pedagogic and an agitational approach to a particular group in a particular instance with the principled position of a party in its relations to the proletariat, other parties and historic events.

At a gathering of workers who are monarchists or Catholics, I would deal cautiously with the altar and the throne. But in the program of my party and in all its policies, its relation to religion and monarchy must be formulated with absolute exactness. At a meeting of a reformist trade union, I, as a member of the union, might be compelled to leave
much unsaid; but the party as a whole, in its papers, its public meetings, pamphlets and proclamations, is duty bound to say everything.

Should police conditions compel the legal press to be cautious in its formulations, the party must have an illegal press besides. When Marxists demand that "things be spoken of as they are," they have in mind not every isolated speech in some special situation or other but the policy of the party as a whole. The party that for "tactical" reasons hides its position is no revolutionary party, because it repels the advanced workers, because it adapts itself to the prejudices of the backward workers. And the backward workers can be reeducated only through the advanced workers.

But even at a particular meeting, while using all the tact necessary in approaching a given group, one must not forget that among them there are workers on different levels and that, while it may be necessary to adapt oneself to the backward ones in the method of exposition, it is impermissible to adapt one's political position to them. Thus, for instance, there cannot, at present, be a single, political mass meeting at which revolutionary Marxists are not obliged to bring forward the idea of the Fourth International in one form or another. Even though today this slogan musters only a handful numerically, it is nevertheless immeasurably more important and fruitful than repeating general phrases or presenting criticism that may be correct but that fails to draw the clear and necessary conclusions. In any case, no "tactical" considerations can condone fraternization and embraces with political fakers and traitors in the eyes of the workers.

The most important strategical lessons of the last decade have been formulated by us in the eleven points that you are acquainted with. These brief theses are based upon the collective work of the International Left Opposition. Before discussing "sectarianism," one should determine one's own attitude to the basic problems formulated in these eleven points. This has always been our demand to the comrades of the SAP, and we continue to demand precisely this today. Without a specific criticism of our principled position and the methods flowing from it, the charge of "sectarianism" can remain only so much empty sound.

Had the leaders of the SAP studied the documents, pondered and discussed the tragic experience of the Anglo-Russian Committee, which was of some historical significance, they would not be making now the experiment of their own "German-Norwegian Committee," a pale copy of the pathetic original. It would not take much effort to demonstrate that all the argu-
ments brought in defense of the unprincipled and hopeless bloc with Tranmael are only repetitions, almost word for word, of the arguments used by Stalin, Bukharin and Lozovskyy in defense of their bloc with Purcell and Citrine. Disregard for theory, which is only the generalization of the practice of the past, takes its cruel revenge in this given instance also.

Occasionally one may hear the following reproach from our allies: the Left Opposition analyzes the situation quite realistically, and it advances the correct slogans; but why does it take such an intransigent attitude toward those organizations that stand outside of the Second and Third Internationals? Why does it demand from them "100 percent" Marxism? Behind this extremely characteristic approach there is hidden an entire world attitude in which there is hardly to be found 51 percent Marxism.

A revolutionary organization must, of course, study most attentively the objective situation in order not to mistake its own desires for the mood of the masses. But the party will be able to utilize the objective conditions and gain the leadership of the masses only provided it has the following: ideological cohesion, fighting unanimity and invincible discipline. The chief historical instrument of our epoch is the party of the proletariat. This instrument must be forged of the best steel, well tempered and sharply ground. Only if such an instrument exists is it possible to work successfully upon the raw historic material.

A realistic study of objective conditions, on the one hand, and an irreconcilable strictness in one's relation to one's own party, on the other hand—these are two organically insoluble sides of Marxism. Without a scientific orientation, without an accounting of the condition of the masses, without paying attention to external impediments, one can have only the policies of sectarianism and adventurism. Without a day-to-day struggle for principled purity and for the intransigence of the party, one can have only petty-bourgeois floundering in the waves of history.

You are no doubt aware that, together with my closest German friends, I stood for a merger as soon as possible with the SAP, hoping that the education of a unified organization would be hastened by our joint experience coupled with mutual criticism. But after initial vacillations, the leaders of the SAP have rejected the merger. The immediate reason was provided by the question relating to the Norwegian Labor Party (or what is practically one and the same thing, the London Bureau). They refused to merge with us in order to have the possibility of continuing their hapless romance with Tranmael.
A special theory has been advanced in order to adorn this uncouth reality: the theory of the excessive influence of a single "personality," the danger of a "personal" regime and so forth. From the viewpoint of Marxism, individuals are dangerous or useful depending upon what ideas and methods they represent. Fortunately, or unfortunately, none of us has at his disposal any means other than the means of exerting ideological influence; that is, we have neither state power nor control of the treasury connected with it nor any hired agencies. Under these conditions, the pretended dread of "personality" is, in reality, fear of certain definite ideas. Semihostility in one's relation to the principles of the Left Opposition goes hand in hand with the urge to preserve one's right to amorphousness, which seemingly is capable of engendering a great attractive power for the "masses."

In order to justify their gravitation toward Tranmæl, Maurin and the like—certainly, oh, most certainly! for the sake of the "masses"—a legend has been put into circulation that we have made it our goal to "compromise" the leaders of the SAP and to tear away their followers from them. It is self-evident that every ideological and political struggle bears within it the danger of lowering the authority of those leaders who stubbornly continue in their mistakes and who screen with ad hominem arguments their inclination to sit on a fence.

Precisely because of this, I urged a merger so that the necessary discussion could take its place in an orderly and friendly manner within the framework of a single organization. The idea of using any sort of artificial measures to "compromise" and "eliminate" the leaders of the SAP is so absurd as to make it hardly worthwhile to dwell on. We are only too well aware how poorly we are equipped at present with qualified revolutionary workers, and because of this we are least of all inclined to reduce their number artificially. And besides, what motives could there be for this? As a matter of fact, those comrades who do not wish to part company with their attitude of going fifty-fifty feel that the criticism of fence-sitting is malicious personal criticism. Such has always been the case.

For better or for worse, it was not possible to realize the merger at the given stage. Our German section must, of course, resume its complete organizational freedom. Does this imply a break with the SAP in the sphere of preparing the Fourth International? No, that would be wrong. The formation of the Fourth International is a very complex process, and in this process I trust that the activities of the International Communist League will play a very prominent role, but still, not the only one.
You express the desire that the League should become the axis around which would crystallize all those revolutionary elements that have broken with the Second and Third Internationals. This formulation is correct but, as you yourselves realize, it is not quite complete. Also included must be the youth, who belong to neither International and who compose the great reservoir of the future. But even the adherence of groups that split away from the old Internationals must not be thought of as following a straight line altogether. For instance, the members of the SAP split away from the two old Internationals, then drew close to us but wavered, halting at a certain distance away from us.

Does this imply that we must reject all attempts at joint work with them? This would be real sectarianism, in the spirit of the Bordigists who think that they will continue sucking their own fingers until history comes to its senses and begs them to take the lead. Propagating the ideas of the Left Opposition, recruiting more and more new adherents, individually and in groups, into the ranks of the International Communist League, carrying on an agitation among the masses under the slogan of the Fourth International, educating our own cadres, deepening our theoretical position—such is our basic work in the historic period immediately ahead of us. But this work does not exclude mergers, agreements and blocs with organizations drawing close to us who desire to work for the creation of the new International.

True, for the last period the leaders of the SAP have been evincing an ever-greater friendliness to the right in relations with centrists and even reformists, and an increasing hostility in relation to us. Should this evolution proceed further in the same direction, it would, of course, signify the break of the SAP with us and, coupled with this, the inevitable collapse of the SAP itself, because, as was said above, only a principled and tempered organization standing under international control can possess the force of resistance to the decomposing tendencies of our epoch. I do not think, however, that matters as regards the SAP are hopeless. If our arguments failed to help or did not help sufficiently, then the saving action will come from the actions of the "friends" from the right. One need have no doubts that Tranmael and Co. will provide in the immediate future a few objective lessons to those utopians who deem it possible to transform enemies into friends by dint of skillful manipulations.

It would be an unlawful pretense, to say nothing of adventurism, to proclaim that the new International has already been established today. Of course, you do not demand this.
We are erecting only the foundation and preparing the timber. But over this timber, we, at this very moment, unfurl the banner of the Fourth International so that all shall know what sort of structure is being erected. Should some participant or other in the construction tomorrow arrive at the conclusion that the work is beyond his powers or not to his liking, we would be sorry, but we would go on putting up the walls. In the interests of joint work, we are ready to make reasonable concessions in all practical questions; but we do not place the fate of the Fourth International in dependence upon the goodwill of this or that ally.

At this moment we are working out documents dealing with the fundamental questions of proletarian strategy, first and foremost, the relation to war. We will strain every effort in order to achieve unanimity on this question with our allies. Should we fail, we shall issue the documents in our own name. Life waits on no one. To give Marxist answers to events in time means to build the new International.

What position should you take under the conditions in which you find yourselves? I think that one must begin with principled self-determination. As matters stand today (through no fault of ours), you must choose between the League and the SAP. From your letter it is apparent that your group has not determined its position on the question of the Norwegian Labor Party, the London Bureau and so forth. Concurrently, these and analogous questions will serve as touchstones for the determination of a correct Marxist line in the course of the next few months. You are duty bound to determine your own position. Of course, not within the next twenty-four hours; the documents must be studied, the necessary data collected, the question of today must be compared with the experience of the Anglo-Russian Committee and so forth. Should all this not prove sufficient, it will then be necessary to postpone the final decision until new events have brought the test. Personally I have not the slightest doubt that the events in this question as in all major questions will work for the International Communists. Needless to say, I should like to infect you too with this assurance in order to attract you to come over to our ranks.

With International Communist greetings,
L. Trotsky
ARE THERE NO LIMITS TO THE FALL?

A Summary of the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International

(January 18, 1934)

The plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, which met toward the end of December, passed a resolution ("Fascism, the War Danger and the Tasks of the Communist Parties"). This resolution resembles nothing so much as an epitaph—"Here lie buried the last remains of what was once the party of the international proletariat." The absence of any general guiding conception whatsoever is attested to in this resolution. But where could such a conception possibly have come from? Scraps of old zigzags have been carelessly pieced together to serve as directives for the working class of the world. The only thing that remains for criticism is to expose the insufficiency of each of the elements separately and their mutual incompatibility as a whole.

1. The resolution once again takes a solemn oath—evidently there are a few who do not believe it!—that the policy of the German Communist Party was unconditionally correct before, during and after the Hitler overturn. We are told, however, in a parenthesis that Remmele and Neumann belong to the "right opportunists and defeatists in their appraisal of the perspectives of the German revolution." If this is not a miracle, what is? During the last few years, the leadership of the German Communist Party had been officially entrusted by the Comintern to three persons: Thaelmann, Remmele and Neumann (one can glean this even from the last edition of the German "encyclopedia"). Now we are informed, in a fleeting remark, that two members of this triumvirate that led the German party "correctly" before and during the overturn acciden-
tally turn out to be "opportunists and defeatists." Only the thick walls of a fascist jail shield the third member against such an accident. But, actually, whom are the leaders of the Comintern making fools of? Are they, perhaps, ridiculing themselves?

2. According to the resolution, "the growth of fascism and its assumption of power in Germany, and in a number of other capitalist countries, imply a growth of the revolutionary crisis and increasing indignation of wide masses against the hegemony of capital." Commonly, this is called covering up one's tracks. It is an old story by now that the growth of fascism would be impossible without the growth of the social crisis of capitalism. But Hitler's victory ("the assumption of power by fascism") did not at all arise from the "indignation of wide masses against the hegemony of capital" but from the impotence of these masses, who have been paralyzed by reformism and adventurism, by the lack of revolutionary leadership and by the despicable and criminal policy of the Comintern. "No Stalin—no victory for Hitler." No bureaucratic subterfuges can cover up either the depth of the German defeat or the responsibility of the Comintern.

3. "The Social Democracy," reads the resolution, "aims only to fool and disarm the workers by denying the fascistization of bourgeois democracy and by counterposing in principle (!) the democratic countries to the countries with the fascist dictatorship." By intentionally jumbling together questions of different orders, this muddled formulation serves the same purpose: to justify the "correct" policy of the German Communist Party, which, during the epoch of Braun-Severing-Bruening,206 asserted that fascism was already victorious, because there is no "principled" difference between the regime of Social Democracy and the regime of National Socialism. Apparently these gentlemen do not know themselves what is understood by a "principled difference." Let us assist them. Czarism was the state rule of the feudal landowners and of large capital. The Provisional Government of the February republic remained also the rule of the landowners and large capital. Was there a "principled" difference between the two? Obviously, no. In that case, was it worthwhile to make the February Revolution? Or to put it differently: is it permissible to attach any sort of "principled" significance to the February Revolution? Yet, without the February Revolution, the October Revolution would have been impossible. Large capital ruled in Germany under the vile democracy of Mueller207-Severing-Bruening; large capital rules under Hitler. Clearly, there is no "principled" difference between these two regimes. Yet, after the fascist overturn, the proletariat found itself deprived of all means of defense and offense.
The Thirteenth Plenum offers us the classic reasoning of anarchism during the period of its primitive dumbness; Messrs. Kuusinen, Manuilsky and so forth are no anarchists; they place much too great a value upon the aid of the GPU in the struggle against revolutionary Marxists. But by the logic of their mistakes, subterfuges and denials, they have arrived at anarchistic philosophy: changes of political regimes are, if you please, without any "principled" meaning! No doubt, those Communists who are sitting not in the Hotel de Luxe but in the concentration camp see these matters differently.

4. The resolution teaches us that the difference between Social Democracy and fascism involves only the "forms and methods of fascistization." That's all! In contradistinction to fascists, social fascists "defend the preservation of parliamentary forms while putting through the fascistization of the bourgeois dictatorship." But, on account of these "forms and methods," fascism wages a struggle against the Social Democracy not for life but to death, murdering its leaders, seizing houses and funds, and committing workers to concentration camps. We know that the Social Democracy is a party that adapts itself to every political power and that crawls on its knees even before the crowned representatives of the ruling classes; why is it, may we ask, that this utterly opportunist party that strives for fascistization becomes the victim of fascism, instead of adapting itself to it? Is it only because of nonprincipled "forms and methods"? The perspicacious leaders of the Comintern took note of "parliamentary forms," but they forgot about the political and economic organizations of the proletariat. Not by a single word do they recall that the Social Democracy can neither live nor breathe—that is, it can neither exploit democracy nor betray the workers—without leaning upon the political and trade-union organizations of the working class. Thus it is precisely along this line that the irreconcilable contradiction between Social Democracy and fascism takes place; precisely along this line does there open up the necessary and unbridgeable stage of the policies of the united front with the Social Democracy. Its attempt to leap over this stage cost the Comintern its head.

5. "The Social Democracy," in the words of the resolution, "continues to play the role of being the chief social support of the bourgeoisie also in those countries where an open fascist dictatorship exists." It is difficult to imagine an idiocy more provoking. The Social Democracy was driven from all its positions, entirely overwhelmed and trampled underfoot precisely because it had ceased to be of service as a support for the bourgeoisie. The place of the workers' bureaucracy that leaned upon the reformist organizations of the proletariat
and received fat bribes from the hands of finance capital has been taken by fascist thugs who lean upon the unbridled petty bourgeoisie. The essence of the overturn consisted in supplanting one "social support" by another "social support" if one were to use the terminology of the leaders of the Comintern: in reality what they have in mind is not social but political support.

Evidently, the wiseacres wish to express the idea that what fascism leans upon is the lack of confidence of the workers in themselves; and that reformism bears the guilt for this abject condition of the proletariat. Historically, this is true. But it is also true that the Comintern was founded in 1919 in order to liquidate the fatal influence of the Social Democracy. Up to 1923 the Comintern fulfilled this task successfully. Since then, for the last ten years, it has been systematically sliding downward.* By compromising the revolutionary methods in the consciousness of the toiling masses, the Comintern provided one of the most important conditions for the victory of fascism. This does not, of course, imply that the Comintern today plays the role of being "the chief social support" of Hitler; but this does imply that to overthrow Hitler it is necessary to finish with the Comintern.

6. "But," the resolution comforts us, "it [the Social Democracy] is already in the process of decomposition in the majority of countries." In a brief communication of the Thirteenth Plenum, the British Communist Party is advised to "redouble the struggle for the united front, attracting into it workers who still (!) follow the Labour Party and the trade-union bureaucracy." The little word "still" completely exposes the phantom universe that the bureaucrats of the Comintern inhabit. The British Communist Party is a sorry myth. And, on the other hand, the party of the Labourites, covered with betrayals, is preparing once again to assume power, for new betrayals. In 1926-27, the Profintern numbered a "million" workers in the ranks of the left wing in the trade unions. Nothing has remained today of this movement. We shall not speak of the

* Some of our critics have the following to say on this score: under Lenin, it appears, everything was fine, but after his death, everything went to the dogs; so where does Marxism come in here? The causes for the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR and the Comintern have been long since disclosed by us; no one has offered any other explanations; but the objective historical processes are realized through people; and specific personal influences can hasten or retard these processes. It remains an incontestable historical fact that Lenin's illness was widely utilized by the bureaucratic reaction, which prepared a road for itself by means of the rabid struggle against "Trotskyism."
collapse of the German party, which — alas! — will not be saved by the efforts of a few hundred or thousand self-sacrificing workers.

In France the split of the Socialist Party did not help the decomposing Communist Party a hair's breadth. The Unitary trade unions [CGTU] dropped from half a million to less than 200,000, while the reformist federation [CGT] grew from 300,000 to 800,000. In Belgium the Communist Party does not exist politically; the party of His Majesty's minister, Vandervelde, still continues to rule over the workers' movement. In Austria the Social Democracy is consistently leading the proletariat to complete debacle, while the Communist Party never emerged from its state of nonentity. Despite the fact that in Sweden and Denmark the Social Democracy has been in power for years the official Communist Parties in these countries remain nothing.

In Norway the perfidious reformist Tranmael, who in 1923 had slightly less support than did the orthodox section of the Comintern, received 45 percent of the votes of the population during the last elections, while the Communist Party has degenerated into a pitiful sect. In Switzerland the Social Democracy has been winning one canton after another while the Communist Party draws further and further back into obscurity. In Spain where the Social Democracy has borne the direct responsibility for strangling the revolutionary masses during the last few years, and where it has indubitably become weaker, and where anarcho-syndicalism had exposed its insufficiency on an unheard-of scale, the Communist Party failed to emerge from its state of nonentity. Everything seems to indicate that by passing over to the opposition side, the Spanish Socialist Party will regain its lost position once more.

The Polish Communist Party, which as late as 1931 represented a major political force, has completely frittered away its influence over the masses. The leadership of the working class has returned again into the hands of the PPS [Polish Socialist Party]. The reporter Kuusinen could have described eloquently how the Communist Party of Finland passed into limbo under his leadership. The resolution of the Thirteenth Plenum mentions by name only one country where it appears "the majority of the working class solidly follows the Communist Party in serried ranks"; this country is Bulgaria! But even in Bulgaria the workers did not react at all against the terroristic measures that were legislated against the Communist Party. These are the facts.

7. The "yearbooks" of the Comintern, a few years ago, gave the following data relating to the numerical strength of the Communist Parties:
Germany
1921 360,000
1923 400,000
1926 150,000

Britain
1921 10,000
1923 4,000
1926 5,000

France
1921 90,000
1923 52,000
1926 83,000 (?)

Czechoslovakia
1921 360,000 (?)
1923 154,000
1926 93,000

Norway
1921 97,000
1923 20,000 (after the split)
1926 7,000

With 1926, the statistics of the Comintern, as well as the publication of the yearbooks, come to a dead stop: before an abyss, one had best shut one's eyes. But the real decline, which assumed an irresistible character in the course of the "third period," began only in 1925-26. Outside of the USSR, where the party has been liquidated by bureaucratic strangulation, it would be no exaggeration to say that the total number of members of the Comintern is now 10 percent of the number in the period of its apex. As regards the Profintern, it would be necessary to cite a proportion even more depressing. The Krestintern [Peasant International] gave up its ghost long ago, and its very name has dropped out of circulation. The cited figures, however, provide far from a complete picture of the theoretical collapse of the Comintern and of the decline of its revolutionary prestige.

8. How does the Comintern itself explain these facts? It does not explain them but keeps mum on the subject. It makes a fleeting comment; only in speaking of the tasks of "mass work" of the Communist Parties does the Thirteenth Plenum remark that "their weakest side as yet (!) . . . is their work in factories and trade unions," that is, in the proletariat. Where is its strongest side? Evidently in the circus tent of Muenzenberg and in the Moscow Hotel de Luxe. What do the words "as yet" signify? The period when the Communist Parties were winning over trade-union and shop committees and when the Profintern was an imposing power lies in the past and not
the future. There is no retrieving the past. The policies of Zinoviev-Bukharin-Stalin-Manuilsky-Kuusinen ruined the Comintern.

9. Only a fraudulent, made-to-order optimism has remained of the strength that was frittered away. "It would be a right-opportunist error," the Thirteenth Plenum pronounces oracularly, "not to see now the objective tendencies of the intensified ripening of the revolutionary crisis in the capitalist world." And what does "intensified" signify? Is it in comparison with that situation when Hitler had not as yet conquered? And did this catastrophe result from a lack of "the objective tendencies of a revolutionary crisis"?

Had the Comintern placed, from 1929, or even from 1930 or 1931, at the foundation of its policies the objective irreconcilability between Social Democracy and fascism, or more exactly between fascism and Social Democracy; if upon this, it had built a systematic and persistent policy of the united front, Germany, within a few months, would have been covered with a network of mighty committees of proletarian defense, that is, potential workers' soviets. Had the government of the USSR announced in time that it would view Hitler's coming to power as a preparation to strike eastward, had it, by utilizing the favorable situation in Europe, at the same time taken the necessary preparatory military measures on the western boundaries of the USSR, it would have imbued a double assurance into the ranks of German workers, and Germany would have had all the chances of becoming a soviet republic. Europe and the entire world would have had a different aspect by now. Instead of this, the Stalinist Comintern, as well as the Stalinist diplomacy, assisted Hitler into the saddle from either side. After which Piatnitsky put his forefinger to his head and explained: The German workers surrendered to the executioner without a battle because . . . there was no revolutionary situation. Messrs. Strategists, how many "revolutionary situations" are you prepared to ruin? Fortunately your hands have become considerably shorter.

10. "The revolutionary development," the Thirteenth Plenum teaches us, "is, at the same time, both made difficult and hastened by the fascist madness of the bourgeoisie." To this equivocal phrase there is appended the following melancholy postscript: "At the given moment, the revolutionary hatred of the proletariat is growing in less open (!) forms in Germany." That's it! On the day after the fascist overturn, we had been promised a proletarian insurrection in the next few months, if not weeks; in fact, it was predicted that it would coincide with October. Whoever refused to believe it was branded a
counterrevolutionary. Subsequently in the plebiscite, Hitler re-
ceived forty-three million votes as against three million for
the opposition.213 "We are not to blame," replied all the Kuusin-
ens. "Hitler, you see, is applying terror." How unexpected!
Hitler seized power precisely in order to be able to operate
by means of terror. But if—as Messrs. Bankrupts originally
asserted—the assumption of power by the fascists acts to "has-
ten the revolution," then this should have manifested itself
first of all in the impossibility to cow the workers by measures
of terror, the more so, since not barricades were involved as
yet, but only the casting of opposition ballots. But it turns
out that fascism, after collecting seventeen million votes under
democracy, was able to terrorize twenty-five million more. If
this is an expression of "speeding up" the revolution, then there
is absolutely no difference between that and the deepening of
the counterrevolution. "Pessimism!" "Defeatism!" "Capitulation!"
will howl those upstarts, once again, who are paid for their
invariable readiness to call counterrevolution revolution the
moment it is demanded of them by their bosses. Workers, learn
to despise this bureaucratic rabble!

11. The directives of the Comintern—which do not rise above
the level of its theoretical analysis—contradict the latter, how-
ever, at every point. The Thirteenth Plenum prescribes to the
Communist Parties that they "painstakingly explain what eco-
nomic and political enslavement the fascist dictatorship has in
store for the toilers." Just now we were "painstakingly" instructed
that there is no "principled" difference between democracy and
the fascist dictatorship and that the Social Democracy fright-
ens the workers with the fascist destruction of democracy only
for the sake of fooling the workers. Suddenly, without any
logical transition, the leaders of the Comintern in chorus with
the Social Democrats proceed "painstakingly" to frighten the
workers with that enslavement that the victory of fascism bears.
One reads with revulsion and a feeling of shame this political
gibberish, which, however, is the lawful progeny of the famous
theory of the two twins: Social Democracy and fascism.

12. The plenum charges the Communist Parties with the
task of "arousing the masses for the timely defense of trade
unions, of the workers' press, workers' homes, the right to
strike, the right to hold workers' meetings . . . creating mili-
tant self-defense squads to repel terroristic bands." Obviously
the matter concerns the defense not only of Communist unions,
papers and homes but also of workers' organizations in gen-
eral. And since the Social Democracy is interested no less inti-
mately than the Communist Party in defending its own unions,
papers and workers' homes, then there imperiously flows from this the policy of the united front. Is it not then obligatory right now to turn to the Socialist Parties and trade unions of those countries where fascism is just getting ready for the offensive with the proposal of joint defense, of the joint functioning of the workers' squads? But the resolution keeps mum on this point. It dares not mention it, for fear of unwinding the entire chain of crimes committed by the Comintern.

13. The Executive Committee recommends fighting for the right to strike and the right to hold workers' meetings, in other words, for the democratic rights of the proletariat. To this must be added the defense of free elections and the inviolability of Communist deputies—and consequently the defense of parliamentarism itself against fascist and Bonapartist assaults. In what a cowardly, confused, circumspect and hem-and-hawing manner do the ill-fated leaders of the Comintern approach the question of defending the democratic positions of the proletariat! These masked demi-concessions are entirely insufficient for a correct policy; but they more than suffice for an indictment against the Comintern.

14. The resolution demands that the Communist Parties "put an end to the opportunist and capitulatory disdain (!) of trade-union work and, in particular, of work inside the reformist . . . trade unions." On the fifteenth anniversary of the Comintern, the plenum is obliged to explain to the Communist Parties that it is impermissible to cherish "disdain" toward mass working-class organizations. The most rabid foes have never uttered anything more annihilating about the Comintern than these few words. "Disdain" toward the proletariat and its mass organizations—that is the result, that is what has entered into the brain and marrow of the entire policies of bureaucratic adventurism.

15. And what of the perspectives? On this score, the resolution refers us back again to the question whether the victory of fascism speeds up the proletarian revolution. One could maintain with equal success that a shipwreck "speeds up" the voyage from Europe to America. The great importance of this question is patent: if fascism "speeds up," then it is permissible to repeat in France, Spain, Belgium, Holland, etc., those policies that were applied so successfully in Germany. One can have no doubts as to the happy results. All the more mercilessly must the Bolshevik-Leninists drive the theory and practice of bureaucratic adventurism out of the ranks of the workers' movement!

It is incontestable that the proletariat crushed by fascism
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1933-34)

will pass ultimately out of the defeat, but only at the cost of terrific sacrifices, equivalent to the political ruin of an entire generation. The experience of Italy clearly attests this.

As against the Italian example, the plenum advances the following conception: "In contradistinction to the first wave of the fascistization of capitalist states, which occurred during the transition from a revolutionary crisis to a partial stabilization, the capitalist world today is passing from the end of capitalist stabilization to the revolutionary crisis. . . ." The modicum of truth included in these words is lavishly diluted with lies. The victory of Hitler does not coincide at all with the transition from stabilization to crisis, because the unheard-of world crisis began in 1929, and Hitler conquered some four years later, at the moment when the general social crisis of capitalism may again be mitigated for a time by a conjunctural revival. In any case, one thing is indubitable: the contradictions of capitalism, internal and international, have sharpened monstrously, and all bourgeois regimes, including the fascist, are heading toward terrible experiences and tests.

On this point the resolution remarks: "At any moment the turn may occur that would signify the transformation of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis." The idea itself is old enough; the Bolshevik-Leninists explained long ago how and why our epoch is the epoch of political turns. But this idea is least of all applicable today precisely in relation to Germany. In every other country in Europe, a revolutionary situation may arise sooner than in Germany where the proletariat requires a considerable period to recover from the havoc and the demoralization, to recuperate and to regain confidence in its own forces. Needless to say, the victory of the proletariat in any other country would immeasurably speed up the process of the revolutionary resurrection of Germany.

The center of gravity is not lodged, however, in the revolutionary order of countries. In whatever country it may occur, "the transformation of the economic crisis into a revolutionary one" does not quite decide the question. In order that the revolutionary crisis be transformed into the proletarian revolution and not into a new fascist overturn, a correct policy is required and, consequently, a genuine revolutionary party. A new International is necessary.

16. There is no ground for taking pride in the fact that fifteen years after the foundation of the Third International it is necessary, in a certain sense, to begin from the beginning. But the guilt for so great a slide backward lies upon the leadership of the Comintern. The past cannot be remedied. One must take his point of departure from things as they actually
are in order to consolidate the international revolutionary vanguard on a new historic stage.

This is equally necessary both in the interests of the world revolution and for the salvation of the USSR. Today nothing threatens the world position of the first workers' state to such a degree as placing faith in the parasitic Comintern. In the moment of danger to the USSR, one can expect the same aid from Cachin and Jacquemotte as from Leon Blum and Vandervelde.

17. The plenum did not leave unnoticed the question of the new International either. After posing "the leftward trend of the Social Democratic workers" and the "dogfights among the social fascist leaders" that flow from this, the resolution takes note of the attempt to "concoct a new Two-and-a-Half International" out of the left splinters. The political thought of the leaders of the Comintern does not rise higher than the level of these cheap words. Yet, before us is the question of a new stage in the world working-class movement.

The influx of workers to the Social Democracy, coupled with the mortal danger of fascism, knocks the camp of reformism out of its old equilibrium and engenders in it new currents and differentiations. The present growth of the Social Democracy only prepares a new and much more acute crisis for it. One must go to meet this crisis with a clear strategic plan and not dismiss it with shallow witticisms upon the theme of "dogfights among the leadership."

One must understand that the Social Democracy was never before caught in such a fearful vise as now. It is no accident that in the last minute before the crash, Stampfer phoned the Soviet consulate seeking assistance against Hitler. The traditional division of labor between Blum and Renaudel has turned into a split. Blum, who led the venomous struggle against Soviet "imperialism," finds himself compelled to announce that the French Social Democracy now leads its "struggle for peace" in a united front with the USSR. The Belgian Social Democracy advances the recognition of the USSR as one of its chief slogans. Among Russian Mensheviks, tendencies are becoming stronger in favor of recognizing the Soviet state—as a workers' state. At the same time, an interest, partly simulated, partly sincere, is growing in the ranks of the left reformist bureaucracy in the ideas of the Bolshevik-Leninists. Even among the Russian Mensheviks, "innovators" appear who discover the progressive sides of . . . "Trotskyism."

One would have to be an infant to accept all this in a lump for sound currency; one would have to be a Kuusinen not to see in it anything more than "dogfights among the social-
fascist leaders." It is necessary to catch the squirming reformists at their own words and to impel the reformist masses to the road of action—beat the enemy with his own weapons.

Least of all does there flow from this perspective the courting of Social Democratic bureaucrats, the hushing up of their crimes, the exaggerating of their "services" and so forth. Such a policy is worthy of left centrism, which feels itself to be only the shadow of reformism and which fears to counterpose itself actually to reformism. He who seeks a road to the masses by conforming to reformist leaders will assuredly be cast away by the masses together with the compromised leaders. A consistent struggle against reformism! Not the slightest concession to centrism! These are the inscriptions on the banner of the Fourth International.

18. Under the present conditions, the left flank of the Social Democracy would evolve quickly to the side of communism if the road were not barred by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Failing to understand the historical dialectic of the degeneration of the Comintern, many "left" groupings halt midway and entertain notions of merging the two Internationals, of creating an intermediate International and similar reactionary phantasmagorias.

But alongside of these fence-sitting currents, for whom there is in store an uneasy evolution with inevitable internal splits, there are being extruded even at this moment more progressive groupings that set as their task the creation of the Fourth International, that is, the reestablishment of the policies of Marx and Lenin on a new and higher historical level.

The Thirteenth Plenum graciously takes note of this tendency also, "The hireling of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie, Trotsky, by his pathetic attempts to create a Fourth International... seeks without success to halt the transition of the Social Democratic workers over to the side of communism." It is quite in character for people who pass off the victory of counterrevolution as the "speeding up" of revolution to pass off Marxists for counterrevolutionists. It is not worthwhile to dwell on it. There is another side to the matter that is more interesting. It appears that "the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie" (evidently there exists a revolutionary one also!), which has the Social Democracy for its chief "social support" and which, at the same time, entrusts to fascism the blasting of its "chief support" although there is no "principled" difference between the two—this "counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie," it appears, requires over and above this... the Fourth International. At any rate, there is consolation in the fact that despite the efforts of counterrevolutionists "the transition of Social Dem-
ocratic workers over to the side of communism" not only is not being hindered but, on the contrary, is growing not by the day but by the hour. . . . Only people who spit upon the public opinion of the working class can lie so crudely and idiotically.

The decisions of the Thirteenth Plenum are permeated with the spirit of bureaucratic cynicism. The Comintern is dead for the revolutionary cause. Nor will it be revived by the Seventh Congress, which has been called at last for the "latter part" of the current year. The revolutionary movement will follow another course. The Bolshevik-Leninists have the right to be proud of the fact that history has placed upon them the mission of being the new trailblazers.
ON THE EVE OF THE
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS 217

(January 20, 1934)

The impending congress of the ruling party of the Soviet Union is being called upon to give its approval of the political leadership, the economic plan and the work of the Comintern, in accordance with a formula prepared in advance. However, these three closely interconnected spheres present a number of burning questions that the congress cannot and does not want to answer—not because these questions conflict with the interests of the workers' state but because their very presentation is incompatible with the interests of the ruling bureaucracy.

First of all, why wasn't a regular party congress convened for three years and eight months? Under the most onerous conditions of underground struggle and emigration, from the years of 1903 to 1907, four congresses took place: in Brussels-London, Geneva, Stockholm and again in London. The years of reaction and the complete decline of the party that set in interrupted the regular succession of congresses. Only in 1912 did a Bolshevik conference gather in Prague, equivalent in importance to a congress. No sooner did the revolutionary movement revive (1912-14) than the war broke out.

In April 1917 a new party conference was called, similarly equal in importance to a congress. Four months later, at the end of July 1917, under conditions of semi-illegality, the Sixth Party Congress assembled and set out the political premises for the October uprising. Eight months later, a new party congress was called upon to solve the Brest-Litovsk disagreements. The following five congresses were convened at regular intervals of a year, and each of them marked an important epoch in the development of the party and Soviet policy. Each congress was preceded by a discussion that unfolded with complete freedom.

Such was the regime prior to the death of Lenin and prior
to the declaration of war against "Trotskyism." The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Congresses had already taken place after great delays necessitated by backstage bureaucratic maneuvers. The Fifteenth Congress was called, contrary to the party statutes, more than two years after the Fourteenth; it was necessary to smash the opposition. In the autumn of 1927, the Central Committee decided—although the statutes did not and could not grant it such a right—to convene all future congresses every two years. This decision was carried not without inner friction in the apparatus itself; it was difficult to explain openly why the Bolshevik Party as a ruling party was denied the right that it had enjoyed in the revolutionary underground: the right to control its apparatus and to give it instructions for the future. The Sixteenth Congress (June 1930), however, was convened not two years after the Fifteenth (January 1928) but two-and-a-half years, that is, already in violation of the new statutes. Finally, between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses three-and-two-thirds years have elapsed. During the twenty months that the Central Committee ruled by usurpation, not merely in fact but according to the letter of the statutes as well, not a voice of protest was raised in the party. This was for two reasons: (1) no one believes that the apparatus congress is capable of changing anything in the work of the ruling group; (2) if anyone would try, in his simplicity, to protest, he would immediately be expelled from the party. The purge that preceded the congress expelled tens of thousands of people for lesser sins. If, in the classic period of Bolshevism, a discussion lasting a number of weeks preceded the congress, the present congress was preceded by a bureaucratic purge that dragged out for a half year. Under these conditions, the congress will be a ponderous parade of the bureaucracy.

Liberals and Social Democrats have frequently drawn a very superficial analogy between Bolshevism and fascism. The late Serrati,218 former leader of the Italian Maximalists and a Communist during the last years of his life, said to me in 1924: "To our shame, Mussolini learned more from the Bolsheviks than we did." It is not necessary to explain the irreconcilability of the aims that the two principal world currents serve: one wants to perpetuate decaying capitalist society by means of universal police rule, the other wants to liquidate classes and states by the methods of the revolutionary dictatorship, thus liberating society and the human being. But in the course of combat, mortal enemies frequently exchange weapons. The fact is that if in the struggle for power the fascists have borrowed greatly from Bolshevism, then in the last period the Soviet bureaucracy has familiarized itself with many
traits of victorious fascism, first of all by getting rid of the control of the party and establishing the cult of the leader.

It is impossible to read without a feeling of embarrassment and sometimes shame the Soviet press, where in each column, in each article, each telegram and report of a meeting, the "leader" is honored and praised in the very same unchanged and universally obligatory expressions. Even a journalist like Louis Fischer, who is not very critical with regard to the Soviet bureaucracy, found it necessary to point out the insufferable character of these standardized panegyrics.

The connection between deifying the leader and the leaders (local leaders are deified within the limits of a definite territory) and the violation of the statutes, the abolition of criticism of the leadership, the convocation of congresses at arbitrary intervals, after even more arbitrary purges, is absolutely evident. All these phenomena in their entirety mean the liquidation of the party as an active political whole that checks, elects and renews its apparatus. The first question that arises before the congress reads: where and why did the Bolshevik Party disappear?

For social development in general, for proletarian dictatorship in particular, a course and norms of pure reason cannot be prescribed. It is naive to say that the Soviet state is not a dictatorship of the proletariat merely on the basis that the given form of a dictatorship does not correspond to our a priori conceptions. But if reality cannot be judged by ideal norms, it is just as inadmissible and no less dangerous to elevate the Soviet reality into an ideal norm. The historic failure of the Comintern is caused primarily by the fact that it proclaimed the Soviet state, more precisely, the Soviet bureaucracy, as a categoric imperative. Meanwhile, the international proletariat as well as the Soviet state itself need nothing more urgently than free, unhhampered Marxist criticism.

The harsh character of the dictatorship is caused by the need of suppressing the resistance of the overthrown ruling classes and undermining their economic roots. But according to the official theory, this basic task of the workers' state is, in the main, achieved. The second five-year plan will merely have to complete it. The Seventeenth Party Conference already decided—this decision is now repeated day in and day out—that the task of the second five-year plan is not only the "liquidation of capitalist elements and classes in general" but "complete liquidation of causes that engender class distinctions and exploitation" as well. In the conditions that the second five-year plan is to create, state power will have nothing more to do. The struggle against external dangers would require, of course, also in a socialist society, a powerful military organi-
zation but by no means internal government coercion, not a regime of class dictatorship. Where the causes disappear, the consequences also disappear.

In reality, none of the rulers of the USSR believes in such a perspective. The second five-year plan, calculated on a full and complete liquidation of class distinctions, does not foresee at all a mitigation of government coercion, nor a decrease in the budget of the GPU. The ruling bureaucracy does not prepare in the least to give up its commanding positions; on the contrary, it supplies them with ever new and more material guarantees. Coercion, even within the formal framework of the party, already has such a harsh character as it never had during the years of civil war. Moreover, in all the official speeches and articles, the perspective of a further intensification of the methods of the dictatorship is pictured. This crying divergence between two perspectives, the economic and the political, demonstrates irrefutably that the ruling bureaucracy obviously does not know how to make both ends meet theoretically.

Young Soviet theoreticians, it is true, have attempted to present the matter in such a way that the socialist growth of the country and the liquidation of the classes lead before our very eyes to the mitigation and weakening of purely state functions. Some people believed them. Louis Fischer, in one of his generally not very fortunate excursions into the realm of theory, tried to present the merging of the Commissariat for Trade with the trade unions as the beginning of the liquidation of the state. In reality, we have only a merging of two bureaucratic apparatuses. The new statutes of the party, which are to be ratified by the Seventeenth Congress, make a decisive turn towards the merging of the state and the party—but how?—by a final and formal replacement of the party as well as of the mass Soviets by the single bureaucratic apparatus. It is a question not of the "withering" away of the state in Engels's sense of the term, but, on the contrary, of its further bureaucratic concentration. It is no wonder that the ruling leaders severely rebuked the careless young theoreticians for attempting to draw political conclusions from the "liquidation of the classes."

The withering away of the party in the socialist sense of the word presupposes the liquidation of politics in general, therefore also of state coercion, and signifies the approach to an anarchistic society and by no means to a bureaucratic regime. Is it this that we see in reality? If "politics" has disappeared in the USSR, it has disappeared for the masses only. All politics is monopolized, centralized, personalized. It would be the greatest naivete to think that the constant "deification" of the leader is engendered by personal bad taste and by official subser-
vience. This purely psychological explanation explains nothing. In reality, the deification of the leader is a necessary element of the present political regime of the USSR. Since the workers are denied the possibility of reelecting and directing their apparatus, some other instance is necessary to solve state problems. Disagreements within the uncontrolled bureaucracy must be settled from above, by the "leader," who is but the personification of the apparatus.

But if it is a question now not of the withering away of the state but of its highest intensification, there should be deep social contradictions that give rise to this process. In what direction must we look for them?

Polemizing in 1932 against the author of these lines in the columns of Das Berliner Tageblatt [The Berlin Daily], Radek explained to us with his usual playfulness that socialism means the nationalization of the means of production and distribution and nothing more, and that if working-class children do not get enough milk this is explained by the scarcity of cows and not by the absence of socialism. Despite all its captivating simplicity, this theory is radically false. Socialism presupposes not only the nationalization of the means of production but also the ability of the latter to satisfy all human needs. Precisely because of this, the old primers stated that socialist society is possible only on a certain level of development of the productive forces.

It is true that Social Democrats drew from this proposition the reactionary conclusion that the Russian proletariat must not take power in general. They came to the same conclusion for Germany of 1918 as well and, through the officers of Noske,220 brought this admonishment forcefully to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.221 But the conclusions of the Social Democracy are no less false than those of Radek. The theory of Kautsky, Otto Bauer, Leon Blum and others assumes an extremely harmonious evolution of social forms: having reached the necessary maturity, the productive forces invite Messrs. Socialist Leaders to power. Everything takes place within the framework of democracy, with full comfort for all the participants. In reality, the principal characteristic of historic development is the constant disruption of the equilibrium between the productive forces and politics, inside the productive forces themselves, for example, between industry and agriculture, between the social weight of the bourgeoisie and the weight of the proletariat, between the potential power of the proletariat and the real strength of its party, etc. Contradictory historic conditions forced the Russian proletariat to take power first, although from the point of view of "sensible" socialist account-
On the Eve of the Seventeenth Congress

ing it would have been infinitely more advantageous for the proletariat of the United States, England or Germany to have taken power first. Had the Russian proletariat, however, obeyed the Mensheviks and not seized power in 1917 and not nationalized the means of production, Russia would have been doomed to the fate of China.

However, the disproportions of the belated and jumpy economic and cultural development have not disappeared in the dictatorship of the proletariat: they have merely taken on an unrecognizable form. The productive forces of the USSR develop now in a nationalized form, but they still pass the stages left far behind by the advanced capitalist countries—especially if reckoned on a per capita basis. From this follow, despite the "liquidation of classes," the social contradictions of Soviet society as well as the great theoretical confusion of the leaders.

Socialism, that is, a society of harmonious production and distribution, presupposes at any rate that all the children should drink milk to their heart's content. If the cows are nationalized, but their number is insufficient or their udders dry, this is still not socialism, because for lack of milk conflicts arise: between the city and village, between the kolkhozes [collective farms], Sovkhozes [state farms] and individual peasants, between various layers of the proletariat, between all the toilers and the bureaucracy. Precisely these sharp constant conflicts that inevitably take on a social and, in their tendencies, a class character demand the powerful intervention from above, that is, state coercion. Sometimes we see how a fight about milk leads to a malicious destruction of dairy cattle, and this forces the government authorities to denationalize the cow, giving it back to the peasants as private property. Only very recently, the government found itself obliged for the same reasons to transfer horses to the lifetime use of the peasants. The real key to the puzzle of bureaucratic omnipotence lies in these simple facts. We say, and not at all for paradox's sake, that if certain ancient religions, also because of insufficiency of cattle, based themselves on the bull Apis, the religion of bureaucratic sovereignty also bases itself on the cow—not on the one that exists, but on the one that is lacking.

The problem is, of course, not exhausted by milk; it only begins with milk and bread. The contradictions pass through the whole system of economy and of social relations. The question, however, is too complicated and requires a special article.
A REAL ACHIEVEMENT

(January 24, 1934)

The transformation of Unser Wort into a weekly is a great achievement not only of the revolutionary wing of the German emigration, not only of the new party of the German proletariat that is now being built, but of the Fourth International as well. The strength of Unser Wort lies in the fact that it simultaneously serves both national and international tasks.

Some wise men, who understood nothing of the character of our epoch and learned nothing from the victories and defeats of the proletariat, try to reason as follows: first, we will build a national party and then, on a solid and safe foundation, we shall erect the International. This argument sounds very serious, circumspect, solid, but in reality it demonstrates philistine shortsightedness. The regenerating workers' movement does not begin history anew; it has a colossal past, similar in its main traits for all countries. The proletariat of the whole world had been united for decades by the Second International and the trade unions. After the world war, the proletarian vanguard united under the banner of the Third International. Not only the world crisis, fascism and the danger of war but the decline of the Comintern as well have an international character. It is clear that under the influence of the very same common causes advanced proletarian elements in all countries must seek a way out in the same direction. Can they, in this case, refuse the establishment of international connections, elaboration of programmatic and strategical questions, exchange of political experience and, finally, mutual practical support, already at the first steps of their work?

Some wise slow-movers go even further and say: "We do not want to split our ranks because of questions of the character of the Soviet state, the strategy of the Comintern in the Chinese Revolution, the policy of the Anglo-Russian Committee, etc., etc. We want simply to help the workers of our country to
carry on the class struggle." Thus reason, for instance, the initiators of the new American Workers Party (CPLA—Muste et al.). Of the same opinion are the leaders of the Swedish Independent Communist Party (Kilbom and others), the British ILP (Fenner Brockway and others), etc. If you will, the authors of the German pamphlet *Neu Beginnen* [Begin Anew] occupy even a lower place in this question. Can one imagine a doctor who would say that he is not concerned with the fundamental theories of anatomy, physiology and pathology, that he does not want to argue about the newest theories on cancer or malaria, but prefers "simply" to treat the patients of his locality? Not one thinking worker would trust the life of his child, or his own life, to such a pitiable dullard. No capitalist, on the other hand, would entrust the erection of a plant to an engineer who did not master thoroughly the fundamental theories of technology. Only in the sphere of politics, even "revolutionary" politics, does ignorant quackery continue so pretentiously as to argue against the scientific method. It is at times difficult to believe that the *Communist Manifesto* was written eighty-five years ago!

The disputed questions now splitting the world working-class movement have not an episodic nor a tactical but a principled, strategic and, by this very fact, international character. No matter how great the peculiarities of this or that country may be, they determine in our epoch merely the tactics and not the strategy of the working class. The importance of tactics is, of course, great; in the final analysis, all strategy dissolves into tactics. But we cannot make one correct tactical step without a strategic compass in hand. We cannot orient ourselves in the national situation without appraising theoretically the world situation, without drawing conclusions from the international experience of the working class, without outlining an international perspective, that is, without a program of a new International.

When deep-thinking people say: "Do not hurry; now is not the time for the Fourth International," they could with equal success say: "Do not hurry; now is not the time for the class struggle." It is a question not of the formal "proclamation" of the new International but of the building of a new party, not as an isolated national entity but as a part of the International.

The small *Unser Wort* is now the only organ in the whole field of the German working-class movement that realizes correctly, earnestly, in a Marxist fashion, the interrelation of tactics and strategy, of a national party and a new International. Precisely in this lies the guarantee of its success. In the epoch
of dissolution, ferment and confusion, political half-heartedness may sometimes register great successes that are of the greatest surprise to itself and blind it; but these successes are not trustworthy; they disappear together with the political conjuncture that gave birth to them. The successes of Unser Wort are of a different order; they are successes of method, system, Marxist clarity—these successes are solid.

Friends of Unser Wort must spare no efforts to insure the weekly appearance of the paper, enrich its content, enlarge its size, increase its circulation, facilitate its penetration into Germany and make ready for publication, alongside Unser Wort, of a theoretical monthly for the elaboration of the principal questions of our epoch, that is, the program of the Fourth International.

Hearty greetings to the editors, personnel, administration, readers and friends of the weekly Unser Wort!
Dear Comrade Parijanine,

My work on Lenin has not emerged and will not emerge so soon from the preparatory stage. I will hardly be able to give even the first chapters for translation before July.

In no way do I think a translation by you of Bunin could compromise you politically. It's a question of artistic not political literature; and besides, in general, a translator is not responsible in any way for the content of the work he translates; otherwise we would have to make Lenin responsible for the opportunist tendencies of the Webbs.

Thank you very much for sending *les Humbles.*

With sincere comradely greetings,

Yours,

L. Trotsky
CENTRISM AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

(February 22, 1934)

1. The events in Austria, coming after the events in Germany, placed a final cross over "classic" reformism. Henceforth only the dullest leaders of British and American trade unionism and their French follower, Jouhaux, the president of the Second International, Vandervelde, and similar political ichthyosaurs will dare to speak openly of the perspectives of peaceful development, democratic reforms, etc. The overwhelming majority of reformists consciously take on new colors now. Reformism yields to the innumerable shadings of centrism that now dominate the field of the workers' movement in the majority of countries. This creates an entirely new, and in a sense unprecedented, situation for work in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism (Bolshevism). The new International can develop principally at the expense of the now prevailing tendencies and organizations. At the same time, the revolutionary International cannot form itself otherwise than in a consistent struggle against centrism. Under these conditions, ideological irreconcilability and the flexible policy of the united front serve as two weapons for attaining one and the same end.

2. One must understand, first of all, the most characteristic traits of modern centrism. That is not easy; first, because centrism, due to its organic amorphousness, yields with difficulty to a positive definition; it is characterized to a much greater extent by what it lacks than by what it embraces. Secondly, never has centrism yet played to such an extent as now with all the colors of the rainbow, because never yet have the ranks of the working class been in such ferment as at the present time. Political ferment, by the very essence of the term, means a realignment, a shift between two poles, Marxism and reformism, that is, the passing through of the various stages of centrism.
3. No matter how difficult it is to make a general definition of centrism, which of necessity always has a "conjunctural" character, nevertheless, we can and must bring out the outstanding characteristics and peculiarities of the centrist groupings originating from the breakdown of the Second and the Third Internationals.

a. Theoretically, centrism is amorphous and eclectic; so far as possible it evades theoretical obligations and inclines (in words) to give preference to "revolutionary practice" over theory, without understanding that only Marxist theory can impart revolutionary direction to practice.

b. In the sphere of ideology, centrism leads a parasitic existence. It repeats against revolutionary Marxists the old Menshevik arguments (Martov, Axelrod, Plekhanov), usually without suspecting this. On the other hand, its main arguments against the right it borrows from the Marxists, that is, first of all from the Bolshevik-Leninists, dulling, however, the sharp edge of criticism and avoiding practical conclusions, thereby rendering their criticism meaningless.

c. A centrist readily proclaims his hostility to reformism, but he does not mention centrism. Moreover, he considers the very definition of centrism as "unclear," "arbitrary," etc.; in other words, centrism does not like to be called by its name.

d. A centrist, always uncertain of his position and his methods, views with hatred the revolutionary principle: state what is. He is inclined to substitute for a principled policy personal maneuvering and petty organizational diplomacy.

e. A centrist always remains in spiritual dependence on rightist groupings and is inclined to cringe before those who are more moderate, to remain silent on their opportunist sins and to cover up their actions before the workers.

f. The centrist frequently covers up his dawdling by referring to the danger of "sectarianism," by which he understands not abstract propagandist passivity (of the Bordigist type) but an active concern for purity of principles, clarity of position, political consistency and organizational completeness.

g. A centrist occupies a position between an opportunist and a Marxist somewhat analogous to that which a petty bourgeois occupies between a capitalist and a proletarian: he kowtows before the first and has contempt for the second.

h. On the international arena, the centrist distinguishes himself if not by blindness then by shortsightedness. He does not understand that in the present epoch a national revolutionary party can be built only as part of an international party. In the choice of his international allies, the centrist is even less discriminating than in his own country.
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1933-34)

i. A centrist sees in the policy of the Comintern only "ultra-left" deviations, adventurism and putschism, ignoring completely the right-opportunist zigzags (Kuomintang, Anglo-Russian Committee, pacifist foreign policy, antifascist bloc, etc.).

j. A centrist swears readily by the policy of the united front, emptying it of its revolutionary content and transforming it from a tactical method into a supreme principle.

k. A centrist readily resorts to pathetic moralizing to cover up his ideological emptiness; he does not understand that revolutionary morality can be formed only on the basis of revolutionary doctrine and revolutionary policy.

Under the pressure of circumstance, the eclectic centrist may accept even the most extreme conclusions only to retreat from them afterwards in practice. Having accepted the dictatorship of the proletariat, he will leave a wide margin for opportunist interpretations; having proclaimed the necessity of a Fourth International, he will work for the building of a Two-and-a-Half International, etc.

4. The most malignant example of centrum is, if you wish, the German group Neu Beginnen [Begin Anew]. Superficially repeating the Marxist criticism of reformism, it comes to the conclusion that all the misfortunes of the proletariat follow from splits and that salvation lies in the safeguarding of the unity of the Social Democratic parties. These gentlemen place the organizational discipline of Wels and Co. higher than the historic interests of the proletariat. And since Wels and Co. subordinate the party to the discipline of the bourgeoisie, the Neu Beginnen group, cloaked by left criticism stolen from the Marxists, represents in reality a harmful agency of the bourgeois order, even though an agency of second degree.

The so-called London (now Amsterdam) Bureau represents an attempt at creating an international focal point for centrist eclecticm, under the banner of which the right- and the left-opportunist groupings, which dare not choose finally a direction and a banner, try to unite. In this, as in other cases, the centrists try to direct the movement obliquely along a diagonal course. The elements composing the bloc pull in opposite directions: the NAP cautiously moves toward the Second International; the ILP—partly toward the Third, partly toward the Fourth; the SAP and the OSP—veering and vacillating—toward the Fourth. Exploiting and preserving the ideological amorphousness of all its participants and trying to compete in the work for the creation of a new International, the bloc of the London Bureau plays a reactionary role. The failure of this grouping is absolutely inevitable.

6. The defining of the policy of the Comintern as that of
bureaucratic centrism retains its full force now too. As a matter of fact, only centrism is capable of constant leaps from opportunist betrayals to ultraleft adventurism; only the powerful Soviet bureaucracy could for ten years assure a stable base for the ruinous policy of zigzags.

Bureaucratic centrism, in distinction from centrist groupings that crystallized out of the Social Democracy, is the product of the degeneration of Bolshevism; it retains—in caricature form—some of its traits, still leads a considerable number of revolutionary workers and has extraordinary material and technical means, but by its political influence is now the crassest, most disorganizing and harmful variety of centrism. The political breakdown of the Comintern, clear to the whole world, signifies of necessity the further decomposition of bureaucratic centrism. In this sphere, our task is to save the best elements for the cause of the proletarian revolution. Side by side with tireless principled criticism, our main weapon for influencing the workers still remaining under the banner of the Comintern is the further penetration of our ideas and methods into those wide masses who stand now in overwhelming majority outside the influence of the Comintern.

7. Precisely now, when reformism is forced to renounce itself, transforming or dyeing itself into centrism, some groupings of left centrism, on the contrary, stop short in their development and even move backwards. It seems to them that the reformists have already grasped almost everything, that it is only necessary not to play with exorbitant demands, criticism, extreme phraseology, and that then with one blow one can create a mass "revolutionary" party.

In reality, reformism, forced by events to disavow itself, having no clear program, no revolutionary tactics, is capable only of lulling the advanced workers to sleep by inculcating in them the idea that the revolutionary regeneration of their party is already achieved.

8. For a revolutionary Marxist, the struggle against reformism is now almost fully replaced by the struggle against centrism. The mere bare counterposing of legal struggle to illegal, of peaceful means to violence, of democracy to dictatorship, now goes beside the mark in the majority of cases, because the frightened reformist, disavowing himself, is ready to accept the most "revolutionary" formulas if only they do not obligate him today to a decisive break with his own irresoluteness, indecision and expectant waiting. The struggle with hidden or masked opportunists must therefore be transferred chiefly to the sphere of practical conclusions from revolutionary requisites.

Before seriously accepting centrist talk of the "dictatorship
of the proletariat," we must demand a serious defense against fascism, a complete break with the bourgeoisie, a systematic building of a workers' militia, its training in militant spirit, the creation of interparty defense centers, antifascist staffs, the banishment from their ranks of parliamentary, trade unionist and other traitors, bourgeois lackeys, careerists, too. Precisely on this plane the main fights against centrism must now be fought. To carry on this struggle with success it is necessary to have free hands, that is, to retain not only full organizational independence but also critical intransigence with regard to the most "left" offshoots of centrism.

9. Bolshevik-Leninists in all countries must realize clearly the peculiarities of the new stage in the struggle for the Fourth International. The events in Austria and France give a powerful impetus to the realignment of the forces of the proletariat in a revolutionary direction. But precisely this universal supplanting of open reformism by centrism develops a powerful, attractive force with regard to left-centrist groupings (SAP, OSP) that only yesterday were about to unite with the Bolshevik-Leninists. This dialectical process may produce the impression on the surface that the Marxist wing is again "isolated" from the masses. A flagrant delusion! The veerings of centrism to the right and to the left follow from its very nature. There will yet be tens and hundreds of such episodes on our road. It would be the most wretched faintheartedness to fear to go forward just because the road is strewn with obstacles or because not all the fellow travelers will arrive at the very end.

Whether the new opportunist vacillations of our centrist allies will prove conjunctural or final (in reality they will be of both kinds), the general conditions of the formation of the Fourth International on the basis of genuine Bolshevism become more and more favorable. The chase of the "extreme left" centrists after the ordinary lefts, of the lefts after the moderates, of the moderates after the rights, like the chase of a man after his own shadow, cannot create any stable mass organization; the miserable experience of the German Independent Party (USP) retains now also its full force. Under the pressure of events, with the aid of our criticism and our slogans, the advanced workers will step over the vacillations of the most left-centrist leaders, and, if it should become necessary, also over these very leaders. On the road to a new International, the proletarian vanguard will find no other answers than those that have been elaborated and are being elaborated by the Bolshevik-Leninists on the basis of international experience during ten years of uninterrupted theoretical and practical struggle.
10. During the past year, our political influence has greatly grown in a number of countries. We will be able to develop and broaden these successes in a comparatively short time under the following conditions:

a. Not to outsmart the historic process, not to play hide and seek, but to state what is;

b. To give ourselves a theoretical accounting of the changes in the general situation, which in the present epoch frequently take on the nature of sharp turns;

c. To heed carefully the mood of the masses, without prejudices, without illusions, without self-deception, in order on the basis of a correct estimate of the relationship of forces within the proletariat to avoid opportunism as well as adventurism and to lead the masses forward, not to throw them back;

d. Every day, every hour, to answer clearly to ourselves what our next practical step must be, tirelessly to prepare this step and on the basis of living experience to explain to the workers the principled difference of Bolshevism from all other parties and currents;

e. Not to confuse tactical tasks of a united front with the basic historic task: the creation of new parties and a new International;

f. Not to neglect even the weakest ally for the sake of practical action.

g. To watch critically the most "left" ally as a possible adversary.

h. To treat with the greatest attention those groupings that actually gravitate to us; patiently and carefully to listen to their criticism, doubts and vacillations; to help them develop toward Marxism; not to be frightened by their caprices, threats, ultimatums (centrists are always capricious and touchy); not to make any concessions to them in principle;

i. And once more: not to fear to state what is.
FRANCE IS NOW THE KEY TO THE SITUATION

A Call for Action and Regroupment After the French and Austrian Events

(Published March 1934)

We, the representatives of the International Communists (Bolshevik-Leninists) of the USSR, Germany, France, England, Italy, Spain, Holland, Belgium, the United States, South America, China and other countries, turn to you, workers of the world, in an hour of impending danger, with this appeal.

Since the crushing of the Austrian proletariat and the bloody fights in the streets of Paris, it is clear even to the blind that old methods of struggle, based on peaceful development, are completely exhausted. Rotting capitalism has no other resort except to suppress the proletariat, smash its organizations, crush its will and reduce it to abject slavery. The bourgeoisie will not and cannot wait until the proletariat gains 51 percent of the votes. The question will be settled by force. Finance capital is organizing and arming fascist bands. Mussoliniism is not an Italian but a world phenomenon. The gangrene of barbaric reaction is spreading over one land after another. France is next in order. February 6 marked the first rehearsal of fascist banditism. The same manifestations are in preparation in England. The prerequisites for fascism exist in the United States just as much as in Europe.

What a terrible degradation!

The proletariat is the only creative class in present-day society. On it depends the entire life of the country, its economy and culture. Together with the semiprolétarian masses, whose leader it is destined to be, the proletariat constitutes the overwhelming majority of civilized humanity. It is inspired by a great social ideal. During recent days in Austria, as throughout all modern history; it has shown itself capable of great self-sacrificing heroism.

Nevertheless, fascism, basing itself on the worst, most demoralized elements of the petty bourgeoisie, on human dust, the scum of the nation, gains one victory after another.

What is the cause of this? This is the question weighing on the mind of every worker. The answer is written in the flames of the events themselves. The cause lies in the bankruptcy of the leadership. The proletariat is betrayed, divided and rendered powerless from above.

For this the Social Democracy, the Second International,
bears the major responsibility. As long as the question was limited to peaceful parliamentary and trade-union struggles and settlements, the workers did not notice that the staffs were made up of narrow-minded petty-bourgeois types, ex-reformists and semirevolutionists who had become conservatives and, finally, common traitors. To these leaders (Wels and Hilferding, Vandervelde and de Man, Leon Blum and Renaudel, Lansbury and Henderson, Robert Grimm, etc.), the thoughts and feelings of bourgeois ministers, bankers, journalists and professors are incomparably nearer than are the thoughts and feelings of the proletariat, the unemployed, the small farmers, the starving youth growing up on the streets.

But a heavy responsibility rests also upon the Third International, which once rose high under the banner of the October Revolution but which, sinking ever lower and lower, has changed from the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat into an ossified bureaucratic apparatus. The Stalinist Comintern led the revolution in China and brought it to defeat. The Comintern took the revolutionary workers of the whole world out of the trade unions, isolated the left wing and thereby saved the conservative trade-union bureaucracy from collapse. The Comintern entered into blocs with individual bourgeois pacifists, chatterers and careerists, while rejecting joint action with proletarian mass organizations.

The Stalinist leadership of the Comintern says to the world proletariat: "Accept without dispute my commands or I will smash the fighting unity of your ranks and sabotage the defense against fascism." This was the policy of the most powerful section of the Comintern, its German section, through 1929-32, and this policy led to Hitler's victory. In Austria, thanks to the chain of crimes and mistakes of the Comintern, the Communist Party did not even succeed in raising its head. Finally, heedless of all tragic lessons, the Communist Parties of France, England and other countries proceed slavishly to repeat the criminal policy of the German Stalinists. The combination of Marcel Cachin and Leon Blum will inevitably lead to the same consequences as the combination of Thaelmann and Wels. Along this road complete and final catastrophe awaits the proletariat.

The result of the great October overturn in Russia was the Soviet Union. It showed the power and potentialities inherent in the proletariat. The Soviet Union remains today flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood. With all the power at our command, we call on every honest worker to come to the defense of the Soviet state in the hour of need.

Under the pressure of world imperialism, internal difficulties
and the mistakes of the leadership, however, a powerful bureaucracy has elevated itself over the workers' and peasants' soviets and now makes a religion of its infallibility. The autocratic rule of the unrestrained bureaucracy today constitutes a terrible danger to the further development of the peoples of the USSR and to the triumph of world socialism. The Communist International created by Lenin has fallen victim to its servile dependence on the degenerate Soviet bureaucracy.

A new party and a new International must be built.

Although in these words many hear the voice of "sectarianism" and "despair," this slogan is dictated by the situation in the world arena as well as in each individual country. There is no other way. Is it possible to reform or renew the Second International, pervaded by crimes and treacheries? The war and all postwar events answer: "No!"

The matter stands no better with the Third International. We Bolshevik-Leninists, known hitherto as the Left Opposition, have tried for ten years to reform the Comintern, to bring it back to the road of Marx and Lenin. Colossal events in all parts of the world have confirmed our warnings and appeals. In vain! The conservative ideas and the interlocking interests of the privileged bureaucratic group have proven stronger than all the lessons of history. It is impossible to rebuild the Comintern through the masses because it no longer depends on the masses.

The Second and Third Internationals have played themselves out. Now they are only obstacles on the road of the proletariat. It is necessary to build a revolutionary organization corresponding to the new historic epoch and its tasks. It is necessary to pour new wine into new bottles. It is necessary to build a genuinely revolutionary party in every country. It is necessary to build a new International.

The thinking worker must recognize the iron logic of these conclusions. But doubt born of the all-too-recent disappointments rises in him. A new party? This means new splits. But the proletariat needs unity above everything else. This is simply a pretext, largely arising from a reluctance to face great difficulties.

We reply that it is not true that the proletariat is in need of unity in and of itself. It needs revolutionary unity in the class struggle. In Austria almost the whole proletariat was united under the banner of the Social Democracy; but this party taught the workers capitulation, not fight. The Austrian workers have demonstrated that they know how to fight. With them part of the old leadership also fought courageously, but the responsibility for the defeat falls on the party as a
whole. Opportunistic "unity" has proven itself to be the road to ruin. In Belgium the party of Vandervelde, de Man and Co. has the overwhelming majority of the working class behind it. But of what value is this "unity" when the general staff of the proletarian army, thoroughly corrupted, crawls on its belly before the royal power, the patriotic bishop, the liberal city mayor, all the representatives of the class enemy? In little Norway, the opportunistic party led by Tranmael, which received 45 percent of the total votes cast in the last elections, is repeating every crime of the Austrian Social Democracy, crippling the proletariat and opening the door to Norwegian fascism. Such unity is a rope around the neck of the working class.

We need genuine, revolutionary, fighting unity: for the resistance against fascism, for the defense of our right to live, for an irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois rule, for the full conquest of power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the workers' state, for the Soviet United States of Europe, for the Socialist World Republic.

Social Democracy is devoted body and soul to the bourgeois regime. The Comintern has shown in practice its total inability to assemble the masses for revolutionary tasks. There remains for the proletariat only to bow its head under a slave yoke, a yoke even more terrible than that of the Middle Ages, or to forge itself a new weapon for its revolutionary liberation.

"Where, however, is the guarantee that the new International will not suffer shipwreck in its turn?"

A miserable, philistine question! In the revolutionary struggle, there are no guarantees in advance, and there can be none. The working class climbs up steps that it hews for itself out of granite rock. Sometimes it slips down a few steps; sometimes the enemy dynamites the steps that have been cut; sometimes they cave in because they were cut of poor material. After every fall, one must rise; after every slip down, one must reascend; every step destroyed must be replaced by two new ones.

A guarantee of success—if one must speak of guarantees—lies in the fact that we are enriched by the experience of the Second and the Third Internationals, which were of great service to the proletariat before they broke down. We stand on the shoulders of our predecessors. That is our greatest advantage.

We gather all who today have realized the perniciousness of the policy of the two outlived bureaucratic apparatuses. The correctness of our methods, our predictions and our slogans have been incontestably proved through the entire historic development of the last ten years, that is, the period of
the degeneration and decay of the Communist International.

Correct theories and a correct policy will inevitably clear a road for themselves and gather the majority of the world proletariat under their banner. Thus is revolutionary unity forged.

Here, however, we hear another answer that at first glance, seems most convincing: "The Fourth International will not crystallize at once, and meanwhile fascist pestilence stalks over every land with seven-league boots; is this the time to divide the ranks of the working class?" To this we answer: For the unity of the ranks in the direct struggle there is the Leninist united-front policy. Bolshevism was victorious in October 1917, thanks only to the correct application of this policy.

Marx and Lenin were not frightened by the splitting of opportunist and bureaucratic parties while they welded the real revolutionaries into an independent vanguard; at the same time, Marx and Lenin were ready to make practical agreements with any mass organization for the defense of the daily interests of the proletariat. The wisdom and strength of Leninism lies, on the one hand, in the theoretic and political intransigence of the party and, on the other, in the realistic attitude to the class, all its organizations and groups.

Leninism did not try to order the proletariat from above to follow it, but neither did it dissolve itself in the mass—and precisely because of this it gained the leadership of the proletariat.

Yes, throughout the world fascism marches forward with seven-league boots. But wherein lies its strength? In the confusion of working-class organization, in the panic of the workers' bureaucracy, in the treachery of its leaders. It would be sufficient for the proletariat of one country to offer merciless resistance to the reactionary band, to go over to the offensive, to seize power, for the attack of fascism to turn into panicky retreat and go down in ruin.

Between the USSR and a Soviet France, the dictatorship of the Nazis could not last two weeks. Mussolini would not be long in following Hitler to inferno. Defense is possible and necessary; from an active defense there would emerge the attack. It is necessary to throw all waverers overboard and to free ourselves of the vacillating—they will follow later—it is necessary today that the vanguard of the vanguard close its ranks in the international arena. The masses, harassed and made restless by terrible pressure and dangers, await an answer and demand a leadership. That leadership must be created.

*The greatest of all dangers is the war danger.* The whole world listens to the indistinct subterranean rumblings of ap-
proaching international collision. The leaders of the Social Democracy and the trade-union bureaucracy are preparing anew to assume the role of patriots, that is, hirelings of imperialism, to become suppliers of cannon fodder to their masters, the capitalists. Under the guise of "defense of the fatherland," they are preparing the slaughter of the peoples.

At the same time, the Comintern is replacing the revolutionary mobilization of the urban and rural masses with empty sound and fury, and tries in vain to hide its impotence by masquerade congresses. The proletariat can prevent a new war or shift its consequences to the shoulders of the exploiters in no other way than by regrouping its ranks from the ground up on a new basis, under the banner of the new International.

By taking the initiative, a small minority can, under wartime conditions, play a decisive role. Think of Liebknecht, think of Rosa Luxemburg, think of Lenin!

The miserable philistines may speak of our "sectarianism." To prepare for the future is not sectarianism, but revolutionary realism. To all working-class organizations, we offer a concrete program of action on the basis of the proletarian united front. Beginning today, we see active proletarian self-defense as the main task. Force against force! The workers' militia is the only weapon in the struggle against fascist bands, who sooner or later will have the aid of the official police.

A workers' militia, however, is not for parades or theater performances of the Amsterdam and Pleyel types, but for fierce struggle. A workers' militia is the mailed fist of the proletariat. Answer each and every blow with two blows. Carry the struggle to the point of exhaustion, to annihilation. Do not let the fascist enemy raise its head. Follow hot on its trail.

The general strike of February 12 in France was an impressive warning, but no more than that. Scenting the danger, the enemy has doubled, tripled and quadrupled its efforts. The working class of France, like that of the whole world, will be able to hold its position and win new conquests in no other way than by heroic battles.

The revolutionary defense must become a great school for attack. The workers of France have shown that their blood still runs hot with the flame of revolution that flared in the Paris Commune. But mere readiness to fight, as shown by Austria, is not enough. It is necessary to know how; organization is necessary; a plan is necessary; a general staff of the proletariat is necessary.

On February 12, the day of the general strike and powerful demonstrations, the workers of France forced the two bureaucratic apparatuses into a united front for twenty-four hours.
This was, however, *improvisation*, and for victory *organization* is needed.

The natural united-front apparatus in days of struggle is the body of proletarian representatives, the delegates from shops and factories, from workers’ quarters and trade unions: the *soviets*. Long before they become organs of power, the soviets are the *revolutionary apparatus of the united front*. In honestly elected soviets, the minority submits to the majority. The powerful logic of the struggle pushes us in this direction. Our conscious efforts must be bent in this direction.

Today proletarian France is next in historic order. Again in France is being decided not only the fate of France but that of Europe and, in the final analysis, of the whole world. Should fascism succeed in crushing the French proletariat, the whole of Europe will have to drink of the bitter cup. On the other hand, under present conditions the victory of the French proletariat would far surpass in significance even the October victory of the Russian proletariat!

Workers of the world, you can help the French proletariat best and most surely by an irreconcilable struggle against your own bourgeoisie. Call on the other French workers’ organizations to unite in the struggle! Under the fire of the enemy, gather the most intrepid, farsighted, devoted among you and weld them together into detachments of the Fourth International. Call upon and lead the toiling, the downtrodden, the unemployed masses into struggle. Penetrate every organization; explain, arouse, recruit! Do not lose a day, not an hour!

*Hands off proletarian organizations and the proletarian press!*

*For the democratic rights and the social gains of the proletariat!*

*Against reaction!* Against Bonapartist police rule! Against fascism!

*For the proletarian militia!*

*For the arming of the workers!*

*For the disarming of reaction!*

*Against the war! For the fraternization of the peoples!*

*For the overthrow of capitalism!*

*For the dictatorship of the proletariat!*

*For the socialist society!*

*Proletarians of both hemispheres!* The First International gave you a program and a banner. The Second International raised the widest layer of masses to their feet. The Third International gave the example of revolutionary action. The Fourth International will bring final victory!
RAKOVSKY'S DECLARATION
OF SUBMISSION

(Published March 10, 1934)

Rakovsky states that he will give up his struggle and submit to discipline. That is the only content of his declaration. In order to understand this declaration in its proper light—and naturally we condemn it—it is necessary to understand the situation in which Rakovsky was placed. In fact he had been placed in a condition of giving up his active struggle three or four years ago. He could neither communicate with his friends, nor write articles, nor receive the literature of the Left Opposition and information on the international labor movement generally. In his complete isolation he remained without any perspective whatsoever.

Rakovsky's declaration, far from being an ideological or political capitulation, is, at the same time, not only a highly regrettable but also a condemnable fact. Undoubtedly this example will be extensively utilized by the Stalinist bureaucracy in order to draw many of the youth, imprisoned and isolated like Rakovsky, on the path of capitulation in the manner not of Rakovsky but of Zinoviev.

We have reiterated many times that the restoration of the Communist Party of the USSR can only be accomplished on the international arena. The case of Rakovsky confirms this in a negative but striking manner. The Bolshevik-Leninists in the USSR do not learn from Pravda of the burning facts of international life: Hitler's victory, the danger of war, nor the crushing of the Austrian proletariat. They have no opportunity of orienting themselves in the true light of these events, nor of discerning the different formations in the workers' movement.

In order to re-create a powerful International Communist movement in the USSR, the struggle of the Fourth International must take form and become so powerful a factor that the Stalinist bureaucracy will no longer be able to hide it from the Soviet workers, the Bolshevik-Leninists included.

We register the purely formal declaration of the old warrior, who by his whole life has demonstrated his unshakable devotion to the revolutionary cause; we register it with sadness and pass on to the order of the day, that is, to the doubly vigorous struggle for the new parties of the new International.
Mankind is clearly being drawn into a new war by the so-called course of events, that is, the impersonal factor that in an emergency enables responsible politicians to establish their alibis. Two of the possible breeding places of war have already taken shape with an ominous clarity: the Far East and Central Europe. In both variations, which, by the way, can easily interfuse, the Soviet Union must inevitably be drawn into the whirlpool of events. This perspective poses the following question before every reflecting individual: just what does the Red Army represent? Concurrently, far too often political passions and tendentious publicity have turned this question into an insoluble enigma.

The author of these lines participated most intimately in building and training the Red Army during the first seven years of its existence; during the next four years he followed its development either personally or from access to original sources; during the last period—that is, his five years of exile—he could follow its evolution only in the role of an attentive reader. Needless to recall, his forced exile is bound up with the author's sharply critical attitude toward the policies of the present ruling stratum of the Soviet bureaucracy.

In no way intending to disclaim his own conclusions and evaluations, the author desires, first of all, to provide the reader with a brief review of the fundamental psychological and material elements of the problem, equipping him with certain general criteria that would enable him to grasp the true essence of the Red Army from beneath the veils of the enigma.

Excluding the two predraft ages—the years, nineteen and
The Red Army

twenty—the Red Army contains nineteen draft ages, from twenty-one to forty years; the term of active service is five years, with fourteen years of reserve service, first and second class. This implies that incorporated today within the ranks of those subject to military duty, there are still the four youngest age groups of the imperialist war; the three youngest age groups of the civil-war period—a greater number, actually, since youths of twenty and even nineteen were often drafted—and twelve age groups comprising those who had received or are receiving their military training under peacetime conditions.

Increasing at the annual rate of almost 3,000,000, the population of the USSR today is close to 170,000,000. A single draft right now comprises some 1,300,000 men. Allowing for the strictest physical and political examination, not more than 400,000 would be eliminated. Consequently, a standing army with a two-year term of service would have greatly to exceed 2,000,000 men. Such a burden, however, could not be borne by any national economy under the modern conditions of military technology.

From the very outset, the Soviet government aimed toward instituting a territorial-militia system. As early as the Eighth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, in the spring of 1919, the regulations, accepted in accordance with the military report presented by the author of this article, read as follows: "We would acquire the best army possible by creating it on the basis of the compulsory military training of workers and peasants under conditions closest to their daily routine of work. The general recovery of industry, the rise of collectivization and of the productivity of agricultural labor would create the healthiest basis for the army, the regiments and divisions of which would correspond to factories, districts, etc. . . . We are heading precisely toward such an army, and we shall attain it sooner or later."

But the militia, in its pure form, has its own Achilles' heel. A certain number of weeks or even months are required for mobilization before the territorial army can be set in motion. During this critical period, the frontiers of the country must be protected. Thus, the correlation of a territorial-militia system with a standing army is dictated by the position of a country whose immense far-flung frontiers are at a distance of 10,000 kilometers from one another. The proportions in which these two systems supplement each other today were not arrived at immediately, and they continue to change under the influence of growing technology and experience.

The czarist standing army, comprising 1,300,000 soldiers, the bulk of whom were illiterate and poorly equipped, was
dissolved completely within the 18,000,000 mobilized recruits during the war. The chain of defeats and, subsequently, the two revolutions of 1917 swept this army from the face of the earth. The Soviets had to build anew. Beginning with 100,000, the Red Army, in the course of the civil war, grew to 5,000,000. The standing, or cadre, Red Army was formed from precisely this field army, by means of consistent reductions. Today it numbers, all told, 562,000; together with the GPU troops, 620,000 soldiers, with 40,000 officers. The curtailments were made so that the army, though preserving in entirety its function of a military shield, would be capable of maximum subsequent expansion. Thus, an infantry division on peacetime basis numbers only six to seven thousand soldiers, that is, about one-third of its wartime strength. But precisely for this reason, the Red Army is not able to absorb into its ranks more than 260,000 soldiers, whose terms depend upon the nature of the service—two years in the infantry and four years in the navy. The balance of more than 600,000 recruits would have to be completely absorbed by the territorial troops, where the training term is from eight to eleven months. But the pure militia corps themselves likewise require standing cadres, about 1,500 men to a rifle division, that is, less than 10 percent of wartime strength. In order to be capable of absorbing the entire mass of the available human material, the cadres of the territorial divisions alone would have to exceed the present numerical strength of the army—620,000 men—in which case the country once again would be deprived of its military shield. For this reason, the cadres of the territorial corps are so fixed as to absorb annually a trifle more than 200,000 men. The 300,000-400,000 remaining youths have to get their military training under the supervision of these same cadres, but outside the regular army ranks, through improvised training battalions and regiments.

Up to now, this last category of drafted men has far from received its required six-month period of military training, and only recently has it been thoroughly covered. Over and above this, youths of nineteen and twenty receive the so-called predraft training, which generally takes two months, outside the ranks of the regular army. There remains to mention field exercises, drilling the civilian population—women among the number—in chemical warfare and the rapidly developing military sports. Within this sphere, exceptionally important is the public organization, Ossoaviokhim [Friends of Defense], with a membership of 12,000,000. Predraft training, field exercises, military training outside the territorial corps and the regular army—these are the basic elements of the complex and, in a certain sense, eclectic system. During autumn months, when
The Red Army

249

the alternate effective forces of the territorial divisions are assembled and when field exercises take place, up to 1,500,000 men are under the colors.

To give a detailed analysis of the Red Army, branch by branch, would be to encumber this article with a mass of approximate figures that may be obtained without much difficulty from reference books readily available. The general structure of the various military branches is determined much more directly by military technology than by the character of the social regime. A Soviet Army division approximates that average type that was developed in the advanced armies of the entire world after the war. Perhaps it may not be superfluous to point out that the general numerical strength of the peacetime Red Army is, to a certain degree, elastic. If need arises, the Commissariat of War has the right to detain soldiers for an additional period of four months. In general, the eclectic character of the system provides the opportunity to reinforce those sections that are threatened most without stepping outside the peacetime framework. Thus, there would be nothing surprising if it should transpire that, after strengthening the Amur frontiers or fortifying the approaches to a railroad, the war department had created special new military units for the defense of the strengthened positions.

As regards the probable size of a wartime army, one can give at best only the most general orienting data. In its recent estimates, the Soviet staff took as its point of departure a Germany that was disarmed and more or less friendly. Due to geographic reasons alone, there was, and is, little probability of the appearance of French or English troops in the Russian theater of war. Consequently, the blow from the West can be dealt only through the direct neighbors of the USSR—Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland—with the material support of much more powerful enemies. During the initial period of war, the bordering nations could muster together 120 infantry divisions. Setting the general, hypothetical numerical strength of the enemy armies at 3,500,000 men, the mobilization plan of the Red Army would have to assure for the western frontier an initial army of approximately 4,000,000. During a single war year, for every 1,000 soldiers fighting at the front, 750 men are required to fill in the gaps. Leaving out of consideration those returning from hospitals to the front, two years of war would draw out of the country about 10,000,000 men.

Extremely conditional as these figures have been hitherto, today they must, to a great degree, remain hanging in midair; Germany is arming itself feverishly and, besides, chiefly against the USSR. On the other hand, the adjoining states of second
and third rank, while they preserve in general a vacillating position, doubly seek to insure themselves by means of a rapprochement with their eastern neighbor. But the old estimates preserve some interest even now, since, in the meantime, only a very big question mark can be put at the basis of new estimates. As regards the far eastern frontier, here—during the next two or three years, at any rate—the fighting can involve hundreds of thousands and not millions of fighters, because of all the conditions of the war arena. The combined character of its military system results in the qualitative heterogeneity of the composite elements of the Red Army and its many-millioned reserve. This fact by itself, however, does not entail any special danger; an army in action represents a huge conveyor that pulls in gradually semifinished material and perfects it on the way. In any case, one thing is indubitable: the USSR's capacity for mobilization has as its limits not human but technical resources.

From 1928 to 1933, the official budget of the army and navy increased from 744,000,000 to 1,450,000,000 rubles, that is, almost double. These figures do not include expenditures that fall upon local Soviet organizations and public organizations—Ossoaviokhim and so forth. As regards the capital outlays for war industries, these are included in the estimates of the National Economic Commissariats, and not in those of the War Department.

The indices relating to Soviet industry have become the public possession of the civilized world. True, the figures of growth that stagger the imagination have met more than once with the objection that the disproportions between the different branches of the national economy reduce greatly the coefficient of the effective functioning of the new industrial giants. The author is all the less inclined to underestimate such criticism, since he himself has advanced it more than once against the excesses of the optimistic official estimates. But in relation to the question that interests us here, serious limitations must be put upon this argument. First, the law that now prevails in the economy of the entire world is the profound disruption of all proportions, internal as well as international. Secondly, the general question of the equilibrium in the national economy of peacetime loses a great deal of its acuteness precisely from the viewpoint of military necessity. Mobilization, which intrudes from above into national economic life and which forcibly subordinates the latter to itself, is itself an organized disruption of all peacetime proportions. In any case, state centralization will represent tremendous superiorities for the purposes of war; and these must outweigh by far conjunctural and even organic disproportions in national economy. Con-
centrating in its hands economic and military plans, the Soviet government has, besides, the unrestricted opportunity to lodge in time the perquisites for future militarization into the very equipment of the most important enterprises.

For appraising the military-industrial efforts of the Soviet power during the last few years, some support can be gleaned from Stalin's announcement to the effect that the first five-year plan was fulfilled not 100 percent but 94 percent, chiefly because of the forced transfer of a considerable number of factories from peacetime production to military purposes. The official balance of the five-year plan—"94 percent of the plan"—may be challenged, and it has been challenged by the author of these lines. But what interests us here is another side of the matter. Stalin finds it possible to appraise publicly the loss that resulted from the adaptation of peacetime factories to military needs at 6 percent of the total gross production. From this we may obtain an indirect but clear characterization of the supplementary sacrifices that have been made for the defense—6 percent is equivalent to approximately 6,000,000,000 rubles, a sum four times greater than the annual budget proper of the Red Army.

In the sphere of reequipping the army with artillery, decisive successes had been achieved even prior to 1932. During the last two years, the main efforts have been directed toward the production of trucks, armored cars, tanks and airplanes. As regards the construction of tanks, we may take as our point of departure the data relating to the production of tractors, which themselves are also very important to the army. Beginning practically at zero, tractor production has made a gigantic leap forward during the first five-year plan. At the beginning of the current year, there were already in the country more than 200,000 tractors; the present annual output of plants exceeds 40,000. The production of tanks has proceeded along a parallel course, attaining a very impressive scale, as evidenced by official reviews and maneuvers. The mobilization plans of the Red Army are based upon the requirement of thirty to forty-five tanks to each kilometer of the active front. According to the statement of Voroshilov, people's commissar of army and navy, "entirely up-to-date tanks are available in sufficient numbers." We see no reason to doubt the correctness of this announcement.

It is well known that, as a consequence of the World War, the navy was reduced to more than modest proportions. Out of 518,000 tons in 1917, only 82,000 remained in 1923. And even now the navy, which, it is true, has succeeded in reaching 140,000 tons, can pretend only to an auxiliary role in a sphere of defending the maritime frontiers. However, considerable
efforts are being made by the war industry to strengthen the material branches of the fleet, submarines in particular.

Aviation occupies an immeasurably more important place. During the civil war, there were some 300 planes, largely antiquated and dilapidated, at the service of the Red Army. The construction of the aviation industry had to be begun practically from scratch, primarily with the aid of German technology and German engineers. In 1932, about 2,300 planes and 4,000 motors were produced for both military and civil aviation. Indubitably, this number was greatly surpassed in 1933. According to the dispatch carried by the semiofficial Le Temps, which is exceedingly chary of addressing any praise to the USSR, the delegation of French technicians that accompanied the minister of aviation, Cot, last autumn was "astonished and enthused" by the successes attained.

The French specialists had in particular the opportunity to become convinced that the Red Army was producing heavy bombers capable of a cruising radius of 1,200 kilometers; in event of a war in the Far East, all the political and military centers of Japan will be subject to a blow from the maritime provinces. Early in March the London Daily Mail carried a dispatch that one heavy bomber was being produced daily in the USSR and that measures had been taken to assure the construction of up to 10,000 planes a year. Needless to explain, the demonstrative character of this dispatch was dictated by consideration of internal British politics. But we see nothing fantastic in the figures of the Daily Mail. The backward branch of aviation is the naval branch, where foreign models still predominate. But even here considerable achievements have also been gained in the last period.

In its report to the Disarmament Commission of the League of Nations, the government of the USSR specified 750 planes in the army for January 1, 1932. Taking this as a minimum figure—in any case, it is not exaggerated—and taking as our point of departure the fact that for the last three years the coefficient of growth of aviation has considerably surpassed the average coefficient set by Voroshilov for war technology as a whole, 200 percent—and this can hardly be disputed—it is not difficult to draw the conclusion that today there are more than 2,500 active planes in the army and navy. In any case, the potential productive power of the aviation industry on the side of the Soviets is immeasurably superior to that of Japan.

Aviation is indissolubly bound up with chemistry and, consequently, with that branch of industry that practically did not exist in czarist Russia. During the first five-year plan, 1,500,000,000 rubles were put into the chemical industry. In the past
year, the gross bulk of the chemical products was valued at 1,750,000,000 rubles. As compared with czarist times, the production of sulphuric acid has increased five times, the production of superphosphates as much as twenty-five times.

It is no secret that the Soviet government—incidentally, together with the governments of the whole world—did not bank for a moment upon the reiterated intentions to outlaw chemical warfare. Ever since 1921, the first Soviet laboratories producing poison gases and other substances have functioned systematically upon the basis of ever-more-extensive international information and with the assistance of qualified specialists. This work has never been halted for a single day. It is most difficult of all to venture forecasts in those most secret and ominous of spheres. Without in any way sinning against caution, it is possible, in my opinion, to state one thing: the Red Army is equipped, if not better, certainly not worse than the advanced armies of the West against any sort of catastrophic surprises in a sphere of chemical warfare—and, I may also add, bacteriological warfare.

However, the data relating to the outstanding quantitative achievements in the sphere of the production of artillery, machine guns, automobiles, tanks and planes requires an answer to the supplementary question: what is the quality of the military products? It is a matter of common knowledge that the record industrial figures were often achieved by a sharp worsening of the Soviet manufactures. Tukhachevsky,237 one of the Red Army commanders who pays the greatest attention to the complex demands of scientific technology, spoke at the last party congress very cautiously, but, in reality, very decisively in criticism of the belt-plan production.

The assertion of the Daily Mail purporting that the Soviet military planes are superior to the English contradicts directly the recent statements not only of Tukhachevsky but also of Voroshilov. It may be set down as an incontestable fact that the Soviet airplane motor still lags behind the best Western types.

In order to eliminate negative as well as positive exaggerations in the question relating to the quality of Soviet technology, we must not disregard certain considerations of a general character. During the first five-year plan, and to a large measure even now, the attention of the ruling circles was, and is being, concentrated upon those branches of industry that produce the means of production. In this sphere not only the quantitative but also the qualitative achievements are much higher than in the sphere of producing consumer goods. Though it may sound implausible, turbines and transformers are being made better in the USSR than shoes or wooden
tables. The loom, as a general rule, is superior to the calico woven on it. Under the capitalist regime, the pressure exerted by the consumers upon the entrepreneurs through the market assures the quality of the essential products. Under a planned economy, competition can be supplanted only by an organized control exerted by the consumers. The function of mass control is excessively weakened by the factual dictatorship of the Soviet bureaucracy, that of trusts among the number. The extremely low quality of the essential products indicates how far away the Soviet regime still is from the realization of those social tasks that it sets itself. Sooner or later, the struggle of the population for better-quality goods will be directed against the domination of the uncontrolled bureaucracy. But in cases where the customers, if not the consumers, are the influential grouping within the bureaucracy itself, in cases where the trusts work not for consumers but for other trusts and where, consequently, the delivery of orders is subject to specified guarantees, the quality of the products is satisfactory even now. And indubitably, the War Department is the most influential customer. Small wonder, then, that the machines of destruction are of superior quality not only to the consumer goods but also to the means of production.

Astonishing as it may seem, it is actually the case: the weak spot in the equipment of the Red Army at the present time is not guns and ammunition, not tanks, planes and gases, but horses. Parallel with the tempestuous industrialization and the feverish construction of tractors, the number of horses in the country dropped from 33,500,000 in 1928 to 16,600,000 at present—exactly one-half. The guilt for this blow to the national economy falls squarely upon the unpredmeditated and unprepared policy in the sphere of collectivizing the peasant holdings. The loss of 17,000,000 horses has been far from covered as yet by 200,000-odd tractors with a total of 3,100,000 horsepower. At the same time, the demand of modern armies for horses has remained almost unchanged, despite the motorization of transport and military equipment; today, even as in the time of Napoleon, one horse is required for every three soldiers. After learning how to produce airplane motors and magnetos at home, the Soviet government found itself compelled to purchase horses abroad for the army during the last few years.

But onerous as the decline in horse breeding is to the national economy, it would be erroneous to overestimate the influence of this factor upon the course of a possible war, especially in the east. A field army of 1,000,000 soldiers would require 300,000 horses. In any event, this number is assured, together with a subsequent quantity necessary to make up for losses.
It should also be added that the government, even though after considerable delay, has taken a series of measures to restore the stock of horses.

The question, however, is not restricted to horses alone. During the same period and for the same reasons, the country has suffered an equally serious drop in large and small cattle and has undergone extreme shortages in foodstuffs. This has led to hasty deductions, which have been drawn frequently in the world press, about the complete inability of the Soviets to wage even a defensive war. There is no disputing that the extremely yielding attitude on the part of Soviet diplomacy toward Japan up to the autumn of last year was dictated, among other things, by the foodstuff shortage. However, as the last year has demonstrated, the acuteness of this crisis was largely due to transitional circumstances. A single good crop has immediately raised the subsistence level of the country.

But even in the event of a poor crop, the government of a country that has a population of 170,000,000 and the monopoly of the grain trade will always be able to mobilize sufficient provisions for the front—obviously, of course, to the detriment of the rest of the population; but, in general, the civilian population of all countries, in the event of a new major war, has nothing to look forward to except famine and poison gases. In any case, the military supply bases in the Far East have been considerably replenished, thanks to the bumper crop. There is no reason for assuming that the Red Army may be caught unprepared with respect to any manner of supplies.

Beginning with 1918, the Red Army drew into its ranks 50,000 czarist officers, who composed 40 percent of the commanding staff, and about 200,000 noncommissioned officers, who played a very important role in the civil war. After the victorious conclusion of the civil war, about 80,000 officers were retired into the reserve. Today former czarist officers in the Red Army do not number even 10 percent. They have given place to the Red commanders who had passed through the revolution and the Soviet military schools and academies.

The party, the Young Communist League, the trade unions, the administrative staffs of the nationalized industry, the cooperatives, the kolkhozes and Sovkhozes serve to educate innumerable cadres of young administrators who become accustomed to operate with masses of people and goods and to identify themselves with the state; they constitute an invaluable reservoir for the commanding staff. Another independent reservoir is provided by the highest predraft training given to the student youth. The students are enrolled into special training battalions, sometimes regiments, outside the regular army. In the event of mobilization, these training corps can be success-
fully expanded into rapid training schools for the commanding staff. Each graduate of the highest educational institution must serve a term of nine months—one year in the navy and the air force—with cadre troops, after which he undergoes examination for the rank of a reserve officer. Those with secondary-school training are permitted to take similar examinations after twelve months of service—two years in the fleet. The proportions of this reservoir may be estimated from the fact that the number of students of both sexes is now close to 500,000, of whom about 40,000 graduate annually, and the number of students in the secondary schools is close to 7,000,000.

The junior officers—noncommissioned officers—who number 100,000, have to be trained from among the Red Army mass, in the course of actual service, by means of a special nine-month course in regimental schools. Certain difficulties arise in educating noncommissioned officers for the territorial corps. But in addition to holding over in the cadre-army volunteers who had completed their service term, the War Commissariat, leaning upon a series of auxiliary organizations, has sufficient resources at its disposal to insure the broad and intensive training of noncommissioned cadres, including the student youth among the number.

In the literature of the emigre officers and also partly in foreign military literature, it has become customary to speak somewhat contemptuously about the strategy of the civil war. The author, who for three years had to direct the day-to-day struggle against the lack of discipline and dilettantism and all forms of anarchy that accompanied the civil war, is not at all inclined to idealize the organizational or functional level of the Red Army during those harsh years. One must not overlook, however, the fact that these were the years of a great historical baptism for the army. Individual rank-and-file soldiers, noncommissioned officers, ensigns and lieutenants rose suddenly above the mass, disclosing talent for organization and capacity for military leadership, and they tempered their wills in a large-scale struggle. These self-taught men had to attack and retreat; they dealt and suffered defeat; and ultimately they emerged with victory. Subsequently, the best among them studied long and assiduously. From among the highest-ranking officers, all of whom passed through the civil war, 80 percent graduated from academies or took special courses to perfect themselves. From among the older commanding staff, about 50 percent received the highest military schooling, the rest, secondary. Military theory enabled them to discipline their minds, but did not kill the audacity that was steeled in the impetuous maneuvers of the civil war. Today, this gen-
eration is from thirty-five to forty years old—the age at which the physical and spiritual forces attain a balance, at which daring initiative leans upon experience, but is not yet crushed by the latter.

A Red officer may obtain charge of a battalion after eight years of service; after thirteen, a regiment; and after seventeen years, a division. These terms are still further shortened for those who graduate from military academies. The French delegation was astonished by the youth of the commanding staff of Soviet aviation; there are quite a few generals of the air force barely on the wrong side of thirty. Promotions in the service are achieved only through attainments in the service; promotions on the basis of seniority have been eliminated entirely. This system assures not only the youngest commanding staff in the world but also the selection of the most active and capable from among the youth.

In the Red Army, one-half of the soldiers and 70 percent of the officers belong to the party or the Young Communist League. The highest commanding staff is composed almost entirely of party members. True, in the event of mobilization, the percentage of Communists would drop considerably, but still not enough to loosen the political skeleton of the army. To what extent the present ruling party may be called Bolshevik or Communist—that is another question. But the party, such as it is, endows the army with an indubitable political unity.

So long as the czarist officers occupied the chief place among the commanding stratum, they had to be duplicated by political commissars with unrestricted powers. The system of dual power flowing from this had to be tolerated as a lesser evil, because it was necessary, first of all, that the commanding staff gain the confidence of the revolutionary army and that the latter be fused by the unity of the new doctrine. In his own time, Cromwell made the following reply to those pedants who spoke scornfully about the military training of the bulk of his officers: "And for all that, they are excellent preachers!" And with the aid of his commanders from among the artisans and merchants, Cromwell crushed the brilliant officerdom of the king. The Red Army, under its system of dual power, fared no worse against its enemies than Cromwell. Today, thanks to the fact that the officers have become Communists, and Communists, officers, the principle of single leadership so necessary in the army has been instituted. Officer and preacher have now been fused into a single person.

His blind herd instinct was the most distinguishing trait of the old Russian soldier, nurtured under the patriarchal conditions of his village world. What the West referred to, partly
in praise and partly in contempt, as the "Slavic soul" was the reflection of the amorphous and barbarous Russian medievalism. The "Christ-loving" army, which cast, at one time, an aura of omnipotence around czardom, was soaked to its marrow with traditions of slavery. In times long gone by, under the conditions of a semifeudal Europe, this army could have had its superior points as the most finished exemplar of a universally predominating type. Suworov, the generalissimo of Catherine II and Paul, was an incontestable master of the army of serf slaves. The Great French Revolution liquidated forever the military art of old Europe and of czarist Russia.

Since that time, it is true, czarism was still able to inscribe into its history annexation of stupendous territories, but it no longer won victories over the armies of civilized nations. A chain of great defeats and upheavals was necessary to remold in their flames the national character. The Red Army could be constituted only upon this new social and psychological basis. The Red warrior differs from the czarist soldier immeasurably more sharply than did the Napoleonic grenadier from the Bourbon soldier. The cult of passivity and of submissive capitulation before obstacles has been supplanted by the cult of political and social audacity and technological Americanism. Of the Slavic soul only a literary memory has remained.

The awakened national energy manifests itself in large and small things—first of all, in the growth of culture. The insignificant percentage of illiterate recruits is declining steadily; the Red Army does not let out of its ranks a single illiterate. Inside and outside the army there is to be observed a tempestuous development of all types of sport. During the current year, in Moscow alone, 50,000 workers in civilian jobs and schools received medals for marksmanship. The army is switching more and more to snowshoes, and this is of inestimable military importance because of the climatic conditions. In the sphere of parachute jumping, glider flights and aviation, the youth is attaining great successes. The Soviet record flights into the stratosphere are well remembered. These peaks serve to characterize the entire mountain range of achievements.

In order to appraise the strength of the Red Army, it is not in the least necessary to idealize things as they are. It is too soon, to say the least, to speak about the prosperity of the peoples of the Soviet Union. There still are too much want, misery and injustice and, consequently, dissatisfaction. But the notion that the Soviet national masses tend to await assistance from the armies of the Mikado or Hitler cannot be regarded as anything except delirium. Despite all the dif-
difficulties of the transitional regime, the political and moral ties between the peoples of the USSR are sufficiently strong; at any rate, they are stronger than those among her probable enemies. What has been said above does not at all imply that a war—even a victorious war—would be in the interests of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it would throw her far back. But the preservation of peace depends, at least, on two sides. Facts must be taken as they are: not only is war not excluded but it is also almost inevitable. He who is able and willing to read the books of history will understand beforehand that should the Russian Revolution, which has continued ebbing and flowing for almost thirty years—since 1905—be forced to direct its stream into the channel of war, it will unleash a terrific and overwhelming force.
Dear Comrade Sneevliet:

I was much interested in the theoretical article of Comrade de Kadt ("A Few Remarks on the Program of the New International") as it represents a very important theoretical avowal of one of the leaders of the OSP. I thought at first of waiting for the completion of this article in De Nieuwe Weg. But, as I note, this article still remains unfinished. However, even what appeared suffices. We know that centrism always holds back with all its strength from entering the field of "gray theory" precisely because it does not want to reveal itself clearly. De Kadt found himself impelled by the whole situation to take a stand on the programmatic problems of the new International, and this step of his can be regarded as nothing short of ominous.

In this letter I wish to touch on only a few points that, though lying in different planes, are equally characteristic of centrist thinking.

"It is not our task," de Kadt writes, "to present today the formulations that we consider necessary. The aim of these remarks is to establish in advance our right [!] to defend a nonorthodox point of view in the coming programmatic discussion." Here it is a question—is it not?—of working out the fundamental principles of the new International. It would be difficult to conceive in this epoch of a more important document. Under the circumstances, what should be the most urgent, immediate, deepest need of every Marxist revolutionist? At the least, the formulation of the most important observations, generalizations, statements and slogans that should be incorporated in the program precisely because it concerns the vital matter of giving the uprooted, disoriented, disappointed, groping workers the answer to the burning questions of our period. At least, so the question appears to us "orthodox" Marxists.
Not so, however, to de Kadt. He approaches the problem in a purely individualistic, subjective, dilettante fashion. For him it is a question not of formulating definite ideas, but of reserving the "right" to present a "nonorthodox" point of view in the future. The question of program is, however, not a question of right. What needs to be presented is the point of view and not the right to the point of view. Nobody in the working-class world is particularly concerned about whether anybody has the "right" to bring to light at some later day a nonorthodox point of view. What one wants to know is the point of view itself so as to test its real content. But the secret lies in the fact that the centrist has, in general, no definite, clear-cut, well-thought-out point of view. Therefore, he remains content with the right . . . to have no point of view.

Immediately following the above words of de Kadt, the latter continues as follows: "To give an example: must we continue to speak of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' when in reality the dictatorship can be exercised only through the socialist portion of the proletariat and the nonproletarian elements that are devoted to socialism? In reality, we have to deal with a 'socialist dictatorship,' a dictatorship exercised through socialists for socialism." Well said indeed: "to give an example"! The critic does not notice at all that by his "example" he attempts to sweep away, in passing as it were, the whole structure of Marxism. For here it is a question not of the name dictatorship of the proletariat but of the essence of the class theory of society. Marx, who at any rate was not satisfied with the mere right to ideas but had many a good idea, considered the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat as precisely his most important contribution to the science of society.

Back in 1852, Marx stated to Weydemeyer\footnote{241} that the class theory of society had been discovered and formulated long before him by bourgeois scientists but that he—Marx—applied this theory to the further development of capitalist society, carrying it to its final conclusion, that is, to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin wrote his book State and Revolution in which he clarified this fundamental Marxist tenet and freed it from the "nonorthodox" revisionist fog of Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc.

Now comes de Kadt, with his "right to a point of view," who makes plain to us "for instance" on the dictatorship of the proletariat: "Nothing of this sort exists at all," since in reality "the dictatorship is realized only through the socialist portion of the proletariat" and, what is more, nonproletarians participate in it too. In other words, it is a matter
not of the dictatorship of a class but rule by a like-minded group, a gathering of people around the idea of socialism. Thus we see that it is not classes that decide in history but ideas. It follows, therefore, that every self-respecting person must safeguard his right to ideas. De Kadt counterposes to Marxism, "for instance," a thoroughly idealistically metaphysical philosophy of history. A dozen lines suffice for him to break from the fundamentals of Marxism.

We poor "orthodox" ones believe even today that it is not ideas that determine the fate of society but classes; that social ideas—as the old, wise Italian Antonio Labriola said—do not fall from heaven, but give expression to immediate or historic interests of classes. The "idea" of socialism is the theoretical expression of the historic trend of the proletariat coordinated with the logical development of capitalist society. The relation between class and "idea" is not mechanical but dialectical. The class attains self-consciousness not through revelation but through difficult struggle, which also takes the form of an internal struggle within the proletariat itself. So—by your leave—our struggle against centrism is an important component part of the struggle of the working class for self-knowledge. It is inevitable, therefore, that in the process of development of the proletariat a crystallization of the most advanced, farsighted, courageous, of the elite, of the real vanguard, should take place. And only through the aid of this, its most important organ, can the proletariat fulfill its historic mission, that is, conquer power and maintain it in the form of a dictatorship until the complete liquidation of all antagonisms. That it is a question of a dictatorship of a class is proved by the relation between the class and its vanguard: without the support of the vast majority of the class, the establishing of a workers' state would be impossible. That the proletarian revolution is, however, accomplished through the intermediation of the vanguard is explainable by the heterogeneity of the proletariat as it is given us by history. Marx operated not with bare abstractions ("class," "socialism") but with historic realities, their actual interrelations and their effects on each other.

That deserters from other classes participate in the dictatorship is explained by the fact that we deal with living social matter in which classes merge into one another, affect one another, rather than dealing with the druggist's compartments in which each preparation has its special packing and label. It is precisely the decisive historic role of classes that imparts to the progressive class the ability to carry along with it the best elements of other classes. To declare the class theory null
A Centrist Attack on Marxism

and void on this account, as de Kadt does, is the same as to deny the law of gravity because a balloon travels up and not down.

Next De Kadt takes another "example," this time not against Marx, but against Lenin: "Why must we," he asks, "accept in our program the 'soviet principle,' since not even a trace of proof exists that the 'soviet's were anything (!) else than temporary (!!) forms of organization in which the masses unite immediately prior to and immediately after the struggle for power." The idealist and metaphysician is not inclined to attribute to the "soviet principle" any great importance, for soviets are nothing more than "temporary" forms of organization; they serve the proletariat only "immediately prior to and immediately after the struggle for power." We Marxists are not at all set upon including in our program "eternal," "ever­lasting" values; we are satisfied just with "temporary" things like soviets, which— and de Kadt admits this too—are instruments of the seizure and maintenance of power by the proletariat. So far, that is completely sufficient for us. We are willing to grant the "right" to de Kadt and his co-thinkers in the future to invent far more "eternal" forms of organization; first, however, let them try at least to create "temporary" soviets and to conquer power.

In this fashion I could take up the whole article, sentence by sentence, to prove that—except for meaningless platitudes—de Kadt's article consists only of horrible mistakes against the fundamentals of Marxism. De Kadt never mentions the lights that have given him inspiration. Certainly they are not Marx, Engels and Lenin. But in his latest, revisionist revelations we find only echoes of Bernstein, of the German Neo-Kantians and also of the Austro-Marxists. And all that should serve for the setting up of the program of the new International? Oh no! De Kadt will have to look for some different application for this.

Our critic is very harsh with regard to Bolshevism, even the genuine—Lenin. He does not want to "idealize" it. That is not at all necessary. But what de Kadt says on Leninism is truly lamentable. We are faced here not with principled criticism but with distorted facts, anachronisms, misunderstood relations, false, personal estimations, etc. Refuting all this would, without being of any great value, take up too much time. It is sufficient to establish here that de Kadt criticizes most severely the "system of Lenin-Trotsky" in order to attach himself to the system of ... Tranmael. Hand in hand with the Norwegian Social Democracy, which is only the diluted edition of Austro-Marxism, de Kadt wants in a "revolu-
tionary" manner to reconstitute the international working-class movement . . . on the basis of principles that will be revealed to us only later.

We do not want to dispute anyone's "right" to a distorted point of view. But to the Dutch workers we want to say with full conviction: to build a party on the philosophy of de Kadt is to build on sand. Beware of doing so; build on Marxist granite!

L. Trotsky
ONCE MORE ON CENTRISM

(March 23, 1934)

De Fakkel's criticism of my article ("Centrism and the Fourth International") is highly characteristic of the makeup of the leadership of the OSP as well as of left centrism in general. It therefore deserves to be analyzed.

Is it correct that the main tendency of the working-class movement of the world consists in the transformation of reformism into centrism? De Fakkel disputes it. It believes that the striving to orient the movement towards the right is to be observed everywhere simultaneously. It points, thereby, to the French Neo-Socialists, the Belgian Labor Party and the Dutch Social Democracy. The facts indicated by De Fakkel only confirm—when one knows how to interpret them in Marxist fashion—my assertion.

Why were the Neo-Socialists ejected from the old party? Because it was clothing itself with centrism. The right wing changes into a conservative, nationalistic clique that has nothing more to do with the working-class movement. The Belgian example is also a case in point. De Fakkel reminds us of Vandervelde's recent avowal of allegiance to the king. But there is nothing new in this. The plan of de Man is not new. In substance as well as by its author's admission, the plan is but an attempt to obliterate the line of demarcation between reform and revolution. Precisely in this is the essence of centrism.

Monarchistic servility indicates only that we must distinguish between centrism and centrist. There are honest centrist moods of the masses, and there are consciously lying centrist designs of old parliamentary cheats of the masses. But such designs have become necessary precisely because of the shift of the party base to the left. In essence the matter stands no differently also with the British Labour Party, although in tempo and in phenomenal form it is quite different. The going-over of the MacDonald clique to the reaction, on the one hand, the
expulsion of the ILP from the Labour Party, on the other, are two very significant symptoms of the above-mentioned processes.

In the coming period, we will inevitably observe a new development of centrist currents in the Labour Party. That the German Social Democratic leadership with Wels, as well as the leaders of Austro-Marxism, now clothe their philistine prejudices in the language of "revolution" is widely known. In countries with a backward political development, the Social Democratic apparatus can afford, in the face of threatening dangers—the growth of fascism and, simultaneously, of internal centrist opposition—the attempt to hold its positions by clinging to the right, to the state, and by repressions against the left, against its own opposition. The formation of the OSP in Holland was the first step in the open decomposition of the old Dutch Social Democracy. The development will proceed in this direction.

As a matter of practical policy in every country, it is naturally very important to keep track not only of the general tendency of development but also of the stages through which it passes. For Holland, as well as for every other country, it is of importance, however, to recognize in time the centrist disguise of former reformism so that reformism itself will be combated not by centrist but by Marxist methods.

Viewed historically, reformism has completely lost its social basis. Without reforms there is no reformism, without prosperous capitalism, no reforms. The right-reformist wing becomes antireformist in the sense that it helps the bourgeoisie, directly or indirectly, to smash the old conquests of the working class. It is false to consider the Neo-Socialists a working-class party. The split did not weaken the old French Socialist Party; it strengthened it since, after the cleansing, the party enjoys greater confidence on the part of the workers. But it must adapt itself to this confidence, and the form of this adaptation is called centrism.

Left-centrist groupings such as the OSP are not conscious of this process of which they form a component part. Precisely because they feel their principled weakness and their inability to give the working class a clear answer, they must divert the attention of the workers from centrist sickness to reformist danger. In this they resemble old liberalism, which always scared the workers with reaction in order to hold them back from the fight against liberalism itself. Therefore, for instance, the declarations of the OSP and SAP to the youth conference contain nothing or almost nothing on centrism. However, it is well known that it was precisely those parties that did not
permit themselves in the past to be held back from a merciless fight against liberal vacillations that always proved to be the bravest fighters against reaction. The same holds true now. Those revolutionists will fight reformism best who are absolutely independent of centrism and view it critically and intransigently.

The London-Amsterdam Bureau is unable to fight against reformism since it is a mutual aid society for the vacillating and hesitant. *De Fakkel* says: "The aim of the Bureau is to win for the Fourth International as many adherents as possible." The OSP could have joined the Second International with the same justification. That we must fight for the Fourth International wherever possible is clear. This task, however, means an irreconcilable struggle against the treacherous policy of Tranmael and certainly not a brotherhood in arms with him. That they "criticize" Tranmael meanwhile makes matters worse, since he is criticized only to the extent that the working agreement with him remains unbroken, that is, *apparent criticism* is made, which only serves as a cover for the out-and-out reactionary bloc. The gallant Shakespearean actor who was supposed to play the lion at the court feared to frighten the beautiful ladies and therefore roared as softly, as tenderly as a kitten. Our highly respectable left centrists become very gruff to Bolshevik "sectarians"; to the Tranmaels they coo like doves.

*De Fakkel* acknowledges our characterization of the Comintern as that of bureaucratic centrism. This, however, is only lip service, since the whole working alliance with the Amsterdam Bureau is nothing else but a wilted, sickly edition of the infamous Anglo-Russian Committee. There also were found British "lefts" of the type of Finn Moe* who were used as bait by the real leaders. In defending their brotherhood with Tranmael, *De Fakkel*, as well as *Die Neue Front*, repeats all the old arguments of Stalin and Bukharin ("masses," "masses" and again "masses"!), but in a worse form, if anything.

Thus I cannot recognize the validity of a single argument that *De Fakkel* brings against my article, by which, however, I do not want to say that there are no flaws in the article. Thus, for instance, one could point out correctly that the article does not reveal sufficiently the practical and organizational inadequacy of centrism. Centrists like to speak of illegality, of conspirative underground methods. As a rule, however, they do not take their own words seriously. They like to

*Besides its left Finn Moes who face the OSP and the SAP, Tranmael has also his right Finn Moes, whose face is turned towards the king's palace.*
poke fun at bourgeois democracy; in practice, however, they always show naive trust in it. For instance, when they call together an international conference, it is handled as though it were a matter of a picnic; and the result is a catastrophe with a toll of heavy human sacrifices. If the matter should be looked into a little closer, it will invariably be found that such organizational slovenliness is connected with the ideological looseness of centrism. Woe to those who cannot learn from experience!

It is true that the organizational base for the Fourth International is as yet very narrow. In 1914, however, the basis for the Third International was even narrower. The work of building up did not consist, however, of groveling before opportunist organizations of the NAP type but, on the contrary, of struggling for the liberation of the workers from the influence of such organizations. The real initiators of the Fourth International begin with Marxist quality to turn it afterwards into mass quantity. The small but well-hardened and sharply ground ax splits, hews and shapes heavy beams. We should begin with an ax of steel. Even here the means of production is decisive.

With regard to the OSP, as in all other cases, we draw a distinction between the centrism of the workers, which is only a transition stage for them, and the professional centrism of many leaders, among whom there are also incurables. That we will meet with the majority of the OSP workers on the road to the Fourth International—of this we are quite certain.
GREETINGS TO LA VERITA

(March 25, 1934)

To the Editorial Board, La Verita

Dear Comrades,

Yes! the Italian proletariat needs a genuine Marxist paper. Nothing shows more clearly the complete corruption of the Social Democracy and the Stalinist party than the fact that an organization like Giustizia e Liberta [Justice and Liberty] can claim to have an independent revolutionary role. Almost a century ago Marx mercilessly banished justice, liberty, etc., from democratic mythology, and now in the thirty-fourth year of the twentieth century the bourgeois, antifascist Italian intellectuals are saying, not without success, that it is necessary to restore to their thrones, in all their splendor, the goddesses who had been dethroned. They are not so expert when they speak openly of the need for "the myth of liberty." The myth is always a twisting, a deformation of reality; in its political application, a lie. Like the priests of the church, the republican antifascists work with lies to save the soul.

How are we to explain this unheard-of relapse? Only by the monstrous bankruptcy of the two workers' parties.

I would like to recall here an interesting episode. On June 15 and 16, 1932, the Social Democratic communal council of Zurich shot down a revolutionary workers' demonstration. To justify itself, the Swiss Social Democracy wrote, "Lenin and Trotsky did no different with their enemies." In one of my letters to the Zurich workers, I permitted myself to recall the "trifle" that we had defended the workers' state and socialist property while the Social Democrats defended the bourgeois state and capitalist property. The head of the Italian Social Democracy, Nenni, then replied, saying that our comments were only "sophisms": inasmuch as the Bolsheviks defended their power in the state and the Social Democrats did the same in the city of Zurich, the only difference between
them was quantitative. Then I said to myself, what a wretched theoretical and political level Signor Nenni is at! Even after the lesson given by Mussolini, he thinks it is possible to conquer power piecemeal. He does not understand that capital tolerates Social Democratic "power" in the communal and cantonal councils only so long as Nenni's friends, in the exercise of this power, are prepared to shoot down every revolt against the capitalist state and capitalist property.

Communal and parliamentary successes are one thing, the conquest of state power is an altogether different thing. The fate of the Vienna Commune will provide a sufficiently important lesson on this theme. Italian fascism will be able, indeed, to face the future without worry if it does not meet other enemies than Nenni and his party.

As far as the Italian Stalinist party is concerned, it can be said that it has done everything possible to compromise the principles, the banner and the name of communism. On the fringes of democracy, for some time at least, it will be able to lead a militant existence, even with an entirely false policy, especially when it has certain financial resources at its disposal. But in illegality that is not enough. In that condition, the party can be built only on devotion, loyalty, persistence, the spirit of sacrifice. And these qualities can be aroused, mobilized and tempered only when the policy of the party inspires trust, that is to say, when it shows itself to be correct in even more difficult tests. The Italian example shows that it is impossible for an illegal party with a false policy to exist for long.

Giustizia e Liberta can only occupy the gap that occurs between the collapse of the old parties and the building of the new, genuine Bolshevik Party. Fascism can be overthrown only by proletarian insurrection. In order to lead this insurrection to victory the proletariat needs a real class party. The beginnings will be difficult, for the ground is strewn with ruins and wreckage. But this work must be done. You wish to rally the genuine Bolshevik elements under the banner of the new party. Under this sign I warmly greet your paper!

Leon Trotsky
To the Leadership of the Communist League of America

Dear Comrade Swabeck:

I hope you have already received from the International Secretariat its expression of opinion in regard to the plans for fusion with the American Workers Party.

You know that the attempt once made here for fusion with the SAP and with the OSP did not succeed in either case. It did not succeed with the SAP because they did not want to, nor with the OSP because our section refused. In England the attempt to enter the ILP led to a split in our section. If you can accomplish the fusion with the AWP, then we will in any case be enriched by an important experiment, and in this epoch we must experiment to a certain degree. We are sufficiently firm in principle and sufficiently centralized, also, internationally, to permit ourselves such an experiment. To propose from here or to recommend the fusion with the AWP would be impossible. We are too far away and know too little about the concrete situation. Since you, however, have undertaken the fusion on your own initiative, we can from here extend our confidence that you will carry the matter through to its conclusion.

I shall appreciate very much hearing further news from you about the League and about the relations with the AWP.

L. Trotsky
Christian Rakovsky and Trotsky in the 1920s.
Rakovsky's declaration making known his intention, in view of the acute sharpening of international reaction, to submerge his differences with the "party" and to submit completely to "discipline" came to many as a bolt from the blue. And no wonder! In the course of the years of his exile, the old fighter was transformed from a human figure into a symbol, not only for the International Left Opposition, but also for wide strata of the working class in general.

The average reader’s reaction to Rakovsky's surrender is that it is a victory for the bureaucracy, or—if this stratum be given its personal pseudonym—a great victory for Stalin! True, Rakovsky did not declare his views false nor sing Byzantine paeans of praise to the bureaucratic leadership, but in any case by his declaration he acknowledged that in the struggle against international reaction cessation of the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy is necessary. If, from the purely individual point of view, his declaration contains nothing of the revolting and shameful self-abasement and self-degradation that have become now indispensable conditions for "Bolshevist" party loyalty, it appears at first glance all the more important from the political point of view.

It would, however, be absolutely false to dwell only on the immediate impressions and purely psychological effects of events. It is the bounden duty of every Marxist to appraise Rakovsky's case not as a case in itself but as a political symptom, that is, to bring it in relation with the deeper processes of development.

More than half a year ago, we wrote: "The extremely difficult conditions under which the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists work exclude them from the possibility of playing the leading role on the international scale. More than this, the Left Opposition group in the USSR can develop into a new party only as a result of the successful formation and growth of
the new International. The revolutionary center of gravity has shifted definitely to the West, where the immediate possibilities of building parties are immeasurably greater" ("The Class Nature of the Soviet State").

These lines were no chance remark but, rather, summed up the whole experience of the last decade. The Russian Left Opposition, which set itself the direct aim of reconstituting the Bolshevik Party and of shunting its policy back on the rails of the international revolution, succumbed in the struggle. One may suffer a defeat because one pursues a fundamentally false policy. But also with a correct policy one may fall victim to an unfavorable relation of forces. Engels repeatedly pointed out that a revolutionary party that suffers a decisive historic defeat is inevitably reduced to nought organizationally. At first glance it would seem that the fate of the Bolshevik Party, which, despite the defeat of 1905, twelve years later achieved the greatest revolutionary victory in world history, contradicts this. But, on closer scrutiny, this example only strengthens Engels's statement. As a mass organization, the Bolshevik Party disappeared from the scene during the years 1907-11. There remained only a few scattered, for the most part, vacillating cadres; there remained a tradition; there remained, above all, the emigrant staff with Lenin at the head. The rising tide of 1912-14 brought a new revolutionary generation to its feet, roused a part of the Old Bolsheviks out of their lethargy and thus created a new party organization, which was historically—but in no way organizationally—the continuator of the old Bolshevik Party. This example by no means exhausts the question with which we are concerned, but it offers certain points of support for its understanding.

The Left Opposition began with the struggle for the industrialization and agrarian collectivization of the Soviet Union. This fight it won in a certain sense, namely, in that, beginning with 1928, the whole policy of the Soviet government represents a bureaucratically distorted application of the principles of the Left Opposition. Without this the Soviet Union would not be in existence any longer. But the economic questions of the USSR formed only one part, and a subordinate one at that, of our program, whose center of gravity rested in the sphere of international revolution. And in this sphere we have during the last eleven years, together with the whole world proletariat, suffered nothing but defeats: in 1923 in Bulgaria and Germany; in 1924 in Estonia; 1925-27 in China; 1926 in England and Poland; 1928-32, the progressive bureaucratic degeneration of the Comintern; 1933, the Nazi victory in Germany; 1934, the Austrian catastrophe. In all these events and processes, the analyses and prognoses
of the Left Opposition have been strikingly although, unfortunately, negatively confirmed. One may read carefully, for instance, the novels of the French writer Malraux\textsuperscript{256} *Les conquérants* [*The Conquerors*] and *La condition humaine* [*Man's Fate*]. Without fully realizing the political interrelations and consequences, the author presents here an annihilating indictment against the Comintern's policy in China and strengthens in a most striking manner through his images and figures all that the Left Opposition had already laid down in its theses and formulas before the events themselves. No one can dispute these invaluable theoretical triumphs of the Marxist method! Just so, in the year 1905 it was not the Marxist method but the Bolshevik Party that was defeated. Later, after a period of years, the methods proved victoriously correct. Right after the defeat, however, 99 percent of the cadres—including the members of the Central Committee—quit the party, turned into peaceful citizens, sometimes even into philistines.

It is not by chance that national reaction triumphed in the USSR on the basis of the social achievements of the proletarian revolution. The proletariat of the West and the oppressed peoples of the East exhibit nothing but defeats. Instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of fascism spreads. Irrespective of what the reasons for this may be, since the revolution itself proved inadequate, the idea of the international revolution was bound to suffer discredit. The Left Opposition, above all, as the representative of the principles of the international revolution, experienced a loss of confidence in the eyes of the toiling masses of the Soviet Union. This is the real reason for the growth of the autocratic rule of the bureaucratic apparatus in the Soviet Union and of its national-conservative degeneration.

Every Russian worker feels now too with his whole heart his solidarity with the proletariat of the rest of the world and hopes that it may be finally victorious, but the international revolution as a *practical factor* has gradually disappeared from the field of vision of the Russian masses. They pin their hopes on the economic successes of the Soviet Union; they discuss passionately the problems of food and shelter; they grow optimistic on the basis of a good crop—but what concerns the international working-class movement has become the profession of Manuilsky-Kuusinen-Lozovsky, whom no one in the country takes seriously.

As to the spiritual makeup of the ruling upper crust of the Soviet Union, one example is highly illuminating—how Kirov\textsuperscript{257} expressed himself at the last party congress. "How beautiful it is to live now it is almost impossible to express." Kirov is no chance figure; he is a member of the Political Bureau
and the political governor-general of Leningrad; he occupies that post within the party that Zinoviev held at the pinnacle of his influence. That Kirov rejoices over the technical successes and the mitigation of the food scarcity is quite understandable. There is not an honest worker in the whole world who does not rejoice over this. The frightful part of it is that Kirov sees only these national partial successes but leaves out of sight the whole field of the international workers' movement. Military dictatorship rules in neighboring Poland, the worst reaction in all other neighboring states. Moscow is forced to preserve "friendship" with Mussolini, and the Italian proletariat remains, after twelve years of fascism, still completely powerless and dispersed. The Chinese Revolution was wrecked; Japan rules in Manchuria; the Soviet Union sees itself forced to deliver to Japan the Chinese Eastern Railroad, the most strategic instrument of the revolution in the East. In Germany the Nazis have scored a victory without a fight, and no bureaucratic cheat or trickster will dare any longer to pass this victory off for the "acceleration" of the proletarian revolution. In Austria the chained and bleeding proletariat lies prostrate on the ground. The Comintern is compromised beyond redemption; it has become a brake on the revolution. Despite its crimes, the Social Democracy becomes anew the strongest party of the working class and in all "democratic" countries prepares the way for fascist slavery. In France Thaelmann's policy is being carried on by Thorez. In Germany while the flower of the proletariat languishes in concentration camps and prisons, the Comintern bureaucracy seems to be conniving, almost consciously, with the Social Democracy to make the whole of Europe, yes, and the whole world, into one fascist concentration camp. And Kirov, a member of the leading body of the first workers' state in the world, admits that he lacks words to express the joy of living today. Can this be simple stupidity? No, the man is not stupid; moreover, he gives expression not only to his own feelings. His winged word is repeated and praised by the entire Soviet press. Speakers and listeners alike simply forget the whole world; they act, think, feel only Russian and, even in this frame, only bureaucratically.

The capitulation statements of Sosnovsky and Preobrazhensky reflect the same spirit. They close their eyes to the world proletariat. That alone makes it possible for them to reconcile themselves to the national perspectives of the Soviet bureaucracy. And if they seek reconciliation, they need it because they see no point of support, no lever, no great historic possibility in the storms of proletarian catastrophes in the West, following one on the heels of the other.
After Hitler's victory, which brought the prehistory of the Fourth International ("Left Opposition") to an end, it was not easy for us in Germany as well as in Europe in general—that is the law of inertia that rules in all fields—to realize that now we must build new proletarian parties in relentless struggle with the old. Had we, however, not taken this road in time, the Left Opposition not only would not have emerged from its prehistory into its own history proper but would have disappeared from the political scene altogether. How much more difficult, however, it is for the old cadres of the Left Opposition in the USSR, dispersed, isolated, disoriented or, what is worse, systematically misinformed, to embark on the new road. Rakovsky has a great revolutionary temperament, a personality, a lucid mind. But no one should be deified. Rakovsky, too, is only a man and, having been for years separated from the great historic perspectives that inspire the cadres of the Fourth International, the "human" in him won the upper hand. By this we do not at all mean to justify Rakovsky. For fighters to explain does not mean to forgive; it means only to strengthen one's revolutionary certainty.

The Gleichschaltung [elimination of opponents] proceeded downwards for years from revolutionary internationalism to national reformism, from Lenin to Kirov. Thus the victory over Rakovsky is only the most glaring symptom of the degradation and wreckage of Marxism in the country that became a workers' state due to Marxism. A remarkable dialectic, a bitter dialectic, but it is actually here and cannot be evaded by mental acrobatics.

Rakovsky's declaration is the expression of a subjective impasse and of pessimism. Without exaggerating by a hair's breadth, we can say that Stalin got Rakovsky with the aid of Hitler. That means, however, that Rakovsky's road leads to a political nowhere. His example can carry away a dozen or more young comrades. In the scope of the international politics of the proletariat, it will change nothing. In Rakovsky we mourn a lost political friend. We do not feel ourselves weakened by his elimination from the struggle, since it strengthens, although tragically from the personal point of view, but politically unshakably, our fundamental principles. As a revolutionary factor, the Comintern is dead. From the Moscow leadership, the world proletariat can expect only obstructions, difficulties and sabotage. The situation is difficult to an unheard-of degree, but by no means hopeless, since our difficulties are only reflections of the difficulties of world capitalism as refracted through both bureaucracies. Two processes run alongside, into and through each other: on the one hand, the decomposition of the old structure, the renunciation of old beliefs, ca-
pitulations before Hitler and, as a shadow thereof, capitulations before Stalin; on the other hand, however, the awakening of criticism, a feverish search for the broad revolutionary road, the gathering of the cadres of the Fourth International.

The Leninist current in the Soviet Union can, from now on, only be revived by great revolutionary successes in the West. Those Russian Bolsheviks who remain true to our cause under the unheard-of pressure of national reaction—and there are more of them than we suspect—will be recompensed by the further course of development. But now the light will come not from the East but from the West. Even the shamelessly betrayed Chinese Revolution waits for a new impulse on the part of the world proletariat.

We have no time to weep long over lost friends—be it even comrades of thirty years of struggle. Let every Bolshevik say to himself: "A sixty-year-old fighter with experience and prestige left our ranks. In his place I must win three twenty-year-old ones and the gap will be filled." Among the twenty-year-old ones, new Rakovskys will be found who, with us or after us, will carry forward our work.
To All Members of the Greek Section of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninists)

Dear Comrades:

The conflict that brought the Greek section in opposition to all other sections of the International Communist League has led with iron logic to a sharp internal struggle in the Greek section itself. Because of the enormous importance of this question, I consider it my duty to present my point of view to you in full frankness.

From the very first, I was struck by the fact that for the past several months your Central Committee had not replied to the letters of the International Secretariat, that it seemed to ignore all its requests for information and its proposals, in other words, that it behaved as if it had already broken de jure with the International League. Needless to say, I was overjoyed to receive the March 10 letter of the majority of your Central Committee because I hoped it would indicate the desire of Comrades Witte, Manos and others to reconstitute the international ties broken by them. To my great regret, the contents of this letter are disappointing to the highest degree. The letter is written with unheard-of animosity and extreme venom. The tone of the letter—thoroughly poisonous—would be understandable only if the majority of your Central Committee has decided to break with the International League of Bolshevik-Leninists. But I refuse to believe it. The attempt of the majority of your Central Committee to make you believe that its blows are directed solely against the International Secretariat does not hold water. The International Secretariat is composed of the most important European sections. If the Greek section is not represented—which I personally regret very much—it is solely due to financial difficulties that do not permit your section to keep a representative abroad. We
have the kind of International Secretariat that corresponds to our strength. The most important of our sections have in recent periods scored great successes in a series of countries. Great perspectives open up before us. It is clear, of course, that the International Secretariat does not claim infallibility; but there can be friendly criticism, the aim of which is the amelioration of the common work, and there can be hostile criticism, which injures all our sections and tends to destroy the organization.

Where does this animosity come from? Originally, as we know, the conflict started within the International Secretariat and the French section. The march of events was not tardy in throwing light upon the conflict. Only after the French League purged itself of the decomposed elements did it become possible for it to broaden its mass work. Its successes in this field are very important; its influence on large sections of advanced workers grows constantly. And, on the contrary, the groups that broke off under the influence of Witte have already come to a split and continue to disintegrate. They do not carry on any political activity. Such are the facts. Against the facts abstract judgment is powerless.

And what about the International Secretariat? During a long period of time, all sections without exception complained of the passivity of the Secretariat, which, despite the presence of a permanent secretary, could not even cope with current correspondence. During the last months, despite the grave financial difficulties and the absence of a permanent secretary, the work is being done systematically. The International Secretariat not only carries on a regular correspondence with all sections but also has edited a series of issues of the Bulletin, worked out a draft of theses on the question of war, edited a manifesto, organized a conference of international youth, etc. Such are the facts. If these facts are considered honestly, without factional prejudice, without personal bitterness, one cannot but recognize that the International Secretariat has made a considerable step forward during the last six months.

The fact that Comrade Witte took a wrong position inside the International Secretariat and the French League does not, it is clear, constitute a crime in itself. Who does not make mistakes in political work? But after a wrong position was refuted by definite and indisputable facts, to insist on it any longer and to try to carry it over to other sections means to put one's personal ambitions above the interests of revolution and socialism. This is altogether inadmissible. In such cases, the rank-and-file militants must correct their leaders.
The second phase of the struggle has developed already inside the Greek section. In this it is much harder for me to give my opinion since I do not read Greek. But the majority of your Central Committee writes that in Greece it goes to the defense of the same "principles" that Comrade Witte practiced in the International Secretariat and in the French League. If this is so, there can be no doubt for me that these are the same principles that have suffered shipwreck. Of course, I do not speak of the time when Comrade Witte was in accord with our international leadership on all fundamental questions and did not pretend to any personal policy apart from it. I speak of the recent period when Comrade Witte, starting with small and secondary questions, has set himself sharply in opposition to our general leadership and to all our most important sections. Here it is a question no longer of single mistakes but of the incorrect principled line of Comrade Witte. After the experience with the French League, for any Marxist acquainted with the facts there cannot be the slightest doubt of it.

Trying to find an explanation for its hostile policy with regard to the International League, the majority of your Central Committee refers to the split of 1903 between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. The odd group that detached itself from the French League under the leadership of Comrade Witte refers in its declaration (see International, No. 12 of November 11, 1933) to the year 1903. Thus, we have here a system of a sort that cannot be called anything other than a system of preventive splits, since those who refer to the year 1903 recognize by this very fact that the only way out is by a split. Are the members of the Greek section in accord with this conclusion?

The majority of your Central Committee says that the struggle concerns organizational principles. What are these principles? In France, in fact, Comrade Witte defended the right of every member not to submit to the discipline of his organization, the right of a member of the IS to carry on a policy behind the back of the Secretariat directed against the Secretariat itself, the right of the minority of the organization not to submit to the decision of the overwhelming majority of the conference—in a word, the worst principles of individualism and anarchism. In Greece, so far as I can judge, the majority of the Central Committee now defends and applies principles directly contrary in denying to the minority the rights and the possibilities of defending openly its position before all the members of the organization. Thus individualist anarchism transforms itself into the opposite, that is, into bureaucratic
centralism. But the two extremes, which, in general, easily pass into each other, have nothing in common with Bolshevism, which builds an organization on the basis of the principles of democratic centralism not only on a national but on an international scale as well.

In the interpretation of the experience of the year 1903, the majority of your Central Committee errs completely. Organizational principles do not suffice in and of themselves. Through organizational forms policy makes its way; through policy a program reveals itself; in the program our theory finds its expression. However, it happens often that political and programmatic differences not yet developed, as yet unformed, manifest themselves in the beginning solely in the organizational field. Thus it was in 1903. But it is precisely for this reason that the Bolsheviks did not consider the split admissible. On the contrary, they demanded the maintenance of unity, of discipline, and a new congress honestly convoked. It was only after profound differences in policy and program manifested themselves that there began the real formation of two factions that led to a definite split in 1912, that is, nine years after the congress of 1903.

What is the conclusion from this? It is clear that by themselves organizational conflicts do not suffice to determine the depth of the differences; even less for a split. Until deep political and programmatic differences clearly manifest themselves, it is the duty of every revolutionist to safeguard the unity of the organization on the basis of democratic centralism. It is precisely this that the International Secretariat urges.

The reference to the year 1903—I must say again—is entirely to the disadvantage of the majority of your Central Committee. The Mensheviks started in 1903 with the defense of superdemocratic principles sometimes approaching anarchism. I personally wrote in that epoch a series of erroneous articles against centralism, although I never went so far, for example, as Comrade Witte with regard to the French League. But when the same Mensheviks took possession the following year, with the aid of Plekhanov, of the majority of the central institutions of the party, they immediately changed their course; they began by imposing orders on the party from above and opposed by every means the convocation of the congress of the party. After a few months of struggle, the Bolsheviks found themselves forced, outside of the Central Committee and against the Central Committee, to build their own center for the convocation of the congress. I firmly hope that the majority of your Central Committee will not take the road of the Mensheviks and will assure a single congress.
Thus, we see that in interpreting in a just and serious manner the lessons of the year 1903, we must arrive at the following conclusions:

a. At the present stage of the differences, that is, insofar as they have not transcended the field of organizational conflicts, one can as yet draw conclusions neither on the depth of the differences nor on their final outcome.

b. It is therefore necessary, on one hand, to guarantee the unity of the organization, on the other, to take all measures for a serious and honest examination of the differences not only in the sphere of organization but also in that of policy and program.

c. These two aims cannot be achieved otherwise than by the method of democratic centralism, that is, by means of the widest discussion, in a congress convened honestly and by the submission of the minority to the majority.

d. A discussion in a loyal party presupposes that the two groups under the same conditions submit to the knowledge of the whole party in writing and orally their points of view on the questions in dispute; every nucleus must have the possibility of hearing the representatives of the majority of the Central Committee as well as those of the minority of the Central Committee. This possibility must be assured by the Central Committee. It was thus and in this invariable manner that matters were arranged in the Bolshevik Party before its bureaucratic degeneration.

e. The congress of the party must be the mirror of the party. This means that from the time that a discussion bearing on platforms has surged up in the organization a congress must be convoked on the basis of proportional representation. This is the ABC of workers' democracy that all honest revolutionists must keep in mind.

f. Our organization is not only nominally but also in essence an international organization. That means: it places not only national discipline above local discipline but also international discipline above national discipline. From this follows particularly the necessity of submitting in time the theses of both groups that combat each other to all our sections to give them the opportunity to express their opinions before the congress.

So far as I can judge from letters, our International Secretariat is of the same opinion.

I do not doubt at all that an overwhelming majority of your section will keep its connection with the International League. The break of this link would signify a reversion to national cadres, the loss of an international horizon, the renunciation
of an international division of labor in the field of revolutionary theory and of revolutionary practice. You will not allow your section to be brought to such a catastrophe, which would open up the road to your ruin. You will call upon your Central Committee to reconstitute the normal fraternal relations with the International Secretariat and to prepare with its aid the convocation of a democratically organized congress. It is only thus that you can get out of the crisis. In this work you can count without any hesitation on the warm support of all our sections. On this road I wish you all success with all my heart.

Long live the Bolshevik-Leninists of Greece!
Long live our International League!
Long live the Fourth International!

Yours,
G. Gourov [Leon Trotsky]
TASS [the news agency of the Soviet Union] communicates for the second time this month about the capitulation of Rakovsky to Stalin.

We are informed from an absolutely authoritative source that matters happened in the following way. In the early part of 1929, the old president of the Council of Peoples' Commissars in the Ukraine and the Soviet ambassador to Paris was deported to Barnaul, central Asia, where he remained for more than five years. The GPU encircled him with an ever-tightening grip. During the last two years, his wife, who shared his exile, was deprived of the possibility of corresponding with her son, a young doctor practicing in Paris.

At the end of 1929, the old revolutionist made a bold attempt to escape and, despite unprecedented surveillance, he succeeded in making his way to the frontier, where he was wounded by Soviet guards.

It was at that time that the entire world press wrote of the sickness or even the death of Rakovsky. In reality, the wounded man was shipped to the Kremlin hospital. Here, despite careful treatment, a formidable moral pressure was brought to bear on him.

But Rakovsky did not yield. His wound having hardly healed, he was sent back to Barnaul and placed under a redoubled guard. . . . Every perspective was completely lost. Shaken by the failure of his supreme attempt, sick, his morale broken, this sixty-one-year-old man signed the statement of capitulation. While Rakovsky remained in Barnaul, his friends in the circles called "Trotskyist" did not wish to divulge these facts in order not to cause any harm to the deportee.

Now that the capitulation is consummated, these same circles consider it necessary to make known the true significance of Rakovsky's capitulation.

Tomorrow the Soviet authorities will possibly impose pressure upon Rakovsky to issue a denial of these facts. This will not be the first example of such acts by Stalin. But such procedure deceives no one.
OFF WITH ALL THE BLINDFOLDS! 262

(Published April 27, 1934)

What leaps to the eye from l'Humanite's articles concerning Comrade Trotsky's expulsion [from France] is, above all, their stupid provocativeness. But, as is known, in politics an evaluation of this kind is totally insufficient. It is true that the theoretical and political levels of the leaders of the French Communist Party are extremely low as are, in any case, those of the entire Comintern. Already in 1921, Lenin wrote to Zinoviev and Bukharin, "If you seek only compliance, you will collect only fools around you."

Lenin liked to and was able to call things by their names. Since 1921, the selection of "compliers" has achieved monstrous success. The fatal illness of the Comintern nests in its bones, that is, in its cadres, in their selection, training, habits and methods. All that is absolutely beyond dispute. It is not the general characteristic of the Stalinist cadres, however, that now interests us but their political content in connection with Comrade Trotsky's expulsion.

L'Humanite starts off from the assumption that there exists a division of labor, based on an agreement between the government, the police, all the organs of the bourgeois press, the Social Democracy and Trotsky. The government expels Trotsky; he "allows" himself to be expelled; the press chases after Trotsky. Le Populaire, as the lawyer, defends the right of asylum, while carefully keeping its distance from Trotsky, and all this is done with the aim of increasing the authority in the eyes of the workers of the "counterrevolutionary" ideas defended by Trotsky and of preventing the Stalinist party from carrying out revolution.

But however ludicrous this explanation might be, it leads us to the very center of the political problem of France and, at the same time, to the central political error of Stalinism, which has already brought about the death of its German and Austrian sections. The bitter campaign over Barbizon
had been started up—according to *l'Humanite*—by the wish of the bourgeoisie to raise the credit of Social Democratic ideas. What do these ideas consist of, then? Salvaging the democratic forms of the ruling capitalist class: if not entirely, then at least three-fourths or half of it. Insofar as the Socialist Party "protests" against the expulsion of Trotsky, it is preoccupied no doubt with the maintenance of its democratic reputation. There is nothing enigmatic about *Le Populaire*’s conduct.

However, the essence of the problem is not *Le Populaire* but the French bourgeoisie. Is it true that it is presently interested in reviving reformist and democratic ideas and illusions? It is enough to put this question clearly for the whole of *l'Humanite*’s construction to fall to dust. The leaders of the Stalinist party have understood nothing about what has happened in France and Europe during the last period. Two years ago, the French bourgeoisie made a great attempt—in fact, the last, one can believe—to regenerate democracy, its forces, images and customs and its illusions.

The attempt found expression in the victory of the Left Bloc. Given that after the May 1932 elections the Radicals had become the main ruling party of the bourgeoisie, French Social Democracy, of all shades, became the regime's main political support. One of the by-products of this political constellation was Comrade Trotsky's entry visa into France. The Socialists need to color their support for the bourgeois regime with "symbolic gestures." And even the Radicals, in reality pursuing a conservative and imperialist policy, needed a democratic mask. Any serious revolutionary could and should have used this situation, without violating his principles, naturally, and without sowing any illusions on the score of the "sacred" right of asylum and other democratic rights.

However, the attempt made during these last months to restore Left Bloc "democracy" has suffered a total and shameful defeat. The reformists blame the Radicals for it. The Radicals blame the reformists. All this superficial discussion takes place in the sphere of parliamentary politics. The truth is, the Bloc failed because decomposing capitalism cannot allow reforms and, consequently, has been forced to pass from "democratic" to Bonapartist (military-police) repressive or fascist (mass pogrom) methods. Trotsky's expulsion is only one of the by-products of this significant turn in France's political life that has taken place before our eyes.

If it is incontestable that Leon Blum's party was the main political support for the Herriot, Chautemps and Daladier governments, only wretched parrots can go on repeating the same phrase when dealing with the Doumergue government.
For this government to be born, a civil war was needed, which, in the last resort, was directed — it goes without saying — against the proletariat but which had set itself the immediate task of overthrowing the Radical government. The main political support for the Doumergue government is formed by the parties and their armed bands that, on February 6, wanted to drive out the capitalist parliament and that killed police officers and their horses, on the road to the Palais Bourbon. That, today, is the grouping of forces. The fact that the same Stalinists found themselves, by pernicious but not accidental aberration, tailing after the fascists has delivered a mortal blow to their political reputation, but it is not reflected to the slightest degree in the results of the counterrevolutionary offensive.266

The Doumergue ministry is only a transient combination along the road by which bourgeois rule is freeing itself from democracy, parliamentarism, and Socialist support. The present government keeps itself above parliament thanks to the growing antagonism between the two camps: fascist and proletarian. The big bourgeoisie has definitively given up ruling "democratically," that is, directly through the Radicals, indirectly through the Socialists. The entire bourgeois press is preparing the road for a more open Bonapartism. Hence the fierce chase against parliamentarism, freemasons, deputies, civil service unions and workers' organizations. The bourgeoisie is now attempting not to regenerate and support democratic illusions but, on the contrary, to compromise, soil and destroy the democratic institutions. The fascists and attendant royalists are acting only as the extreme wing of the united front of the reaction. *Le Matin*,267 official organ of the Bonapartist-fascist bloc, says quite openly that Trotsky's expulsion is only the beginning.

Soon it will be the turn of Cachin and Leon Blum. There is nothing fantastic in this prophecy. We have seen in Germany and Austria how it works. *Le Matin* knows what it is saying. Tardieu268 knows what he is doing.

On the other hand, the Stalinist Bourbons have forgotten nothing and learned nothing. The political turn of February 6 does not exist for them. The Social Democracy as in the past remains for them the "main" support of the bourgeoisie. The articles in *l'Humanite* dealing with Trotsky's expulsion, which struck the whole world by their stupidity, are not the product of chance inspiration but flow logically from the entire Comintern policy. Stalin's celebrated formula, "Fascism and Social Democracy are not antipodes but twins," has definitively been transformed into a blindfold over the Comintern's eyes. *L'Humanite* is now the reformist bureaucracy's best aid
and the greatest obstacle on the road of struggle against fascism.

_Le Matin_ presents the political reality in an incomparably more serious and correct manner than does _l'Humanite_. Trotsky's expulsion from the shelter of Barbizon is only a small rehearsal of the way in which workers' editors, leaders, central committees, administrative commissions, etc., will be thrown out . . . from their party and union locals. It is precisely this perspective that must be developed before the French workers. Off with any and all kinds of blindfolds, Stalinist as well as reformist! It is high time to look stark reality in the face. Declarations against fascism, "revolutionary" phrases, verbal protests, settle nothing. What we need is mass resistance to the offensive of the pogrom bands on which the Bonapartist reaction relies. This resistance must be organized. This very day we must teach every worker to demand from his "chiefs" an immediate answer to the question: What is to be done? Whoever does not give a direct and immediate answer must be rejected. The proletarian united front must be built with the perspective of great battles. Events in France show us once more that the correct revolutionary perspective is given only by the International Communist League, builder of the Fourth International.
CONVERSATION WITH A DISSIDENT FROM SAINT-DENIS

(Published June 8, 1934)

If one is to believe l'Humanite, you are following us into "the camp of the counterrevolution." In that case, when are you scheduled for expulsion from the Communist Party? And what do you think of doing?

As to our expulsion, the Central Committee will not be long in pronouncing it, for the Saint-Denis district decided by over 350 votes against just a handful to break off relations from now on with the party leadership. What will we do? Give life to our Vigilance Committee and help the workers to establish more of them throughout the whole country to resist fascism.

To realize the unity of action of the workers is very fine; we support you on this point for which we have been fighting for a number of years (you recall the German events). To fight, the working class needs unity despite all its political divisions: reformists and revolutionists must close ranks. But if you break with the Communist Party because it tramples the teachings of Lenin on the united front, I do not believe that you want to trample the teachings of Lenin on the question of the party. If a party that calls itself Communist, the Third International, is no longer the organization of the Marxist vanguard of the proletariat, it is necessary to build a new party and a Fourth International. Will your district harness itself to this task?

We do not want to trample the teachings of Lenin, but we refuse to follow you in the building of a party and of an International. These organizations cannot be set up arbitrarily.

I agree with you that it is harmful to set up organizations arbitrarily; that is why we, the Communist League, have combated the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement, which was an apparatus contrived for evading unity of action with Socialist organizations by utilizing the cover of literary and artistic personalities, of whose talents I cannot judge, but who are absolutely
devoid of responsibility before the organizations of the working class.

You have recognized in action that Amsterdam-Pleyel did not permit the safeguarding of real unity of action of the workers. Others (Autonomous Federation of Employees, Action Socialiste, etc.) have come to the same conclusions. It is necessary to come to an understanding to do away with this arbitrary combination that can only stage a few meetings where a Thorez can parade, but that, as a consequence, can create obstacles to unity of action in every community, in every quarter, by opposing itself to all committees of real organizations that may exist.

Let us do away with artificially set up organizations. But the working class needs a party, a Communist International. If none exists now, we must work to build it; we must pose the problem clearly. This does not mean that we can solve it in a couple of days.

Of course, it is not arbitrary to say that the working class needs a Communist Party, but to build it you need definite conditions. It would be premature today; the masses would not follow it. They will follow the Vigilance Committees; they are for unity of action. To pose, as you do, the question of creating a new party is to appear as a splitter and to isolate oneself from the masses.

I cannot entertain the argument of "splitters"; you are a Communist, and consequently you know well that to gather the vanguard of the proletariat means not only not to split it but to create the basic condition for rallying it in struggle. But I will take up your other arguments: it is too soon, we are too few. You advance arguments of opportuneness but not of principles. Is it too soon because the masses are not there? For one, I am certain that we are more numerous than Lenin was at the end of 1914 when he proclaimed "Long live the Third International"; he knew the masses well and, at certain moments, was not afraid of being almost alone. Secondly, how can we lead the masses to an idea, to a conception, without explaining it to them clearly? It cannot be too soon for laying down a clear political basis, and this is the surest means of becoming more numerous.

You forget the principal task of the present hour: to bar the road to fascism and for that to develop committees of vigilance, to bind them to the masses. A new organization of the proletarian vanguard can crystallize itself in action and not in struggles over theses.

I am far from forgetting reaction and fascism, and it is precisely in order to combat them that I pose the question of the
party, without counterposing it but, on the contrary, by tying it to the work of the united front. To bar the road to fascism, to bar it once and for all, it does not suffice that workers oppose it physically at demonstrations; it does not suffice to denounce its infamies in Germany and Italy. Today we defend ourselves against the rise of reaction, but—and you have stated it in your "Open Letter to the Comintern"—to be efficacious this resistance must transform itself into a struggle for power. The Vigilance Committee—you wrote correctly—must be a step towards the soviets. But tell me from whom can we expect the proper slogans for the struggle of the Vigilance Committee, a program of action around which the slow process of gathering the masses should proceed? Not from the Socialist Party, I am sure; an antifascist committee is not a fountain of youth where the decrepit Social Democracy can rejuvenate itself. Nor from the masses as a whole; the masses undergo their own experiences that permit them to choose and to progress along the revolutionary road, but on condition that they find a vanguard that, at every stage of the struggle, explains the situation to them, shows them the objectives to be attained, the methods to use and the ultimate perspectives. It is only by means of an initial nucleus, which acts in an independent and disciplined manner, that the selection can proceed inside the Vigilance Committee. Without that, even the most numerous aggregation of workers would have no future.

The Vigilance Committee is not a sufficient base to assure the life of the Saint-Denis district. To limit oneself to that is to condemn oneself to disintegration. None of the local nuclei that detached themselves from the Communist Party escaped that: Municipalism, PUPism—the Social Democracy eats into them.

One more word. Your committees of vigilance without a Communist Party, they remind me of the slogan of . . . Mensheviks and counterrevolutionaries; by this I do not mean to call you a Menshevik or a counterrevolutionist. When the October Revolution found itself at loggerheads with its worst difficulties, when civil war and famine raged, the enemies of proletarian power advanced the slogan: "Soviets without Communists." The counterrevolution understood instinctively that even the soviet form is not immune against its influence and that were there no Communists in the soviets to introduce into them class intransigence, the counterrevolution could make use of the soviets against the revolution. And if this is true after the soviets have conquered power, how much more true is it with regard to Vigilance Committees, which are not soviets;
one may be sure that Vigilance Committees without Communists (that is, without a party, since there is no communist action outside of an organization) could never become soviets and would never take power.

And then, one other question intrudes itself into the question of the struggle against fascism and for power, that is, the question of the struggle against war. Who will lead this struggle? Strictly speaking, the committees of vigilance could organize actions against the preparations of war, against the two-years' service, etc. But who will lead the antifascist work; who will launch defeatism? In the united front, you have Socialists imbued with patriotism or pacifists, defenders of the League of Nations. Soon you will find the latter even within the official Communist Party due to the Soviet Union's entry into this association of brigands.

I warn you openly that we will never approve of your attacks against the USSR; we will never join you in that.

And I will answer you no less openly: we have never attacked the USSR. Consequently, you do not have to join that which does not exist. What we have done is to combat a policy that we consider false, harmful to the October Revolution and to the world revolution. You struggle against the policy of the Comintern in France; do you believe that it is independent of the general policy of the Comintern and also of the policy of the USSR? When Lenin and Trotsky led the Comintern and the Soviet Union, they did not practice two contradictory policies, one a good, the other a bad one; the policy of the Comintern and that of the Soviet Union complemented each other in serving the needs of the international proletarian revolution. When the revolutionary wave receded, when the workers' state had to make concessions, its leaders explained this openly to all the workers. While today, what do you read in l'Humanité? First, that the revolutionary movement in all countries does not stop growing, that it goes from success to success, that, at the same time, the USSR marches at a rapid pace to socialism and, finally, that the USSR is about to join the League of Nations. Do you believe that this act is a manifestation of strength, of power?

The USSR is encircled by a hostile world; it must know how to utilize the differences in the capitalist class and how to make compromises with certain of the states to break up the bloc of its enemies.

Obviously, no Communist could reproach the Soviet government for making compromises, although there are compromises and compromises. But what is impermissible is to present them as victories over the bourgeoisie, on the one
hand, and, on the other, to base all its activity on the quality of its diplomacy instead of building the defense of the USSR on the forces of the revolutionary movement. Why did the foreign policy of the Soviet Union suffer such a sharp turn to the right if not because of the defeat of the German proletariat? And do you believe that if reaction should triumph in France that the talents of Litvinov would suffice to preserve the achievements of the five-year plan against the fascist tide? A policy hostile to unity of action and a policy that presents the entry of the USSR into the League of Nations as a victory is one and the same policy, that of the ruling bureaucracy of the USSR, whose horizon is limited to the Soviet Union and that neglects and even fears the revolutionary struggles in other countries.

Thus to defend the USSR not only by hollow phrases, but also in reality, that is, to develop a revolutionary struggle, in face of and against an apparatus of good-for-nothings, it is necessary to do what we do, what the Communist League does, to work towards the rebuilding of a revolutionary party of the proletariat. This is the road that you, the region of Saint-Denis, must follow to be true to yourselves; this is "the road of Trotsky" that l'Humanite wants to frighten you with.

*We want to follow the road of revolution.*

That is the same thing.
ARGUMENTS AND REBUTTALS

(Published June 8, 1934)

"The Unity of the Party"

Cachin and Thorez accuse Doriot of breaking the united front inside the Communist Party. Similarly, Blum and Paul Faure have demanded that the left wing of their party put the unity of the Socialist Party above the united front of the proletariat. The analogy is striking. Both bureaucracies are defending themselves against the historical necessities that threaten them. In defending themselves, Paul Faure and Thorez are juggling with the idea of united front like circus clowns tossing balls to one another with their noses.

To speak of a united front in the party is absurd. The party is not a transient coalition of divergent groups, and the united front can only mean an alliance of different and even divergent organizations for a precise purpose that is common to them. If urgent necessity produces a division in the party, and if this division becomes more and more profound and irreconcilable, it serves no purpose to appeal to a united front within the party. It is necessary to take a close look at the party's politics itself, its material content. If the party's strategy proves to be in opposition to the historical necessities of the class, the split becomes not only a right but also a duty. Liebknecht took a stand against a powerful party without worrying about a united front within the party, and it is he who was right.

How Not to Reach a Goal

The falseness of the politics of the French Stalinists has now found almost a mathematical expression and demonstration. Let us look at it more closely. The supreme goal of the Stalinists is to undermine the Social Democracy. The latter is in a historic impasse. It is split and torn by the pressure of events
and by its internal contradictions. One faction has formed in support of rapprochement with Moscow.

But the Stalinist leadership has succeeded in provoking the split in the so-called Communist Party and in driving back the left wing of the SP toward Blum and Paul Faure! It is the Socialist Party, which for years was terribly afraid—and with good reason—of a united front, that now seizes hold of this catchword and transforms it successfully into a cry to rout the Stalinist party! It is in the name of the united front that the Doriot group broke with the party, and it's the Doriot experience that pushes the left elements of the Socialist Party to hesitate over their proposition to go to Moscow: in their eyes this cannot basically serve much purpose.

Thus, by putting the struggle against the "social fascists" (rather imaginary, despite its intransigence) above the historical reality of the class struggle, the Stalinist party arrives at a result diametrically opposed to the goal it had set itself.

**Sectarian Policy?**

This policy of the so-called Communist Party is often described, even by our friends, as sectarian. The word is wrongly used. Sectarianism presupposes a narrow, homogeneous group, bound internally by deep and unshakable conviction, despite the contradictions between this conviction and historical development.

The Stalinist bureaucracy in France does not have any conviction. It is neither disposed towards nor capable of defending its "ideas" against anyone or anything. On the contrary, it is prepared at every turn to prostrate itself before the order received from Moscow, where policy is governed by the preoccupations of the powerful national bureaucracy. *This is not sectarianism—it is pure and unadulterated bureaucratism.*

**Necessity for a Party**

Saint-Denis does not bow before the criminal bureaucracy. We certainly could not disapprove of such an attitude. But what meaning will this new split take on in the eyes of the masses influenced by Saint-Denis? One cannot march with the Stalinists; their party is incapable of leading the working class. If we stop there, we support, at least indirectly, the authority of the Socialist Party. But if we declare the latter bankrupt, the worker will conclude that one could well do without a party, which would mean reviving the most sterile syndicalist prejudices.

The world of politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum. It needs continuity of thought and political action. If we take the strug-
gle with the Stalinists to the point of a split without weakening the willingness to combat the reformists and the centrists, we cannot escape this conclusion: the creation of a new revolutionary party is urgently placed on the agenda.

"Anything you want, but not that," cry the quavering spirits. "This is not the right time. We are realists, not builders of parties and Internationals. It's only the march of events, the pressure of the masses and their own experience that can bring about a new party!"

What wisdom! What profound thought! But what does this "march" of events mean? Are we excluded from it? And how does the experience of the masses come about? Are we there for nothing? Are we incapable of intervening in the march of events and of fertilizing the experience of the masses?

"The masses don't want a new party; they want unity, and we must build on that basis," objects the wise tactician. It's the idea of a united front, a workers' alliance, embryo of the soviets, that corresponds to this desire of the masses for unity. But if we stop here, we only worsen the confusion. It is not sufficient to want unity; you must know how to realize it. Only the party can point the correct road for the masses. Precisely because the class as a whole has only vague, incomplete and confused ideas, the selection of the vanguard is necessary. For a Marxist, the political formula expresses not the consciousness of the masses today but the dynamic of this consciousness, how it is determined and how it must be determined for the class struggle.

It is precisely from the experience of the masses that we have come to the unshakable conclusion that the two Internationals are bankrupt. Are we prophets who guard their knowledge for some secret use? No, we are revolutionaries obliged to explain to the masses their own experience. There is the beginning of Marxist realism.

The "march of events" can facilitate or retard the development of the new party. But the most favorable situation will pass without advantage if the vanguard elements do not do their duty towards the masses, even in the most unfavorable situation.

The allusion to the "march of events" is a completely hollow abstraction. With the same semblance of wisdom, one could say, this is not the "right time" for the split with Thorez. The march of events must bring about such a split. One could go further and say, this is not the "right time" for the Marxist doctrine, for the communist program. It is only the experience of the masses that can lead them to liberation.

But to counterpose Marxism or the communist program
to the experience of the masses means to trample underfoot all the historical experience of the working class in the name of the "experience" of this or that bureaucratic grouping.

The Marxist doctrine and the communist program can neither soar above the chaos, like the Holy Ghost, nor roost in the brain of some prophets. They must have a body, that is, the organization of the workers' vanguard. Its development may depend on many factors and historical circumstances of which we are far from being the masters. But in proclaiming the bankruptcy of the two Internationals, we appeal at the same time to the most conscious, most determined, most devoted workers, inviting them to group around the new party and the new International.
WAR AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

(June 10, 1934)

The catastrophic commercial, industrial, agrarian and financial crisis, the break in international economic ties, the decline of the productive forces of humanity, the unbearable sharpening of class and international contradictions mark the twilight of capitalism and fully confirm the Leninist characterization of our epoch as one of wars and revolutions.

The war of 1914-18 officially ushered in a new epoch. Its most important political events up to now have been: the conquest of power by the Russian proletariat in 1917 and the smashing of the German proletariat in the year 1933. The terrible calamities of the peoples in all parts of the world and even the more terrible dangers that tomorrow holds in store result from the fact that the revolution of 1917 did not find victorious development on the European and world arena.

Inside the individual countries, the historic blind alley of capitalism expresses itself in chronic unemployment, in the lowering of the living standards of the workers, in the ruination of the peasantry and the town petty bourgeoisie, in the decomposition and decay of the parliamentary state, in the monstrous poisoning of the people by "social" and "national" demagogy in face of an actual liquidation of social reforms, of the pushing aside and replacement of old ruling parties by a naked military-police apparatus (Bonapartism, of capitalist decline), in the growth of fascism, in its conquering power and smashing of each and every proletarian organization.

On the world arena, the same processes are washing away the last remnants of stability in international relations, driving every conflict between the states to the very edge of the knife, laying bare the futility of pacifist attempts, giving rise to the growth of armaments on a new and higher technical basis and thus leading to a new imperialist war. Fascism is its most consistent artificer and organizer.

On the other hand, the exposure of the thoroughly reaction-
ary, putrified and robber nature of modern capitalism, the destruction of democracy, reformism and pacifism, the urgent and burning need of the proletariat to find a safe path away from imminent disaster put the international revolution on the agenda with renewed force. Only the overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the insurgent proletariat can save humanity from a new, devastating slaughter of the peoples.

Preparation for a New War

1. The same causes, inseparable from modern capitalism, that brought about the last imperialist war have now reached infinitely greater tension than in the middle of 1914. The fear of the consequences of a new war is the only factor that fetters the will of imperialism. But the efficacy of this brake is limited. The stress of inner contradictions pushes one country after another on the road to fascism, which, in its turn, cannot maintain power except by preparing international explosions. All governments fear war. But none of the governments has any freedom of choice. Without a proletarian revolution, a new world war is inevitable.

2. Europe, the recent arena of the greatest of wars, continually heads toward decline, pushed by victors and vanquished alike. The League of Nations, which according to its official program was to be the "organizer of peace" and which was really intended to perpetuate the Versailles system, to neutralize the hegemony of the United States and to create a bulwark against the Red East, could not withstand the impact of imperialist contradictions. Only the most cynical of the social patriots (Henderson, Vandervelde, Jouhaux and others) still try to connect the perspectives of disarmament and pacifism with the League. In reality, the League of Nations became a secondary figure on the chessboard of imperialist combinations. The main work of diplomacy, now carried on behind the back of Geneva, consists in the search for military allies, that is, in a feverish preparation for a new slaughter. Parallel with it goes the constant growth of armaments to which fascist Germany has lent a new and gigantic impulsion.

3. The collapse of the League of Nations is indissolubly bound up with the beginning of the collapse of French hegemony on the European continent. The demographic and economic power of France proved to be, as was to be expected, too narrow a base for the Versailles system. French imperialism, armed to the teeth and having an apparently "defensive" character, insofar as it is forced to defend by legalized agreements the fruits of its plunder and spoliation, remains essentially one of the most important factors of a new war.
War and the Fourth International 301

Driven by its unbearable contradictions and the consequences of defeat, German capitalism has been forced to tear off the straitjacket of democratic pacifism and now comes forward as the chief threat to the Versailles system. State combinations on the European continent still follow, in the main, the line of victors and vanquished. Italy occupies the place of a treacherous go-between, ready to sell its friendship at the decisive moment to the stronger side, as she did during the last war. England is attempting to retain its "independence"—a mere shadow of its former "splendid isolation"—in the hope of utilizing the antagonisms in Europe, the contradictions between Europe and America, the approaching conflicts in the Far East. But ruling England is ever less successful in its scheming designs. Terrified by the disintegration of its empire, by the revolutionary movement in India, by the instability of its positions in China, the British bourgeoisie covers up with the revolting hypocrisy of MacDonald and Henderson its greedy and cowardly policy of waiting and maneuvering, which, in turn, is one of the main sources of today's general instability and tomorrow's catastrophes.

4. The war and the postwar period wrought the greatest changes in the internal and international position of the United States. The gigantic economic superiority of the United States over Europe and, consequently, over the world allowed the bourgeoisie of the United States to appear in the first postwar period as a dispassionate "conciliator," defender of the "freedom of the seas" and the "open door." The industrial and business crisis revealed, however, with terrific force the disturbance of the old economic equilibrium, which had found sufficient support on the internal market. This road is completely exhausted.

Of course, the economic superiority of the United States has not disappeared; on the contrary, it has even grown potentially, due to the further disintegration of Europe. But the old forms in which this superiority manifested itself (industrial technique, trade balance, stable dollar, European indebtedness) have lost their actuality; the advanced technique is no longer put to use; the trade balance is unfavorable; the dollar is in decline; debts are not paid. The superiority of the United States must find its expression in new forms, the way to which can be opened only by war.

The slogan of the "open door" in China is proving powerless before a few Japanese divisions. Washington carries on its Far Eastern policy in such a way as to be able to provoke at the most propitious moment a military clash between the USSR and Japan, so as to weaken both Japan and the USSR.
and outline its further strategic plan depending upon the outcome of war. Continuing by inertia the discussion on the liberation of the Philippines, the American imperialists are in reality preparing to establish for themselves a territorial base in China, so as to raise at the following stage, in case of conflict with Great Britain, the question of the "liberation" of India. U. S. capitalism is up against the same problems that pushed Germany in 1914 on the path of war. The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of "organizing Europe." The United States must "organize" the world. History is bringing humanity face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism.

5. Belated Japanese capitalism, feeding on the juices of backwardness, poverty and barbarism, is being driven by unbearable internal ulcers and abscesses on the road of unceasing piratical plunder. The absence of an industrial base of its own and the extreme precariousness of the whole social system makes Japanese capitalism the most aggressive and unbridled. However, the future will show that behind this greedy aggressiveness there are but few real forces. Japan may be the first to give the signal to war; but from semifeudal Japan, torn by all the contradictions that beset czarist Russia, sooner than from other countries, the call to revolution may sound.

6. It would be too venturesome, however, to predict precisely where and when the first shot will be fired. Under the influence of the Soviet-American agreement, as well as of internal difficulties, Japan may temporarily retreat. But the same circumstances may, on the contrary, force the Japanese military camarilla to hasten the blow while there is yet time. Will the French government make up its mind to a "preventive" war, and will this war not turn, with the aid of Italy, into a free-for-all? Or, on the contrary, while waiting and maneuvering, will not France under the pressure of England take the road of agreement with Hitler, thereby opening up to him the road of attack to the east?

Will not the Balkan Peninsula be once more the instigator of war? Or will the initiative, perhaps, be seized this time by Danubian countries? The multitude of factors and the intertwining of conflicting forces exclude the possibility of a concrete prognosis. But the general tendency of development is absolutely clear: the postwar period has simply been transformed into an interval between two wars, and this interval is vanishing before our very eyes. Planned, corporative or state capitalism, which goes hand in hand with the authoritarian, Bonapartist or fascist state, remains a utopia, and a lie insofar as it sets itself the official task of a harmonious
national economy on the basis of private property. But it is a menacing reality insofar as it is a question of concentrating all the economic forces of the nation for the preparation of a new war. This work is proceeding now with full steam. A new great war is knocking at the gates. It will be crueler, more destructive than its predecessor. This very fact makes the attitude towards the oncoming war the pivotal question of proletarian policy.

The USSR and Imperialist War

7. Taken on a historic scale, the antagonism between world imperialism and the Soviet Union is infinitely deeper than the antagonisms that set individual capitalist countries in opposition to each other. But the class contradiction between the workers' state and the capitalist states varies in acuteness depending upon the evolution of the workers' state and upon the changes in the world situation. The monstrous development of Soviet bureaucratism and the difficult conditions of existence of the toiling masses have drastically decreased the attractive power of the USSR with regard to the working class of the world. The heavy defeats of the Comintern and the nationalist pacifist foreign policy of the Soviet government in their turn could not but diminish the apprehensions of the world bourgeoisie. Finally, the new sharpening of internal contradictions of the capitalist world forces the governments of Europe and America to approach the USSR at this stage not from the point of view of the principal question, capitalism or socialism, but from the point of view of the conjunctural role of the Soviet state in the struggle of the imperialist powers. Nonaggression pacts, the recognition of the USSR by the Washington government, etc., are manifestations of this international situation. Hitler's persistent efforts to legalize the rearming of Germany by pointing to the "Eastern danger" find no response as yet, especially on the part of France and its satellites, precisely because the revolutionary danger of communism, despite the terrible crisis, has lost its acuteness. The diplomatic successes of the Soviet Union are, therefore, to be attributed, at least in a large measure, to the extreme weakening of the international revolution.

8. It would be a fatal mistake, however, to consider the armed intervention against the Soviet Union as entirely off the agenda. If the conjunctural relations have become less sharp, there remain in full force the contradictions of social systems. The continual decline of capitalism will drive the bourgeois governments to radical decisions. Every big war, irrespective of its initial motives, must pose squarely the ques-
tion of military intervention against the USSR in order to trans­fuse fresh blood into the sclerotic veins of capitalism.

The indubitable and deepgoing bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state as well as the national-conservative charac­ter of its foreign policy do not change the social nature of the Soviet Union as that of the first workers' state. All kinds of democratic, idealistic, ultraleft and anarchistic theories, ign­oring the character of Soviet property relations, which is socialistic in its tendencies, and denying or glossing over the class contradiction between the USSR and the bourgeois state, must lead inevitably, and especially in case of war, to counter­revolutionary political conclusions.

"Defense of the Soviet Union from the blows of the capitalist enemies, irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict, is the elementary and imperative duty of every honest labor organization.

"National Defense"

9. The national state created by capitalism in the struggle with the sectionalism of the Middle Ages became the classical arena of capitalism. But no sooner did it take shape than it became a brake upon economic and cultural development. The contradiction between the productive forces and the frame­work of the national state, in conjunction with the principal contradiction—between the productive forces and the private ownership of the means of production—make the crisis of cap­italism that of the world social system.

10. If state borders could be swept away with one stroke, productive forces, even under capitalism, could continue to rise for a certain length of time—at the price of innumerable sacrifices, it is true—to a higher level. With the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, the productive forces may, as the experience of the USSR shows, reach a higher development even within the framework of one state. But only the abolition of private property as well as of state barriers between nations can create the conditions for a new economic system: the socialist society.

11. The defense of the national state, first of all in Balkanized Europe—the cradle of the national state—is in the full sense of the word a reactionary task. The national state with its bor­ders, passports, monetary system, customs and the army for the protection of customs has become a frightful impediment to the economic and cultural development of humanity. The task of the proletariat is not the defense of the national state but its complete and final liquidation.

12. Were the present national state to represent a progressive
factor, it would have to be defended irrespective of its political form and, of course, regardless of who "started" the war first. It is absurd to confuse the question of the historic function of the national state with the question of the "guilt" of a given government. Can one refuse to save a house suited for habitation just because the fire started through carelessness or through evil intent of the owner? But here it is precisely a case of the given house being fit not for living but merely for dying. To enable the peoples to live, the structure of the national state must be razed to its foundations.

13. A "socialist" who preaches national defense is a petty-bourgeois reactionary at the service of decaying capitalism. Not to bind itself to the national state in time of war, to follow not the war map but the map of the class struggle, is possible only for that party that has already declared irreconcilable war on the national state in time of peace. Only by realizing fully the objectively reactionary role of the imperialist state can the proletarian vanguard become invulnerable to all types of social patriotism. This means that a real break with the ideology and policy of "national defense" is possible only from the standpoint of the international proletarian revolution.

The National Question and Imperialist War

14. The working class is not indifferent to its nation. On the contrary, it is just because history places the fate of the nation into its hands that the working class refuses to entrust the work of national freedom and independence to imperialism, which "saves" the nation only to subject it on the morrow to new mortal dangers for the sake of the interests of an insignificant minority of exploiters.

15. Having used the nation for its development, capitalism has nowhere, in no single corner of the world, solved fully the national problem. The borders of the Europe of Versailles are carved out of the living body of the nations. The idea of recarving capitalist Europe to make state boundaries coincide with national boundaries is the sheerest kind of utopia. No government will cede an inch of its ground by peaceful means. A new war would carve Europe anew in accordance with the war map and not in correspondence to the boundaries of nations. The task of complete national determination and peaceful cooperation of all peoples of Europe can be solved only on the basis of the economic unification of Europe, purged of bourgeois rule. The slogan of the United States of Europe is a slogan not only for the salvation of the Balkan and Danubian peoples but for the salvation of the peoples of Germany and France as well.
16. A special and important place is occupied by the question of colonial and semicolonial countries of the East, which are even now fighting for the independent national state. Their struggle is doubly progressive: tearing the backward peoples from Asiatism, sectionalism and foreign bondage, they strike powerful blows at the imperialist states. But it must be clearly understood beforehand that the belated revolutions in Asia and Africa are incapable of opening up a new epoch of renaissance for the national state. The liberation of the colonies will be merely a gigantic episode in the world socialist revolution, just as the belated democratic overturn in Russia, which was also a semicolonial country, was only the introduction to the socialist revolution.

17. In South America, where belated and already decaying capitalism is supporting the conditions of semifeudal, that is, semislavish existence, world antagonisms create a sharp struggle of comprador cliques, continual overturns within the states and protracted armed conflicts between the states. The American bourgeoisie, which was able during its historic rise to unite into one federation the northern half of the American continent, now uses all its power, which grew out of this, to disunite, weaken and enslave the southern half. South and Central America will be able to tear themselves out of backwardness and enslavement only by uniting all their states into one powerful federation. But it is not the belated South American bourgeoisie, a thoroughly venal agency of foreign imperialism, who will be called upon to solve this task, but the young South American proletariat, the chosen leader of the oppressed masses. The slogan in the struggle against violence and intrigues of world imperialism and against the bloody work of native comprador cliques is therefore: the Soviet United States of South and Central America.

The national problem merges everywhere with the social. Only the conquest of power by the world proletariat can assure a real and lasting freedom of development for all nations of our planet.

The Defense of Democracy

18. The sham of national defense is covered up wherever possible by the additional sham of the defense of democracy. If even now, in the imperialist epoch, Marxists do not identify democracy with fascism and are ready at any moment to repel fascism's encroachment upon democracy, must not the proletariat in case of war support the democratic governments against the fascist governments?

Flagrant sophism! We defend democracy against fascism
by means of the organizations and methods of the proletariat. Contrary to the Social Democracy, we do not entrust this defense to the bourgeois state (Staat, greif zu! [State, intervene!]). And if we remain in irreconcilable opposition to the most "democratic" government in time of peace, how can we take upon ourselves even a shadow of responsibility for it in time of war when all the infamies and crimes of capitalism take on a most brutal and bloody form?

19. A modern war between the great powers does not signify a conflict between democracy and fascism but a struggle of two imperialisms for the redivision of the world. Moreover, the war must inevitably assume an international character and in both camps will be found fascist (semifascist, Bonapartist, etc.) as well as "democratic" states. The republican form of French imperialism did not prevent it from basing itself in peacetime on the military-bourgeois dictatorship in Poland, Yugoslavia and Romania, as it will not prevent it, in case of necessity, from restoring the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as a barrier against the unification of Austria with Germany. Finally, in France itself, parliamentary democracy, already sufficiently weakened today, would undoubtedly be one of the first victims of war if it is not upset before its start.

20. The bourgeoisie of a number of civilized countries has already shown and is continuing to show how, in case of internal danger, it changes without much ado the parliamentary form of its rule for an authoritarian, dictatorial, Bonapartist or fascist form. It will make the change that much faster and more decisively in time of war when both internal and external dangers will threaten its basic class interests with tenfold force. Under these conditions, the support by a workers' party of "its" national imperialism for the sake of a fragile democratic shell means the renunciation of an independent policy and the chauvinistic demoralization of the workers, that is, the destruction of the only factor that can save humanity from disaster.

21. "The struggle for democracy" in time of war would signify, above all, the struggle for the preservation of the workers' press and of workers' organizations against unbridled military censorship and military authority. On the basis of these tasks, the revolutionary vanguard will seek a united front with other working-class organizations—against its own "democratic" government—but in no case unity with its own government against the hostile country.

22. An imperialist war stands above the question of the state form of capitalist rule. It places before each national bourgeoisie the question of the fate of national capitalism and
before the bourgeoisie of all countries the question of the fate of capitalism in general. Only thus must the proletariat too pose the question: capitalism or socialism, the triumph of one of the imperialist camps or the proletarian revolution.

**Defense of Small and Neutral States**

23. The concept of national defense, especially when it coincides with the idea of the defense of democracy, can most easily delude the workers of small and neutral countries (Switzerland, partly Belgium, Scandinavian countries...), which, being incapable of engaging in an independent policy of conquest, impart to the defense of their national borders the character of an irrefutable and absolute dogma. But precisely by the example of Belgium, we see how naturally formal neutrality is replaced by a system of imperialist pacts and how inevitably war for "national defense" leads to an annexationist peace. The character of war is determined not by the initial episode taken by itself ("violation of neutrality," "enemy invasion," etc.) but by the main moving forces of war, by its whole development and by the consequences to which it finally leads.

24. It can be readily accepted that the Swiss bourgeoisie will not take upon itself the initiative of war. In this sense, it has far more formal right than any other bourgeoisie to speak of its defensive position. But from the moment that Switzerland may find itself drawn into the war by the course of events, it would enter the struggle of the world powers in the pursuit of equally imperialist aims. Should neutrality be violated, the Swiss bourgeoisie will unite with the stronger of the two attacking sides, regardless of which one bears the greater responsibility for the violation of neutrality and in which camp there is more "democracy." Thus, during the last war, Belgium, the ally of czarism, by no means left the camp of the Allies when in the course of the war they in turn found it advantageous to violate the neutrality of Greece.

Only a hopelessly dull bourgeois from a godforsaken Swiss village (like Robert Grimm) can seriously think that the world war into which he is drawn is waged for the defense of Swiss independence. Just as the preceding war swept away the neutrality of Belgium, so the new war will leave no trace of Swiss independence. Whether after the war Switzerland will retain its entity as a state, even though without its independence, or whether it will be divided among Germany, France and Italy depends on a number of European and world factors among which the "national defense" of Switzerland will occupy an insignificant place.

We see, therefore, that for neutral, democratic Switzerland
also, a state possessing no colonies and where the idea of national defense appears before us in its purest form, the laws of imperialism make no exception. To the demand of the bourgeoisie: "Join the policy of national defense," the Swiss proletariat must retort by a policy of class defense so as to go over next to a revolutionary advance.

**The Second International and War**

25. The commandment of national defense follows from the dogma that the national solidarity of classes stands above the class struggle. In reality, no possessing class ever recognized the defense of the fatherland as such, that is, under any and all conditions, but rather covered up by this formula the protection of its privileged position in the fatherland. Overthrown ruling classes always become "defeatists," that is, are ready to restore their privileged position with the aid of foreign arms.

The oppressed classes, not conscious of their own interests and accustomed to sacrifices, accept the slogan "national defense" at face value, that is, as an absolute duty that stands above the classes. The basic historic crime of the parties of the Second International consists in their fostering and strengthening the slavish habits and traditions of the oppressed, in neutralizing their revolutionary indignation and falsifying their class consciousness with the aid of patriotic ideas.

If the European proletariat did not overthrow the bourgeoisie at the end of the great war; if humanity writhes now in the agonies of the crisis; if a new war threatens to transform cities and villages into heaps of ruins— the chief responsibility for these crimes and calamities falls on the Second International.

26. The policy of social patriotism rendered the masses helpless before fascism. If in time of war it is necessary to reject the class struggle for the sake of national interests, it is also necessary to renounce "Marxism" in the epoch of a great economic crisis that endangers "the nation" no less than war. Back in April 1915, Rosa Luxemburg exhausted this question with the following words: "Either the class struggle is the imperative law of proletarian existence also during war . . . or the class struggle is a crime against national interests and the safety of the fatherland also in time of peace." The idea of "national interests" and the "safety of the fatherland" has been transformed by fascism into chains and fetters for the proletariat.

27. The German Social Democracy supported Hitler's foreign policy up to the very moment that he drove it out. The final replacement of democracy by fascism revealed that the Social Democracy remains patriotic just so long as the political regime
assures it its profits and privileges. Finding themselves in emigration, the former Hohenzollern patriots turn about-face and are ready to welcome a preventive war of the French bourgeoisie against Hitler. Without any difficulty, the Second International amnestied Wels and Co. who would on the morrow be reconverted into ardent patriots if only the German bourgeoisie should beckon them back with one little finger.

28. The French, Belgian and other socialists responded to the German events by an open alliance with their own bourgeoisie on the question of "national defense." While official France was carrying on a "small," "insignificant" but exceptionally atrocious war against Morocco,275 the French Social Democracy and reformist trade unions discussed at their congresses the inhumanity of war in general, having in mind thereby chiefly the war of revenge on the part of Germany. Parties that support the brutalities of colonial robberies, where it is merely a question of new profits, will support with eyes shut any national government in a great war where the fate of the bourgeois republic itself will be involved.

29. The incompatibility of Social Democratic policy with the historic interests of the proletariat is incomparably deeper and sharper now than on the eve of the imperialist war. The struggle with the patriotic prejudices of the masses means, above all, an irreconcilable struggle against the Second International as an organization, as a party, as a program, as a banner.

Centrism and War

30. The first imperialist war completely dissolved the Second International as a revolutionary party and thereby created the necessity and possibility of creating the Third International. But the republican "revolution" in Germany and Austro-Hungary, the democratization of suffrage in a number of countries, concessions by the frightened European bourgeoisie in the sphere of social legislation in the first years after the war—all this, in conjunction with the disastrous policy of the epigones of Leninism, gave the Second International a considerable respite, no longer as a revolutionary but as a conservative-liberal workers' party of pacific reform. However, very soon—finally with the coming of the last world crisis—all the possibilities on the road of reforms proved exhausted. The bourgeoisie passed over to counterattack. The Social Democracy treacherously gave up one gain after another. All species of reformism—parliamentarian, trade-union, municipal, cooperative "socialism"—have suffered irreparable bankruptcies and catastrophes in recent years. As a result of this, the preparation for a new war finds the Second International with a broken spine. The Social Democratic parties are undergoing an in-
tensive process of discoloration. Consistent reformism takes on new color; it becomes silent or splits off. Its place is being taken by various shadings of centrism, either in the form of numerous factions within the old parties or as independent organizations.

31. On the question of the defense of the fatherland, masked reformists and right centrists (Leon Blum, Hendrik de Man, Robert Grimm, Martin Tranmael, Otto Bauer and others) resort increasingly to diplomatic, confused, conditional formulations calculated at one and the same time to pacify the bourgeoisie and to fool the workers. They put forward economic "plans" or a series of social demands, promising to defend the fatherland from external "fascism" to the extent that the national bourgeoisie will support their program. The purpose in thus posing the question consists in glossing over the question of the class character of the state, evading the problem of the conquest of power and, under the cover of a "socialist" plan, in dragging in the defense of the capitalist fatherland.

32. The left centrists, who are in turn distinguished by a great number of shadings (SAP in Germany, OSP in Holland, ILP in England, the Zyromsky and Marceau Pivert groups in France and others) arrive in words at the renunciation of the defense of the fatherland. But from this bare renunciation they do not draw the necessary practical conclusions. The greater half of their internationalism, if not nine-tenths of it, bears a platonic character. They fear to break away from the right centrists; in the name of the struggle with "sectarianism," they carry on a struggle against Marxism, refuse to fight for a revolutionary International and continue to remain in the Second International, at the head of which stands the king's footman, Vandervelde. Expressing at certain moments the leftward shift of the masses, in the final analysis the centrists put a brake upon the revolutionary regrouping within the proletariat and consequently also upon the struggle against war.

33. In its very essence, centrism means halfheartedness and vacillation. But the problem of war is least of all favorable for the policy of vacillation. For the masses, centrism is always only a short transition stage. The growing danger of war will make for ever-sharper differentiation within the centrist groupings that now dominate the workers' movement. The proletarian vanguard will be the better armed for the struggle against war the sooner and more fully it will free its mind from the web of centrism. A necessary condition for success on this road is to pose clearly and irreconcilably all questions connected with war.
Soviet Diplomacy and the International Revolution

34. After the conquest of power, the proletariat itself goes over to the position of the "defense of the fatherland." But this formula thenceforward acquires an entirely new historic content. The isolated workers' state is not a self-sufficing entity but only a drill ground for the world revolution. Defending the USSR, the proletariat defends not national boundaries but a socialist dictatorship temporarily hemmed in by national borders. Only a deep understanding of the fact that the proletarian revolution cannot find completion within the national framework; that without the victory of the proletariat in the leading countries all the successes of socialist construction in the USSR are doomed to failure; that other than through the international revolution there is no salvation for any country in the world; that the socialist society can be built only on the basis of international cooperation—only these firm convictions, penetrating into the very blood and marrow, can create a safe basis for revolutionary proletarian policy in time of war.

35. The foreign policy of the Soviets flowing from the theory of socialism in one country, that is, the actual ignoring of the problems of the international revolution, is based on two ideas: general disarmament and mutual rejection of aggression. That in search of diplomatic guarantees the Soviet government has to resort to a purely formalistic presentation of the problems of war and peace follows from the conditions of capitalist encirclement. But these methods of adaptation to the enemy, forced upon it by the feebleness of the international revolution and to a great extent by the previous mistakes of the Soviet government itself, can by no means be raised into a universal system. But the acts and speeches of Soviet diplomacy, which have long transgressed the limit of unavoidable, admissible, practical compromises, have been laid down as the sacred and inviolable basis for the international policy of the Third International and have become the source of the most flagrant pacifist illusions and social-patriotic blunders.

36. Disarmament is not a means against war, since, as the experience of Germany itself shows, episodic disarmament is only a stage on the road to new rearmament. The possibility of new and very rapid rearmament is inherent in modern industrial technique. "General" disarmament, even if it could be realized, would only mean the strengthening of the military superiority of the more powerful industrial countries. "Fifty percent disarmament" is the road not to complete disarmament but to absolute 100 percent rearmament. To present disarmament as "the only real means to prevent war" is to mislead
the workers for the sake of a common front with petty-bourgeois pacifists.

37. We cannot for one moment dispute the right of the Soviet government to define with the greatest precision the term *aggression* in any given agreement with the imperialists. But to attempt to transform this conditional legalistic formula into a supreme regulator of international relations is to substitute conservative criteria for revolutionary criteria, reducing the international policy of the proletariat to the defense of the existing annexations and borders set up by force.

38. We are not pacifists. We consider a revolutionary war just as much a means of proletarian policy as an uprising. Our attitude to war is determined not by the legalistic formula of "aggression" but by the question of which class carries on the war and for what aims. In the conflict of states, just as in the class struggle, "defense" and "aggression" are questions only of practical expediency and not of a juridical or ethical norm. The bare criterion of aggression creates a base of support for the social-patriotic policy of Messrs. Leon Blum, Vandervelde and others, who, thanks to Versailles, are given the possibility of defending imperialist booty under the guise of defending peace.

39. Stalin's famous formula, "We do not want an inch of foreign soil but will not give up an inch of ours," represents a conservative program for the preservation of the status quo in radical contradiction to the aggressive nature of the proletarian revolution. The ideology of socialism in one country leads inevitably to the blurring of the reactionary role of the national state, to conciliation with it, to its idealization, to reducing the importance of revolutionary internationalism.

40. The leaders of the Third International justify the policy of Soviet diplomacy on the ground that the workers' state must utilize the contradictions in the camp of imperialism. This statement, indisputable in itself, needs concretization, however.

The foreign policy of each class is the continuation and development of its internal policy. If the proletariat in power must discern and utilize the contradictions in the camp of its external enemies, the proletariat that is still fighting for power must know how to discern and utilize the contradictions in the camp of its internal enemies. The fact that the Third International proved absolutely incapable of understanding and utilizing the contradictions between reformist democracy and fascism led directly to the greatest defeat of the proletariat and brought it face to face with the danger of a new war.

On the other hand, the contradictions between the imperialist governments must be utilized in no other way than from the
point of view of the international revolution. The defense of the USSR is conceivable only if the international proletarian vanguard is independent of the policy of Soviet diplomacy, if there is complete freedom to show up its nationalist conservative methods, which are directed against the interests of the international revolution and thus also against the interests of the Soviet Union.

The USSR and Imperialist Combinations

41. The Soviet government is now in the process of changing its course with regard to the *League of Nations*. The Third International, as usual, repeats slavishly the words and gestures of Soviet diplomacy. All sorts of "ultralefts" take advantage of this turn to relegate the Soviet Union once again among the bourgeois states. The Social Democracy, depending on its particular national considerations, interprets the "reconciliation" of the USSR with the League of Nations as proof of the bourgeois-nationalistic character of the policy of Moscow or, on the contrary, as the rehabilitation of the League of Nations and, in general, the whole ideology of pacifism. In this question, too, the Marxist point of view has nothing in common with any one of these petty-bourgeois evaluations.

Our attitude in principle to the League of Nations does not differ from our attitude to each and every individual imperialist state, whether in or out of the League of Nations. The maneuvering of the Soviet state between the antagonistic groupings of imperialism presupposes a policy of maneuver with regard to the League of Nations as well. So long as Japan and Germany were in the League, the latter threatened to become an arena for agreement of the most important imperialist robbers at the expense of the USSR. After Japan and Germany, the most immediate and chief enemies of the Soviet Union, quit the League of Nations, it changed partly into a bloc of allies and vassals of French imperialism, partly into an arena of struggle among France, England and Italy. This or that combination with the League of Nations may be forced upon the Soviet state, which is steering between imperialist camps equally hostile to it in essence.

42. Giving oneself a fully realistic account of the existing situation, the proletarian vanguard must, at the same time, place in the foreground the following considerations:

a. The necessity for the USSR, sixteen and more years after the October overturn, to seek a rapprochement with the League and to cover up this rapprochement with abstract pacifist formulas is the result of the extreme *weakening of the international*
proletarian revolution and by that of the international position of the USSR.

b. Abstract pacifist formulations of Soviet diplomacy and its compliments directed to the League of Nations have nothing in common with the policy of the international proletarian party, which refuses to bear any responsibility for them but, on the contrary, exposes their hollowness and hypocrisy, the better to mobilize the proletariat on the basis of a clear understanding of actual forces and real antagonisms.

43. In the existing situation, an alliance of the USSR with an imperialist state or with one imperialist combination against another, in case of war, cannot at all be considered as excluded. Under the pressure of circumstances, a temporary alliance of this kind may become an iron necessity, without ceasing, however, because of it, to be of the greatest danger both to the USSR and to the world revolution.

The international proletariat will not decline to defend the USSR even if the latter should find itself forced into a military alliance with some imperialists against others. But in this case, even more than in any other, the international proletariat must safeguard its complete political independence from Soviet diplomacy and, thereby, also from the bureaucracy of the Third International.

44. Remaining the determined and devoted defender of the workers' state in the struggle with imperialism, the international proletariat will not, however, become an ally of the imperialist allies of the USSR. The proletariat of a capitalist country that finds itself in an alliance with the USSR must retain fully and completely its irreconcilable hostility to the imperialist government of its own country. In this sense, its policy will not differ from that of the proletariat in a country fighting against the USSR. But in the nature of practical actions, considerable differences may arise depending on the concrete war situation. For instance, it would be absurd and criminal in case of war between the USSR and Japan for the American proletariat to sabotage the sending of American munition to the USSR. But the proletariat of a country fighting against the USSR would be absolutely obliged to resort to actions of this sort—strikes, sabotage, etc.

45. Intransigent proletarian opposition to the imperialist ally of the USSR must develop, on the one hand, on the basis of international class policy, on the other, on the basis of the imperialist aims of the given government, the treacherous character of this "alliance," its speculation on capitalist overturn in the USSR, etc. The policy of a proletarian party in an "allied"
as well as an enemy imperialist country should therefore be directed towards the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power. Only in this way can a real alliance with the USSR be created and the first workers' state be saved from disaster.

46. Within the USSR, war against imperialist intervention will undoubtedly provoke a veritable outburst of genuine fighting enthusiasm. All the contradictions and antagonisms will seem overcome or at any rate relegated to the background. The young generations of workers and peasants that emerged from the revolution will reveal on the field of battle a colossal dynamic power. Centralized industry, despite all its lacks and shortcomings, will reveal great superiority in serving war needs. The government of the USSR has undoubtedly created great stores of food supplies sufficient for the first period of war. The general staffs of the imperialist states clearly realize, of course, that in the Red Army they will meet a powerful adversary, the struggle with whom will require long intervals of time and a terrific straining of forces.

47. But precisely the protracted nature of the war will inevitably reveal the contradictions of the transitional economy of the USSR with its bureaucratic planning. The gigantic new enterprises may, in many cases, prove to be just so much dead capital. Under the influence of the government's acute need of supplies of prime necessity, the individualistic tendencies of peasant economy will receive considerable strengthening, and the centrifugal forces within the kolkhozes will grow with each month of war. The rule of the uncontrolled bureaucracy will be transformed into a war dictatorship. The absence of a living party as a political controller and regulator will lead to an extreme accumulation and sharpening of contradictions. In the heated atmosphere of war, one can expect sharp turns toward individualistic principles in agriculture and in handicraft industry, toward the attraction of foreign and "allied" capital, breaks in the monopoly of foreign trade, the weakening of governmental control over trusts, the sharpening of competition between the trusts, their conflicts with workers, etc. In the political sphere, these processes may mean the completion of Bonapartism with the corresponding change or a number of changes in property relations. In other words, in case of a protracted war accompanied by the passivity of the world proletariat, the internal social contradictions in the USSR not only might lead but also would have to lead to a bourgeois-Bonapartist counterrevolution.

48. The political conclusions flowing from this are obvious:

a. Only the proletarian revolution in the West can save the
USSR as the workers' state in case of a long protracted war;

b. The preparation for a proletarian revolution in "friendly," "allied" as well as enemy countries is conceivable only with the complete independence of the world proletarian vanguard from the Soviet bureaucracy.

c. The unconditional support of the USSR against the imperialist armies must go hand in hand with revolutionary Marxist criticism of the war and the diplomatic policy of the Soviet government, and with the formation inside the USSR of a real revolutionary party of Bolshevik-Leninists.

The Third International and War

49. Having abandoned a principled line on the war question, the Third International vacillates between defeatism and social patriotism. In Germany the struggle against fascism was transformed into a market competition on a nationalistic basis. The slogan of "national liberation," advanced side by side with the slogan of "social liberation," grossly distorts the revolutionary perspective and leaves no place whatever for defeatism. On the Saar question, the Communist Party began by a cringing subservience to the ideology of National Socialism and moved away from this only through inner splits.

What slogan will the German section of the Third International advance in time of war: "the defeat of Hitler is the lesser evil"? But if the slogan of national liberation was correct under the "fascists" Mueller and Bruening, how could it lose its efficacy under Hitler? Or are nationalist slogans good only for time of peace and not of war? Truly, the epigones of Leninism did everything to confuse themselves and the working class to the very end.

50. The impotent revolutionism of the Third International is a direct result of its fatal policy. After the German catastrophe, the political insignificance of the so-called Communist Parties was revealed in all countries where they were subjected to any test at all. The French section, which showed itself absolutely incapable of rousing even a few tens of thousands of workers against the colonial robbery in Africa, will undoubtedly prove even more its bankruptcy in the moment of so-called national danger.

51. The struggle against war, unthinkable without the revolutionary mobilization of the wide working masses of the city and village, demands at the same time direct influence on the army and navy, on the one hand, and on transport, on the other. But it is impossible to influence soldiers without influencing the worker and peasant youth. Influence in the sphere of transport presupposes a strong foothold in the trade unions.
Whereas, meanwhile, with the aid of the Profintern, the Third International has lost all positions in the trade-union movement and has cut itself off from all access to the working youth. Under these conditions, to talk of a struggle against war is like blowing soap bubbles. There must be no room for illusions: in case of an imperialist attack on the USSR, the Third International will show itself a complete zero.

"Revolutionary" Pacifism and War

52. As an independent current, petty-bourgeois "left" pacifism starts from the premise that it is possible to insure peace by some particular, special means, outside of the class struggle of the proletariat, outside of the socialist revolution. By articles and speeches, the pacifists inculcate "aversion to war," support the conscientious objectors, preach boycott and the general strike (or rather the myth of the general strike) against war. The more "revolutionary" pacifists are not averse even to talking at times of insurrection against war. But all and severally, they have no conception of the indissoluble bond connecting the insurrection with the class struggle and the policy of a revolutionary party. For them insurrection is just a literary threat directed at the ruling class, and not a matter of long and persistent effort.

Exploiting the masses' natural love for peace and diverting it from its proper channels, the petty-bourgeois pacifists turn finally into unconscious supporters of imperialism. In case of war, the overwhelming majority of the pacifist "allies" will be found in the camp of the bourgeoisie and will use the authority with which the Third International has clothed them by its ballyhoo for the patriotic disorienting of the proletarian vanguard.

53. The Amsterdam congress against war and the Paris congress against fascism, both organized by the Third International, are classic examples of the replacement of revolutionary class struggle by the petty-bourgeois policy of ostentatious demonstrations, showy parades, Potemkin villages. On the morrow of the blatant protests against war in general, the heterogeneous elements artificially brought together by backstage manipulation will scatter in all directions and will not lift even a little finger against the particular war.

54. The replacement of the united proletarian front, that is, of the fighting agreement of working-class organizations, by a bloc of the Communist bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeois pacifists—in which for every honest confusionist there are dozens of careerists—leads to complete eclecticism in questions of tactics. The Barbusse-Muenzenberg congresses
consider it their special merit that they combine all types of "struggle" against war: humanitarian protests, individual refusal to serve in the army, education of "public opinion," the general strike and even insurrection. Methods that in life are in irreconcilable contradiction and that in practice can only be in conflict with each other are presented as elements of a harmonious whole. The Russian Social Revolutionaries who preached a "synthetic tactic" in the struggle against czarism— alliance with liberals, individual terror and mass struggle— were an earnest lot compared with the inspirers of the Amsterdam bloc. But the workers must remember that Bolshevism was reared in the struggle against populist eclecticism!

The Petty Bourgeoisie and War

55. Peasants and the lower strata of the city population, for whom war is no less disastrous than for the proletariat, can be drawn most closely to the proletariat in the struggle against war. Generally speaking, only in this way can war be prevented by insurrection. But even much less than workers will peasants let themselves be drawn to the revolutionary road by abstractions, ready-made patterns and bare command. The epigones of Leninism, who brought about an overturn in the Comintern in the years 1923-24 under the slogan "face to the peasantry," revealed a complete inability to attract to the banner of communism not only peasants but even agricultural workers. The Petty Bourgeoisie and War

56. The petty bourgeoisie of the city and village is not homogeneous. The proletariat can attract to its side only its lowest strata: the poorest peasants, semiproletarians, lower civil servants, peddlers; the oppressed and scattered folk who are deprived by all the conditions of their existence of the possibility of carrying on an independent struggle. Over this wide layer of the petty bourgeoisie, the leaders arise, gravitating to the middle and big bourgeoisie and developing political careerists
of the democratic and pacifist or fascist type. While they remain in opposition, these gentlemen resort to most unbridled demagogy as the surest means of later boosting their price in the eyes of the big bourgeoisie.

The crime of the Third International consists in substituting for the struggle for revolutionary influence on the real petty bourgeoisie, that is, on its plebeian masses, theatrical blocs with its false pacifist leaders. Instead of discrediting the latter, it strengthens them by the prestige of the October Revolution and makes the oppressed lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie political victims of the treacherous leaders.

57. The revolutionary road to the peasantry lies through the working class. To gain the confidence of the village, it is necessary that the advanced workers themselves regain confidence in the banner of the proletarian revolution. This can be achieved only by a correct policy in general, by a correct antiwar policy in particular.

"Defeatism" and Imperialist War

58. In those cases where it is a question of conflict between capitalist countries, the proletariat of any one of them refuses categorically to sacrifice its historic interests, which in the final analysis coincide with the interests of the nation and humanity, for the sake of the military victory of the bourgeoisie. Lenin's formula, "defeat is the lesser evil," means not defeat of one's country is the lesser evil as compared with the defeat of the enemy country but that a military defeat resulting from the growth of the revolutionary movement is infinitely more beneficial to the proletariat and to the whole people than military victory assured by "civil peace." Karl Liebknecht gave an unsurpassed formula of proletarian policy in time of war: "The chief enemy of the people is in its own country." The victorious proletarian revolution not only will rectify the evils caused by defeat but also will create the final guarantee against future wars and defeats. This dialectical attitude toward war is the most important element of revolutionary training and therefore also of the struggle against war.

59. The transformation of imperialist war into civil war is that general strategic task to which the whole work of a proletarian party during war should be subordinated. The consequences of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 as well as of the imperialist slaughter of 1914-18 (Paris Commune, the February and October revolutions in Russia, revolutions in Germany and Austria-Hungary, insurrections in a number of warring countries) testify irrefutably that a modern war between capitalist nations carries with it a war of classes within
each of the nations, and that the task of a revolutionary party consists in preparing in this latter war the victory of the pro-
letariat.

60. The experience of the years 1914-18 demonstrates, at the same time, that the slogan of peace is in no way con-
tradictory to the strategic formula of "defeatism"; on the contrary, it develops a tremendous revolutionary force, especially in a case of a protracted war. The slogan of peace has a paci-
fist, that is, lying, stupefying, enfeebling character only when democratic and other politicians juggle with it; when priests offer up prayers for the speediest cessation of the slaughter; when "lovers of humanity," among them also social patriots, tearfully urge the governments to make peace quickly on "the basis of justice." But the slogan of peace has nothing in com-
mon with pacifism when it emanates from working-class quar-
ters and trenches, intertwining itself with the slogan of frat-
erization of the soldiers of the hostile armies and uniting the oppressed against the oppressors. The revolutionary strug-
gle for peace, which takes on ever-wider and bolder forms, is the surest means of "turning the imperialist war into a civil war."

War, Fascism and the Arming of the Proletariat

61. War demands "civil peace." Under the present conditions, the bourgeoisie can achieve it only by means of fascism. Thus fascism has become the main political factor of war. The struggle against war presupposes the struggle against fascism. All sorts of revolutionary programs of struggle against war ("de-
featism," "transformation of imperialist war into civil war," etc.) turn into empty sounds if the proletarian vanguard finds itself incapable of victoriously repelling fascism.

To demand of the bourgeois state the disarming of fascist bands, as the Stalinists do, is to take the road of the German Social Democracy and Austro-Marxism. Precisely Wels and Otto Bauer "demanded" of the state that it disarm the Nazis and assure internal peace. "Democratic" government can, it is true—when it is to its advantage—disarm individual fascist groups but only in order with all the greater ferocity to dis-
arm the workers and prevent them from arming themselves. The very next day the bourgeois state will accord the fascists, only yesterday "disarmed," the possibility of arming themselves doubly and of bringing down with twofold strength their weapons on the unarmed proletariat. To turn to the state, that is, to capital, with the demand to disarm the fascists means to sow the worst democratic illusions, to lull the vigilance of the proletariat, to demoralize its will.
62. Proceeding from the fact of the arming of fascist bands, correct revolutionary policy consists in creating armed workers' detachments for the purposes of self-defense, and in tirelessly calling the workers to arm themselves. Here is the center of gravity of the whole present political situation. The Social Democrats, even the most left ones, that is, those who are ready to repeat general phrases of revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, carefully avoid the question of arming the workers, or openly declare this task "chimerical," adventurous, "romantic," etc. They propose, instead (!) of arming the workers, propaganda among soldiers, which they do not carry on in reality and which they are incapable of carrying on. Bare reference to work in the army is needed by the opportunists only in order to bury the question of the arming of the workers.

63. The struggle for the army is incontestably the greatest part of the struggle for power. Persistent and self-sacrificing work among the soldiers is the revolutionary duty of every truly proletarian party. This work can be carried on with the assurance of success under the condition of the correctness of the general policy of the party in particular and especially among the youth. The agrarian program of the party and in general the system of transitional demands, touching the basic interests of the petty-bourgeois masses and opening up before them a perspective of salvation, has a tremendous importance for the success of the work in the army in those countries with a considerable peasant population.

64. It would be puerile, however, to believe that by propaganda alone the whole army can be won over to the side of the proletariat and thus in general make revolution unnecessary. The army is heterogeneous and its heterogeneous elements are chained by the iron hoops of discipline. Propaganda can create revolutionary cells in the army and prepare a sympathetic attitude among the most progressive soldiers. More than this propaganda and agitation cannot do. To depend upon the army defending the workers' organizations from fascism by its own initiative and even guaranteeing the transfer of power into the hands of the proletariat is to substitute sugary illusions for the harsh lessons of history. The army in its decisive section can go over to the side of the proletariat in the epoch of revolution only in the event that the proletariat itself will have revealed to the army in action a readiness and ability to fight for power to the last drop of blood. Such struggle necessarily presupposes the arming of the proletariat.

65. The task of the bourgeoisie consists in preventing the proletariat from winning over the army. Fascism solves this
task not without success by means of armed detachments. The immediate, urgent, present-day task of the proletariat consists not in seizing power but in the defense of its organizations from fascist bands, at a certain distance behind which stands the capitalist state. Whoever asserts that the workers have no possibility of arming themselves proclaims by that that the workers are defenseless before fascism. Then there is no need to speak of socialism, of proletarian revolution, of struggle against war. Then the communist program should be scrapped and a cross marked over Marxism.

66. Not a revolutionary but an impotent pacifist, tomorrow's capitulator to fascism and to war, can pass up the task of arming the workers. In itself the task of arming is entirely solvable, as history testifies. If the workers will really understand that it is a question of life and death, they will obtain weapons. To explain to them the political situation, hiding or minimizing nothing and chasing out every consolatory lie, is the first duty of a revolutionary party. Indeed, how can one defend himself against the mortal enemy if not by having two knives for every fascist knife and two revolvers for every revolver? There is and there can be no other answer.

67. Where should the weapons be gotten? First of all, from the fascists. The disarming of fascists is a shameful slogan when it is addressed to the bourgeois police. The disarming of fascists is an excellent slogan when it is addressed to revolutionary workers. But fascist arsenals are not the only source. The proletariat has hundreds and thousands of channels for self-defense. We must not forget that it is precisely the workers and only they who with their own hands make all sorts of weapons. It is only necessary for the proletarian vanguard to understand clearly that we cannot evade the task of self-defense. A revolutionary party must take upon itself the initiative in arming fighting workers' detachments. And for this it must first of all cleanse itself of all sorts of skepticism, indecision and pacifist reasoning in the question of arming the workers.

68. The slogan of a workers' militia, or of detachments of self-defense, has a revolutionary meaning insofar as it is a question of an armed militia; otherwise the militia is reduced to a theatrical display, to a parade and, consequently, to self-delusion. Of course, the arming will be primitive at the beginning. The first workers' detachments will have neither howitzers nor tanks nor airplanes. But on February 6 in Paris, in the center of a powerful militarist country, bands armed with revolvers and razors on sticks were not far from taking the Bourbon palace and brought about the fall of the
government. Tomorrow similar bands can sack the offices of proletarian newspapers or trade-union headquarters. The strength of the proletariat lies in its numbers. Even the most primitive weapon in the hands of the masses can perform miracles. Under favorable conditions, it may open a road to more-perfected weapons.

69. The slogan of a *united front* degenerates into a centrist phrase if it is not supplemented under the present conditions by propaganda and practical application of definite methods of struggle against fascism. The united front is needed, first of all, for the creation of local committees of defense. The committees of defense are needed for the building and uniting of detachments of workers' militia. These detachments must at the very start look for and find weapons. Detachments for self-defense are only a stage in the matter of arming the proletariat. In general, revolution knows no other roads.

**Revolutionary Policy Against War**

70. The first prerequisite for success is the *training of party cadres* in the correct understanding of all the conditions of imperialist war and of all the political processes that accompany it. Woe to that party that confines itself in this burning question to general phrases and abstract slogans! The bloody events will crash over its head and smash it.

It is necessary to set up special circles for the study of the political experiences of the war of 1914-18 (ideological preparations for war by the imperialists, misleading of public opinion by military headquarters through the patriotic press, the role of the antithesis defense-attack; groupings in the proletarian camp, the isolation of the Marxist elements, etc., etc.).

71. For a revolutionary party, the *moment of declaration of war* is especially critical. The bourgeois and social-patriotic press in an alliance with the radio and movies will pour out upon the toiling masses torrents of chauvinistic poison. Even the most revolutionary and tempered party cannot as a whole resist this. The present thoroughly falsified history of the Bolshevik Party does not serve in the realistic preparation of the advanced workers for the test, but lulls them into passive impotence by an invented ideal form.

Despite the fact that czarist Russia could by no stretch of imagination have been considered either as a democracy or as the bearer of culture, nor, finally, as belonging to the defensive side, the Bolshevik fraction of the Duma together with the Menshevik fraction issued at the beginning a social-patriotic declaration diluted with pink pacifist internationalism. The Bolshevik fraction soon took a more revolutionary po-
sition, but at the trial of the fraction all the accused deputies and their theoretic guide Kamenev, with the exception of Muranov, categorically differentiated themselves from the defeatist theory of Lenin. The illegal work of the party almost died down at the beginning. Only gradually did the revolutionary leaflets begin to appear that rallied the workers under the banner of internationalism, without, however, advancing defeatist slogans.

The first two years of the war greatly undermined the patriotism of the masses and moved the party to the left. But the February Revolution, having transformed Russia into a "democracy," gave rise to a new powerful wave of "revolutionary" patriotism. The overwhelming majority of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party did not withstand it even then. In March 1917, Stalin and Kamenev imparted to the central party organ a social-patriotic direction. On this basis a rapprochement, and in the majority of cities even a direct fusion, of Bolshevik and Menshevik organizations occurred. Protests by the firmest revolutionists, chiefly in the advanced districts of Petrograd, were needed; the arrival of Lenin in Russia and his irreconcilable struggle against social patriotism were needed to straighten out the party's internationalist front. Such was the case with the best, most revolutionary and tempered party.

72. The study of the historic experience of Bolshevism has an invaluable educational importance for the advanced workers: it shows them the terrific force of the pressure of bourgeois public opinion that they will have to withstand and teaches them, at the same time, not to despair, not to sheath weapons, not to lose courage despite complete isolation at the beginning of war.

It is necessary to study no less carefully the political alignments within the proletariat of other countries, both those that participated in the war and those that remained neutral. Of special significance is the experience of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in Germany, where events took a different course than in Russia but in the final analysis led to the same conclusion: that it is necessary to learn to swim against the current.

73. It is necessary to follow closely the patriotic preparation of cannon fodder now proceeding: the diplomatic fencing that has as its aim the laying of responsibility on the other side; the treacherous formulas of open and hidden social patriots preparing for themselves a bridge from pacifism to militarism; the hollow slogans of the "Communist" leaders who will be just as bewildered on the first day of war as the German "leaders" on the night of the Reichstag fire.
74. It is necessary to gather carefully the most characteristic clippings from official government and opposition articles and speeches, comparing them with the experience of the previous war; to foretell what direction the further work of fooling the people will take; to strengthen these predictions later by the array of facts; to teach the proletarian vanguard to orient itself independently in events so as not to be taken unawares.

75. Reinforced agitation against imperialism and militarism must proceed not from abstract formulas but from concrete facts that strike the masses. It is necessary painstakingly to expose not only the open military budget but also all the masked forms of militarism, not leaving without a protest war maneuvers, military furnishings, orders, etc.

Through well-trained workers, it is necessary to raise the question of the war danger and of struggle against it in all organizations of the proletariat without exception and in the labor press, demanding from the leaders clear and definite answers to the question: what to do?

76. To gain the confidence of the youth, it is necessary not only to declare a fight to the finish upon the morally corrupting Social Democracy and upon the dull bureaucratism of the Third International but also to actually create an international organization basing itself on the critical thought and revolutionary initiative of the young generation.

It is necessary to arouse the working youth against all kinds and forms of its militarization by the bourgeois state. Simultaneously, it must be mobilized and militarized in the interests of the revolution (committees of defense against fascism, Red fighting detachments, workers' militia, struggle for the arming of the proletariat).

77. To conquer revolutionary positions in the trade unions and other working-class mass organizations, it is necessary to break pitilessly with bureaucratic ultimatism, to take the workers where they are and as they are, and to lead them forward from partial tasks to general ones, from defense to attack, from patriotic prejudices to the overthrow of the bourgeois state.

Since the leaderships of trade-union bureaucracy in the majority of countries represent essentially an unofficial part of the capitalist police, a revolutionist must know how to fight irreconcilably against it, combining legal activity with illegal, fighting courage with conspirative prudence.

Only by these combined methods can we succeed in rallying the working class, and in the first place the youth, to the
revolutionary banner, blaze a trail to the capitalist barracks and arouse all the oppressed.

78. The struggle against war can acquire a genuinely wide, mass character only if the working women and peasant women take part in it. The bourgeois degeneration of the Social Democracy as well as the bureaucratic deterioration of the Third International have delivered the hardest blow to the most oppressed and disfranchised strata of the proletariat, that is, first of all to the working women. To awaken them, gain their confidence, show them the true road, means to mobilize against imperialism the revolutionary passions of the most downtrodden part of humanity.

Antimilitarist work among women must in particular safeguard the replacement of mobilized men by revolutionary working women to whom, in case of war, a great part of party and trade-union work must inevitably pass.

79. If the proletariat should find it beyond its power to prevent war by means of revolution—and this is the only means of preventing war—the workers, together with the whole people, will be forced to participate in the army and in war. Individualistic and anarchistic slogans of refusal to undergo military service, passive resistance, desertion, sabotage are in basic contradiction to the methods of the proletarian revolution. But just as in the factory the advanced worker feels himself a slave of capital, preparing for his liberation, so in the capitalist army too he feels himself a slave of imperialism. Compelled today to give his muscles and even his life, he does not surrender his revolutionary consciousness. He remains a fighter, learns how to use arms, explains even in the trenches the class meaning of war, groups around himself the discontented, connects them into cells, transmits the ideas and slogans of the party, watches closely the changes in the mood of the masses, the subsiding of the patriotic wave, the growth of indignation, and summons the soldiers to the aid of the workers at the critical moment.

The Fourth International and War

80. The struggle against war presupposes a revolutionary instrument of struggle, that is, a party. There is none now either on a national or on an international scale. A revolutionary party must be built on the basis of the entire experience of the past, including the experiences of the Second and Third Internationals. The renunciation of open and direct struggle for the new International means conscious or unconscious support of the two existing Internationals, of which one will
actively support the war, the other being capable only of disorganizing and weakening the proletarian vanguard.

81. It is true, not a few honest revolutionary workers remain in the ranks of the so-called Communist Parties. The persistence with which they hold on to the Third International is, in many cases, to be explained by misdirected revolutionary devotion. They can be attracted to the banner of the new International not by concessions, not by adaptation to prejudices inculcated in them but, on the contrary, by a systematic unmasking of the fatal international role of Stalinism (bureaucratic centrism). Thereby the questions of war must be posed with particular clarity and intransigence.

82. At the same time, it is necessary to follow attentively the inner struggle in the reformist camp and attract in time the left socialist groupings developing towards revolution to a struggle against war. The best criterion of the tendencies of a given organization is its attitude in practice, in action, toward national defense and toward colonies, especially in those cases in which the bourgeoisie of a given country owns colonial slaves. Only a complete and real break with official public opinion on the most burning question of the "defense of the fatherland" signifies a turn, or at least the beginning of a turn from bourgeois positions to proletarian positions. The approach to left organizations of this type should be accompanied by friendly criticism of all indecision in their policy and by a joint elaboration of all theoretical and practical questions of war.

83. There are not a few politicians in the working-class movement who recognize, at least in words, the failure of the Second and Third Internationals but consider, at the same time, that "this is not the time" to start building a new International. Such a position is characteristic not of a revolutionary Marxist but of a disillusioned Stalinist or disappointed reformist. The revolutionary struggle does not suffer interruption. The conditions for it may not be favorable today; but a revolutionary who cannot swim against the current is not a revolutionary. To say that the building of the new International is "untimely" is the same as to declare that the class struggle, and in particular the struggle against war, is untimely. In the present epoch, proletarian policy cannot but place before itself international tasks. International tasks cannot but demand the welding together of international cadres. This work cannot be deferred even for one day without capitulation to imperialism.

84. Of course, no one can predict just when the war will break out and at what stage it will find the building of new
parties and of the Fourth International. We must do everything possible to make the preparation for the proletarian revolution move faster than the preparation for a new war. It is very possible, however, that this time also imperialism will overtake the revolution. But even this road, portending great sacrifices and calamities, in no case relieves us of the duty of building the new International immediately. The transformation of the imperialist war into proletarian revolution will proceed all the faster the further advanced our preparatory work will be, the firmer the revolutionary cadres at the very beginning of war, the more systematically they carry on work in all warring countries and the more firmly their work is based on correct strategic tactical and organizational principles.

85. At its first blow the imperialist war will smash the decrepit spine of the Second International and will split its national sections into bits. It will reveal to the bottom the hollowness and impotence of the Third International. But then neither will it spare all those indecisive centrist groupings that evade the problem of the International, seek purely national roots, do not carry any one question to its conclusion, are devoid of perspective and temporarily feed on the ferment and confusion of the working class.

Even if at the beginning of a new war the true revolutionists should again find themselves in a small minority, we cannot doubt for a single moment that this time the shift of the masses to the road of revolution will occur much faster, more decisively and relentlessly than during the first imperialist war. A new wave of insurrections can and must become victorious in the whole capitalist world.

It is indisputable at any rate that in our epoch only that organization that bases itself on international principles and enters into the ranks of the world party of the proletariat can root itself in the national soil. The struggle against war means now the struggle for the Fourth International!
At Barbizon, 1933: Trotsky with his dogs, Benno and Stella.
The motor stopped, and the muffled throbbing of the sea, close by, gave body to the night. Slowly advancing on the path outlined by our lights, preceded by a discreet young comrade carrying an electric lantern, appeared a pair of white shoes, white trousers—a pajama suit reaching to the neck. The head remained hidden by the darkness. I have seen faces that express exceptional lives, almost all are distant countenances; I waited with greater curiosity to look upon this face marked by one of the world's greatest destinies.

From the moment that this phantom in eyeglasses stopped, I noticed that all the force of his features was in his mouth—smooth, tense lips, extremely determined—the lips of an Asiatic statue. He laughed until the strangeness wore off, with a dry laugh that seemed to bear no relation to his speaking voice (a laugh disclosing small teeth far apart, extraordinarily young teeth, in the fine face embellished by white hair). His voice, obliging and imperious at the same time, seemed to say: "Let us finish quickly with these cordial greetings and pass on to more serious things."

Serious things meant, in this period when direct action was forbidden as a condition of his remaining in France, his thoughts. At the great writing desk on which a revolver served as paper weight, the presence of Trotsky brought to mind one of the most significant of all problems: the relation between character and destiny.

We attribute to the blind a rigorous certainty of judgment. I think that is because the blind judge a man only by his voice. Actually, nothing, neither the face, nor the smile, nor the gestures, express man, for the simple reason that man is inexpressible. But of all these tiny open doors of the personality, it is certainly the tone of the voice that reveals most of the quality of the individual. Trotsky did not speak his own language; but even in French, the personal quality of
his voice dominates completely what he says. I felt the absence of that insistence through which so many betray that their great zeal in convincing others is only a desire to convince themselves, the absence of the will to seduce. Most great men have in common this heaviness of expression, this confusion, this mysterious center of the spirit that appears to spring from doctrine but that surpasses it in every sense and produces the habit of considering thought as something that must be conquered, and not as something that repeats itself. In the domain of the spirit, this man had forged his own world, and in it he lived. I remember how he spoke to me of Pasternak.

"Russian youth admires him, but to me he makes little appeal. I do not care for the art of technicians, which is an art for specialists."

"For me," I answered, "art is, above all, the highest or the most intense expression of a legitimate human experience."

"I think that this art will be reborn in all Europe. In Russia, revolutionary literature has not yet produced any great work."

"The true expression of revolutionary art is not found in literature, but in the cinema, don't you agree?"

"Lenin thought that communism would find artistic expression in the cinema. Regarding Potemkin and Mother, many have spoken to me as you do. But I will tell you something: I have never seen those films. When they were first shown, I was at the front. Later, others were shown, and when the earlier ones were revived, I was already in exile."

This art, the first fruit of the revolutionary cinema, this art that in so many ways corresponds to his life and forms a part of his legend Trotsky has never seen.

"Why," I asked, "will literature not disappear, making room for another art form, just as the dance of primitive tribes has been replaced by the arts of our own epoch? We separate the cinema from painting, but I think that is of little significance. Writing has killed the dance; in the cinema there is a form of writing, not created with words, which could very easily kill writing itself—the word killing the dance, the image killing the word."

Trotsky smiled.

"It is difficult for me to discuss the effects of literature on the dance. Remember that technically, I know very little about this thing. But it seems to me that the dance has been preserved; it has evolved. I think it could even be reborn with all that it possessed in other epochs, but further enriched. Humanity never abandons what it has once conquered."

"Nevertheless, it has abandoned at least eight hundred years of ancient values. I believe that it would have been impossible
for a man of the year 700 to understand Pericles, just as it would have been impossible for Pericles to understand a man of the year 700. Nor was the spiritual life of ancient Egypt accessible to Pericles."

"Egypt—"

Trotsky shoved it aside. It was evident that he knew little of Egypt.

"But regarding Christianity," continued Trotsky, "I am suspicious. I think we have too much idealized the early years of Christianity. I do not doubt that in addition to mystics who were ascetics and agile mercenary people, there existed an immense majority in the church who understood little of anything."

Was it possible that Trotsky saw primitive Christianity through the eyes of the Russia of his youth? He continued:

"You know that when the Pope fell ill he went to the physicians and not to those who prayed. Yes, the ancient values disappeared; but they have returned."

"You tell me that humanity does not abandon what it once has conquered. Then would it not be possible to admit the persistence of individualism in communism—a communist individualism as distinct, for example, from bourgeois individualism, as the latter is from the individualism of Christianity?"

"Let us see—here, as in everything, we must start with the economic basis."

"The Christians lived in terms of eternity and conceded little importance to individualism because they were poor. The Communists of the five-year plan are, in a way, in the same situation—for different reasons. The periods of plans in Russia are necessarily unfavorable to any individualism, even communist."

"The periods of war are likewise unfavorable to bourgeois individualism."

"But beyond the plans, or between the plans, communism will apply to itself the energy that today it applies to construction. I believe that the spirit of primitive Christianity is inseparable from extreme poverty."

Trotsky was tired. His French became more rapid and less pure. He used unexpected words more frequently, giving them a singular inflection.

"A purely collective ideology, an exclusively collective ideology, which communism and the modern world will necessitate in a very short time, is irreconcilable with the slightest material liberty."

Accompanied by his son, I abandoned the lonely villa and returned to the city.
The next day we spoke of the campaign in Poland. 280

"Some specialists in France say that Tukhachevsky was defeated because Weygand changed the axis of the action in the middle of the combat, a tactic that the Russian general did not understand. I always distrust specialists in such matters."

"Tukhachevsky knew very well that it is permissible to change the axis of the battle. That was not the question. There were two causes for the defeat—in the first place, the arrival of the French."

"This was said in France, but not believed, for no detailed information was given."

"It is true. The French staff arrived in all this disorder—disorder is putting it mildly. They were not in their own country; they hadn't suffered one crushing defeat since the beginning of the campaign. They were serene. They were able to examine everything with coolness. In the second place, the army of Lemberg did not throw itself upon Warsaw, which is what it should have done. That was essential."

I knew that Stalin had figured in the army of Lemberg.

"But the whole thing was an adventure. I was decidedly opposed. We finally went through with it because Lenin insisted. At that time, the situation and disposition of the Polish proletariat were difficult to grasp. Add to that the fact that a revolutionary army is always exceedingly nervous: when it finds itself separated from its base of supplies it can become demoralized by the slightest defeat, especially after a series of victories."

"Is it to this that you attribute the defeat of the Red Army, after its successes in the war of occupation?"

"Yes. In the war of occupation we were stronger because our forces radiated from the center—Moscow."

"Could the Red Army now maintain itself industrially and chemically against a European or Japanese army?"

"It could quickly place itself on the level of any of them. But the Japanese army is not by a long shot what Europe thinks it is. No doubt you believe that it is analogous to the German army of 1913; but the Japanese army is actually the army of a secondary European nation. It is an army that has not yet been tested, an army that has never fought against a real occidental army."

"I understand quite well that for Russia the Russo-Japanese war was a colonial war, while for Japan it was a national war. But the Trans-Siberian is nothing but a one-track railway even today. No doubt Russia will not fight in Manchuria, but will try to place Japan in a situation similar to her own."

"I think we shall fight in Baikal."
For the first time he said "We." His glance became more intense, as if his attention had suddenly concentrated.

He had just eliminated that minimum of distraction that is part of even the most attentive conversation. I did not altogether trust this Kremlin, the Red Army that burst into the open room, over the shadowy pines and burning trees, pushed forward only by that powerful influence that a historic life can exercise, even when it is inactive. I thought of Dupleix dying in his tiny alcove, ruined and humiliated, reduced to beggary, but dying on the pillows stuffed with his letters of the Indies.

"With a government as authoritarian as the Russian," he continued, "it would be dangerous for an army to withdraw so far."

"Bessedovsky, in his memoirs, which obviously inspire me with only a relative confidence, asserts that Stalin would draw back as far as Irkutsk only to have a free hand in the Chinese revolution."

"I do not believe that. Questioned by a man like Bessedovsky, Stalin exasperated, may have made this answer, but it's just talk. But Japan will not only fight the Red Army in Siberia. Her principal enemy is not the USSR. Whether Roosevelt succeeds or fails, the United States will have to find new markets.

"The United States already has Latin America. That's done, and it is not sufficient. Each day, they oppose the open door in China more energetically. They will find themselves obliged to take China. They will say, 'All the other nations have colonies, the greatest economic nation of the world must have them too.' Who will stop them? Europe will be too busy. Once China is an American colony, war with Japan is inevitable."

While others lingered over the table after eating, we went out into the garden. The sun was setting—a sun as beautiful as the lingering day. The white houses scattered over the fields or among the fringes of the now darkening forest appeared bluish, with a vague aspect of dull phosphorescence. Our conversation grew less intense, less rigorous. He spoke of Lenin, about whose work he is now writing, a book as important as My Life (which Trotsky does not like), in which he will treat all the themes of philosophy and tactics that he has not yet explained. A cat rushed past—one of Trotsky's large wolfhounds was accompanying us.

"Is it true that Lenin was very fond of kittens? You know that Richelieu always had a basket full of kittens on his table."

"Not only cats; Lenin loved all small things—especially chil-
children. Perhaps because he had no children. He simply adored them. In art, his taste was for the past. But he often said of artists, 'One must let them work.'"

"Did he expect a new human type to develop under communism, or did he foresee a certain continuity in this domain?"

Trotsky thought for a while. We were walking at the edge of the sea; it caressed the rocks gently. There was absolute calm.

"A new man," he replied, "for him the perspectives of communism were infinite."

He grew pensive again. I thought of all he had said to me that morning; perhaps he thought of it too.

"But," I said, "it seems to me that for you . . ."

"No, at heart, I think as he did."

It was not his orthodoxy that made him say this. I felt that in spite of the preparation of the revolution, civil war and the taking of power, he had never confronted this problem as he did now. No doubt he wished to say that he foresaw first a continuity among human types, found separation. And I felt through him that Lenin, faced with a world in which Marxism lacked proven data, wished to experiment. In a word, the desire for knowledge led him immediately to action. Here, more than in our political conversation, I felt most keenly the man of action.

The night advanced; again I listened as the sea caressed the rocks.

"The important thing," he said, "is to see clearly. One can say of communism, above all, that it gives more clarity. We must liberate man from all that prevents his seeing. We must liberate him from those economic facts that impede his thinking and from those sexual matters that prevent his thinking. Here, I think, the doctrine of Freud can be very useful."

"I see in Freud a genial detective, a man who has opened one of the greatest domains in psychology. At the same time, he is a disastrous philosopher."

"But do you think that man, once liberated from religious, national or social mobilization, will accept facts instead of faith? Will not death encounter resistance?"

"I think that death is, above all, a product of use. On the one hand, use of the body; on the other, use of the spirit. If this using of body and spirit could be carried on harmoniously, death would be a very simple phenomenon. Death would meet with no resistance."

He was sixty years old and gravely ill. —"Death would meet with no resistance."

I am writing this on my return from a popular gathering
at which we saw a film of the latest celebrations in Moscow. On the wide expanse of the Red Square, with arms-brandishing cars, virile young women passed before the tribune from which all the leaders of the USSR watched the procession, dwarfed by two gigantic portraits of Lenin and Stalin. The multitude applauded as multitudes always do, less a sign of enthusiasm than of approbation. How many among them thought of Trotsky? Many, certainly. Before the showing of the film, speeches had been made, for Thaelmann in particular. The man who dared to speak of Trotsky would, after the first moment of uneasiness, have been quickly attacked, by bourgeois hostility and by orthodox prudence at the same time. This multitude, silent about Trotsky, is troubled by him as by a bad conscience. I know the multitude. I have seen it at all the meetings. I still hear its muted Internationale, ascending as a ground tone from the vast hall of Lune Park: I still see the hoofs of the horses, approaching as I leave; the breast, the hostile head of the constabulary, almost lost in the night, the parallel reflection of the electric lights over the helmets. They are the same who come tirelessly to listen to speakers who talk in the name of Sacco and Vanzetti, of Torgler or Thaelmann; the same who hide their generosity as if they were ashamed of it, as if generosity were incompatible with intelligence; the same who in numbers of three hundred listen to explanations of Marx, and who swell to thirty thousand when they take their homage to Dimitrov—the only homage they possess—the sacrifice of one evening at the cinema. Against the government that exiles you, Trotsky, all are with you. You belong to those proscribed persons of whom they cannot make an emigre. In spite of all that is said, printed, shouted, the Russian Revolution is for them a bloc, and all the heroism that shook the Winter Palace now feels itself humiliated by your solitude.

Once again destiny clutches you between its bloody fingers. A few days after the hopeless attack of the Austrian workers, one French government withdraws the hospitality that another French government had extended to you. You do not mean enough to them to make them remember their obligations. You are still worth enough to extract such obligations. But they could have expelled you without resorting to morality or virtue. It is you who have not lived up to your obligations. You have formed the Fourth International. Today, throughout the world you can count members by the hundreds. It is an International far more dangerous than the Third, which has two million members, or than the Second. (Though the French bourgeoisie would do well at this mo-
ment to forget the Internationals and build against the Nationalisms.) You write in La Verite of your unceasing efforts. You have betrayed France, to whom you are under no obligation—which, of course, is not the case of the Grand Duke on the Riviera. And you have been discovered (as if your house were not always watched by the police) thanks to the surprising "nose" of a police reader of "Simenon." They could have spared themselves this grotesque abuse—to free the hostages there is no need to spit into their faces, even though it may be the custom. An "anonymous" note in Le Matin explains in clear language, although with that special sordidness characteristic of the military tone: "We have had Trotsky." Since what they wanted "to have" in you was the Russian revolutionist, let us remind them that there are still 160 million to be "had." But we must say to these 160 million that whatever doctrinal differences may exist between the government of the Soviet Union and you, we must recognize every revolutionist in danger as one of ours, that what they are attempting to trample in you, in the name of nationalism, is the revolution. But there is in the bastions and in the miserable huts plenty of material with which to build an army of revolutionists. I know, Trotsky, that your thought awaits its own triumph from implacable destiny. Can your clandestine shadow, which for ten years has marched in exile, make the French worker understand that to unite in a concentration camp is to unite a little too late? There are many communist circles in which to be suspected of sympathy for you is as serious as being suspected of sympathy for fascism. But your departure, the insults of the press, show with sufficient clarity that the revolution is one.
NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. "It Is Impossible to Remain in the Same 'International' with Stalin, Manuilsky, Lozovsky and Company." Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 13, 1933. The Communist League of America (CLA) was the American section of the International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists). Signed "G. Gourov." This discussion article, cast in the form of a conversation, was written while Trotsky was en route from Turkey to France. "We" refers to the International Left Opposition (ILO), for whose members the article was intended.

2. Otto Wels (1873-1939) was a leader of the German Social Democracy. As military commander of Berlin, he crushed the Spartacist uprising of 1919; later he led the Social Democratic delegation in the Reichstag until Hitler took over total power in 1933.

3. 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, world congresses were held around once a year—the First in 1919, the Second in 1920, the Third in 1921, the Fourth in 1922—despite the civil war and the insecurity of the Soviet Union. Trotsky regarded the theses of the Comintern's first four congresses as the programmatic cornerstone of the Left Opposition and later of the Fourth International. The Fifth Congress, where Stalin's machine was in control, was held in 1924, the Sixth not until 1928 and the Seventh not until 1935. Trotsky called the Seventh the "liquidation congress" of the Comintern (see Writings 35-36), and it was in fact the last before Stalin announced its dissolution in 1943 as a gesture to his imperialist allies.

4. Trotsky was in error here. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern had been held in 1928, that is, five years before this article.

5. Ernst Thaelmann (1886-1945) was the leader of the German Communist Party, its presidential candidate and a supporter of the Kremlin policies that led to Hitler's victory. Arrested by the Nazis in 1933, he was executed at Buchenwald in 1945.

6. Dmitri Manuilsky (1883-1952) was, like Trotsky, a member of the independent Marxist group, the Mezhrayontzi (Inter-District Group) which fused with the Bolshevik Party in 1917. In the 1920s he supported the Stalin faction and served as secretary of the Comintern from 1931 to 1943.
7. Fritz Heckert (1884-1936) was the German CP leader assigned the task of reporting on the German situation at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on April 1, 1933. He obediently praised Stalin and damned Trotsky, "the confederate of Hitler," whereupon the ECCI obediently approved the German CP policy "up to and during Hitler's coup d'état."

8. The Political Bureau (Politburo) was the ruling body of the Soviet Communist Party, although ostensibly subordinate to the Central Committee. In 1933 its members were Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kalinin, Kirov, Kossior, Kuibyshev, Molotov, Ordzhonikidze and Andreyev.

9. Centrism is the term used by Trotsky 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. Since a centrist tendency has no independent social base, it must be evaluated in terms of its origin, its internal dynamic and the direction it is taking or being pushed in by events. Until around 1935, Trotsky saw Stalinism as a special variety—bureaucratic centrism; thereafter he felt this term was inadequate to describe what the Soviet bureaucracy was becoming. In a letter to James P. Cannon on October 10, 1937, he wrote: "Some comrades continue to characterize Stalinism as 'bureaucratic centrism.' This characterization is now totally out of date. On the international arena, Stalinism is no longer centrism, but the crudest form of opportunism and social patriotism. See Spain!"

10. The international preconference of the ILO had been held in Paris February 4-8, 1933. Among other actions it adopted a document by Trotsky, "The International Left Opposition, Its Tasks and Methods," written December 1932, which included a statement of "eleven points" summing up the basic positions of the Opposition (see Writings 32-33). The tenth point, reaffirming the policy of reform to reform the Comintern, called for "Differentiation of three groupings within the camp of Communism: the Marxist, the Centrist and the Right. Recognition of the impermissibility of a political alliance with the Right against Centrism; support of Centrism against the class enemy; irreconcilable and systematic struggle against Centrism and its zigzag policies." In July, shortly before he left for Turkey, Trotsky wrote an amendment for the tenth point, which called for "The struggle for the regrouping of the revolutionary forces of the world's working class under the banner of International Communism. Recognition of the necessity of the creation of a genuine Communist International capable of applying the principles enumerated above." A plenum (full meeting) of the ILO leadership in August 1933 adopted the amendment.

11. Bolshevism and Menshevism were the two major tendencies in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, section of the Second International, following its Second Congress in 1903. The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, and the Mensheviks, led by Julius Martov, eventually became separate parties, ending up on different sides of the barricades in 1917.

12. 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. The reformists therefore strive to soften the class struggle and to promote class
Notes for Pages 18 to 23

Notes/or Pages

18 to 28

collaboration. The logic of their position leads them to side with the capitalists against workers and colonial peoples attempting to make a revolution.

13. See "The Class Nature of the Soviet State," October 1, 1933, in this volume for Trotsky's explanation of why he and the Left Opposition changed their opinion on this question and began to advocate a political revolution in the Soviet Union.

14. The Sixteenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party was held in June and July, 1930. The subsequent congress was not held until 1934.

15. The Kuomintang (People's Party) of China was the bourgeois nationalist party founded by Sun Yat-sen in 1911 and led after 1926 by Chiang Kai-shek, butcher of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 and ruler of the country until overthrown by the Chinese Revolution of 1949.

16. This refers to the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee formed by Soviet and British union representatives in May 1925. The British used it as a cheap device to demonstrate their "progressivism" and to shield themselves against criticism from the left, especially useful at that time, not long before the British general strike of 1926. The committee folded when the British members, no longer needing it, walked out in 1927.

17. This refers to the showcase congresses and parades "against war" and "against fascism" that the Stalinists at that time were organizing in collaboration with various pacifists and liberals as a substitute for united-front, working-class activity. The principal congresses of this type were held at Amsterdam in August 1932 (hence it was sometimes called the Amsterdam movement) and at the Pleyel hall in Paris in June 1933.

18. Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) was a major figure in the German working-class movement, founding the General German Workers Union. His followers joined the early Marxists in founding the German Social Democracy.

19. "National Socialism" was the label of the German Nazi party.

20. Willi Muenzenberg (1889-1940), an organizer of the Young Communist International, masterminded many propaganda enterprises for the German CP and the Kremlin. He broke with the Stalinists in 1937 and was found dead in France at the time of Germany's invasion.

21. Albert Oustric was a French banker whose speculations wiped out many banks and led to the downfall of the Tardieu cabinet in 1930.

22. Henri Barbusse (1873-1935) was a pacifist novelist who joined the French Communist Party, wrote biographies of Stalin and Christ, and sponsored amorphous antiwar and antifascist congresses used by the Stalinists as substitutes for genuine struggle.

23. Austrian chancellor Dollfuss banned the Communist Party in May 1933. In Bulgaria severely repressive measures were legislated against the Communist Party.

24. After Hitler came to power in 1933, the Communist Party of Chile voted to affiliate to the Left Opposition under the name of the Communist Left of Chile, but it was actually one faction rather than the whole party that took this step.

25. The Second International (or Labor and Socialist Internation-
al) was organized in 1889 as the successor to the First International (or International Workingmen's Association), which existed from 1864 to 1876 and was led by Karl Marx. The Second International was a loose association of national Social Democratic and labor parties, uniting both revolutionary and reformist elements, whose strongest and most authoritative section was the German Social Democracy. 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.

26. "A Necessary Clarification." La Verite, August 4, 1933. La Verite (The Truth) was the paper of the Communist League of France, section of the ILO. Translated for this volume by Jeff White. Trotsky's arrival in France was greeted with a chorus of hatred and threats of violence from three corners—the French fascists and the Russian White Guard emigres, who implied they would use force against the "red butcher" if the government did not expel him at once, and the French Stalinists, who protested the revocation of the reactionary 1916 decree expelling Trotsky and vowed they would organize mass demonstrations against him when they learned where he was. One of their minor slanders, designed to support their charge that Trotsky was a well-paid agent of imperialism, concerned the large size of the party that accompanied him. Those who actually accompanied the Trotskys on the trip to France were two young men who acted as secretaries and guards in Prinkipo, Jean van Heijenoort and Rudolf Klement, and two Americans sent by the CLA, Max Shachtman, to help out on the trip, and Sara Weber, to become Trotsky's Russian-language stenographer and translator.

27. L'Humanite (Humanity) was the daily paper of the French Communist Party.

28. "For New Communist Parties and the New International." Internal Bulletin, Communist League of America, Number 13, 1933. This is an uncorrected stenographic transcript or summary of Trotsky's remarks during a discussion at Saint-Palais three days after his arrival in France, submitted as a contribution to the discussion going on inside the Left Opposition.

29. Concerning the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern regarding Hitler's seizure of power, Trotsky wrote: "For a whole month not a single Communist organ, the Moscow Pravda not excepted, uttered a word on the catastrophe of March 5. They all waited to hear what the presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International would say. . . . At last . . . the decision was announced: 'The political line . . . of the Central Committee, with Thaelmann at its head, was completely correct up to and during Hitler's coup d'etat'" (The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, p. 392).

30. The International Left Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninists), formed in 1930, was an extension of the Russian Left Opposition, formed in 1923, and a predecessor of the Fourth International (World Party of Socialist Revolution). In 1933 the ILO discontinued its original policy of working for the reform of the Comintern, proclaimed the
need for a new International, changed its name to the International Communist League, and set to work gathering forces for revolutionary parties throughout the world. Trotsky proposed that the Fourth International be founded at an ICL conference held in Geneva in July 1936, but the conference disagreed and instead established the Movement for the Fourth International. The founding conference of the Fourth International was held in Paris in September 1938. It held one more conference during Trotsky's lifetime—an emergency conference in the Western Hemisphere in May 1940, which adopted a manifesto on World War II written by Trotsky (see Writings 39–40).

31. The Socialist Workers Party (SAP) of Germany was one of the sponsors of a conference of independent parties and groups to be held at the end of August 1933; the site of the conference was later changed from Brussels to Paris. The SAP was formed in October 1931, after the Social Democrats expelled several left-wingers headed by Max Seydewitz. In the spring of 1932, a split occurred in the German Communist Right Opposition (KPO, the Brandlerites), and a group of 800 led by Jakob Walcher entered the SAP. When Seydewitz and other founders withdrew, the ex-Brandlerites assumed the leadership of the SAP, which then claimed 14,000 members; its numbers were greatly reduced after Hitler came to power. At the August 1933 conference in Paris, the SAP, together with the ILO and two Dutch parties, signed a declaration proclaiming the need for a new International; simultaneously, the SAP voted for a contradictory resolution at the conference. Trotsky urged a merger of the ILO's German section with the SAP, but the SAP leaders declined. Later, the SAP, along with other affiliates of a centrist international grouping, the International Labor Community (IAG), became an active opponent of a new revolutionary International.

32. "Even Slander Should Make Some Sense." The Militant, September 16, 1933. The Militant was the paper of the Communist League of America, section of the ICL. Signed "G. G."

33. Pavel Miliukov (1859–1943), leader of the Cadet Party, was minister of foreign affairs in the Russian Provisional Government, March–May 1917, and an outstanding enemy of the Bolshevik Revolution. Vladimir Bourtzev (1862–1942) gained his reputation for his role in ferreting out some two hundred agents provocateurs within the Social Revolutionary Party. He was hostile to the October Revolution and became an exile in Paris. Alexander Kerensky (1882–1970) was a member of the Russian Social Revolutionary Party and head of the government overthrown by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

34. Thermidor 1794 was the month in the new French calendar when the revolutionary Jacobins headed by Robespierre were overthrown, opening up a period of political reaction that culminated in the seizure of power by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1799. Trotsky called the Soviet bureaucrats Thermidoreans because he believed their policies were preparing the way for a capitalist counterrevolution. Bonapartism was a central concept in Trotsky's writings during the 1930s. He saw two types—bourgeois Bonapartism and Soviet Bonapartism. The former appears, he said, during periods of acute social crisis, usually in the form of a government that seems to raise itself above the nation and the contending classes the better to pre-
serve the capitalist system: "It is a military-police dictatorship with which we are confronted, barely concealed with the decorations of parliamentarism." But bourgeois Bonapartism, he insisted, must not be equated with fascism, even though both serve the interests of capital. Trotsky's views on Soviet Bonapartism did not reach their most finished form until 1935. For his own analysis of both types of Bonapartism, see "Bonapartism and Fascism," July 15, 1934, and "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," February 1, 1935, both in Writings 34-35.

35. The French invasion of the Ruhr in 1923, because Germany had not paid reparations on time, triggered a revolutionary situation that rapidly turned a majority of the German working class toward support of the Communist Party. But the CP leadership, headed by Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer, vacillated, missed an exceptionally favorable opportunity to conduct a struggle for power and permitted the German capitalists to recover their balance before the year was ended. The Kremlin's responsibility for this wasted opportunity was one of the factors that led to the formation of the Russian Left Opposition at the end of 1923.

36. The Bulgarian government of the peasant leader Stambulisky was overthrown by reactionary forces in June 1923. The Communist Party remained neutral and then was subjected to fierce repression by the victorious reaction and forced underground. The CP blandly denied it had suffered any defeat and in September attempted to retrieve the situation by a putsch that was doomed to defeat in advance.

37. "Socialism in one country" was the theory proclaimed by Stalin in 1924 and later incorporated into the program and tactics of the Comintern. It became the ideological cover for the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism in favor of narrow nationalism and was used to justify the conversion of the Communist Parties throughout the world into docile pawns of the Kremlin's foreign policy. For a critique by Trotsky, see his 1928 book, The Third International After Lenin.

38. Thomas Campbell, an agricultural mechanical engineer from Montana, worked in the Soviet Union as a technical adviser and had an interview with Stalin, on which he reported in his 1932 book, Russia: Market or Menace? Several months later, after Trotsky commented on the significance of Stalin's statements to Campbell (see Writings 32-33), Stalin denied that he had been quoted correctly.

39. Simone Weil (1909-1943) was a French radical intellectual who was converted to mysticism and Catholicism before starving herself to death in England during World War II. Despite the contrary impression left by Isaac Deutscher in The Prophet Outcast, she never joined the Bolshevik-Leninists.

40. White Russians, White Guards and Whites were names used for the Russian counterrevolutionary forces following the October Revolution.

41. Le Populaire (The Populace) was the daily paper of the French Socialist Party. O. Rosenfeld was a member of its staff.

42. Christian Rakovsky (1873-1941) was a leading figure in the Balkan revolutionary movement before the Russian Revolution. In 1918 he became chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet and later served as ambassador to London and Paris. An early leader of the Russian Left Opposition, he was deported to Siberia in 1928, where he
suffered illness, medical neglect and isolation. In 1934 he gave up the fight against Stalinism, but his capitulation did not save him. In 1938 he was one of the major defendants in the third Moscow trial, where he was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.

43. "Is Soviet Policy a Matter on Which Only Russian Socialists Are Competent to Decide?" The New Leader, August 25, 1933. This was the paper of the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain.

44. The Independent Labour Party (ILP), founded in 1893, played an influential part in the creation of the BritishLabour Party, to which it was affiliated and in which it usually occupied a position on the left. Expelled from the Labour Party in 1931, the ILP for some years was attracted by Stalinism. Its actual affiliation in the mid-1930s was to the centrist International Labor Community (IAG), and it was one of the sponsors of the August 1933 conference in Paris. It returned to the Labour Party in 1939.

45. This was a speech entitled "In Defense of the Russian Revolution," given in Copenhagen on November 27, 1932, under the sponsorship of a socialist student organization, and printed in many countries as a pamphlet. It is reprinted in Leon Trotsky Speaks (Pathfinder Press, 1972).

46. James Maxton (1885-1946) was the principal leader of the ILP in the 1930s. His pacifism led him to hail Chamberlain's role at Munich in 1938, for which Trotsky branded him a "lackey of imperialism."

47. Trotsky summarizes the basic concepts of the theory of permanent revolution in point 4 of "Contribution Toward a Discussion on the Basic Theoretical Conceptions of the International Communist League," which is included in this volume.


49. Le Temps (The Times) was the unofficial voice of the French government in the 1930s.

50. Edouard Herriot (1872-1957) was the leader of the bourgeois Radical (or Radical Socialist) Party who was most prominently identified with the policy of arranging alliances with the Socialist Party in the 1920s (Left Bloc)—an early form of the People's Front. In a 1935 pamphlet, Edouard Herriot, Politician of the Golden Mean (see Political Portraits), Trotsky called him "the central figure of the political life of France."

51. Leon Kamenev (1883-1936) and Gregory Zinoviev (1883-1936) were Old Bolsheviks and former members of the Political Bureau. In 1923 they and Stalin initiated the crusade against "Trotckyism," but in 1925 they broke with Stalin and in 1926 formed a bloc with the Left Opposition until they were expelled from the party in 1927. They capitulated before Trotsky was banished to Alma-Ata. Expelled again in 1932, they repented again. In 1936 they were both framed up in the first Moscow trial and executed.

52. Shortly before Trotsky left Turkey, a rumor spread that he was about to return to the USSR and that this signified a switch in Soviet foreign policy. After the Nazi press expressed interest in the rumor, the Soviet news agency TASS denied the rumor abroad.
although its denial was not printed inside the USSR (see _Writings 32-33_).

53. Jean Jaures (1859-1914), an outstanding French Socialist orator and pacifist, was assassinated at the start of World War I.


55. The Paris Commune was the first example of a workers' government. It was in power from March 18, 1871, to May 28, 1871, just seventy-two days, before it was overthrown in a bloody series of battles. Five articles on the Commune are collected in _Leon Trotsky on the Paris Commune_ (Pathfinder Press, 1970).

56. The theory of "social fascism," a brainchild of Stalin, held that Social Democracy and fascism were not antipodes but twins. Since the Social Democrats were only a variety ("social") of fascism, and since just about everyone but the Stalinists was some kind of fascist (a liberal-fascist or a labor-fascist or a Trotsky-fascist), then 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 leading up to his winning power in Germany. The Stalinists finally dropped the theory late one night in 1934 without the decency of an explanation and soon were wooing not only the Social Democrats but also capitalist politicians such as Roosevelt and Daladier, whom they were still calling fascists early in 1934.

57. The Second Congress of the Communist International (July-August 1920), held at a time when a number of centrist parties had applied for or expressed an interest in applying for membership in the Comintern, adopted a series of conditions that were designed to make it difficult for those who had not broken completely with reformism to become affiliates of the International. The conditions of affiliation, originally nineteen and finally twenty-one, were written by Lenin.

58. The Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) of Holland was founded under the leadership of Henricus Sneevliet. It participated in the Paris conference, signed the Declaration of Four calling for a new International and soon after the conference affiliated to the International Communist League (the new name of the ILO).

59. Heinrich Brandler (1881-1967), the leader of the German Communist Party during the early 1920s, was made the scapegoat by Moscow for the revolutionary situation that was bungled in 1923 and was expelled in 1929, when the Comintern had entered its "third period" and a left zigzag. He and August Thalheimer founded the Communist Right Opposition (KPO), whose policies paralleled those of the Bukharin-Rykov tendency in the Soviet Union and the Lovestone group in the United States during the 1930s.

60. "More Urgent Needs for Fund Raising." _La Verite_, August 18, 1933. Translated for this volume by Fred Buchman.

61. "The German Opposition and the SAP Should Unite." Internal Bulletin, German section of the ICL, Number 1, January 1934. Translated for this volume by Russell Block. Among Trotsky's visitors
Notes for Pages 36 to 52

to Saint-Palais during his first months in France were Jacob Walcher (J. Schwab) and Paul Froelich, two leaders of the Socialist Workers Party of Germany (SAP), a sponsor of the international conference to be held at the end of August 1933. Schwab remained for three days, during which Trotsky proposed the merger of the SAP with the German section of the ILO. The letter to Schwab was Trotsky's follow-up to the discussion. The proposed merger never took place because of opposition by the SAP leadership.

62. The KPO (Communist Right Opposition) was the group headed by Heinrich Brandler (see Note 59). The KPO minority refers to the group, led by Walcher and Froelich, that left the KPO in 1932 to join the SAP, in which they soon became the predominant tendency.

63. "How to Handle Slanders and Insinuations." La Verite, August 18, 1933. Translated for this volume by Fred Buchman. One of the problems periodically disturbing and even disrupting the revolutionary movement is that of insinuations impugning the integrity of certain members, often made informally and thus depriving the accused of any means of answering the charges and clearing their names. This letter shows Trotsky's suggestions on how to handle such matters—bring them out into the open, investigate them promptly and reject insinuations whose authors "have never dared appear openly to bring their accusations before a competent body."

64. The letter was to Pierre Frank (1905- ), then a member of the Communist League of France, later a member of the International and United Secretariats of the Fourth International, and author of a brief history, La Quatrieme International (Maspero, 1969).

65. "M." was Raymond Molinier (1904- ), a co-founder of La Verite in 1929 and a leader of the Communist League of France.

66. "The Declaration of Four." The Militant, September 23, 1933. Signed by the representatives of four organizations the day before the opening of the Paris conference in which they were participating. The declaration did not win any other supporters at the conference, where it represented a minority point of view.

67. The International Federation of Trade Unions (sometimes called the Amsterdam International or "yellow" International) was the major organization in its field and was controlled by reformists. Its Stalinist-led rival was the Red International of Labor Unions, also known as the Profintern.

68. Austro-Marxism refers to the brand of reformism practiced by the Socialist Party of Austria, section of the Second International.

69. Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) was one of the outstanding leaders in the history of the Marxist movement and a prominent opponent of revisionism and opportunism before World War I. Jailed in 1915, she helped to found the Spartakusbund and the German Communist Party. She and Karl Liebknecht were assassinated in January 1919 by order of Gustav Noske, Social Democratic minister of war in the Ebert-Scheidemann government.

70. Peter J. Schmidt was the leader of the Independent Socialist Party (OSP) of Holland, which later merged with the Revolutionary Socialist Party to become the Dutch section of the ICL.

71. Henricus Sneevliet (1883-1942) was a founder of the Marxist movement in Indonesia and of the Communist Party in Holland.
While imprisoned for defending "mutinous" sailors, he was elected to the Dutch parliament in 1933. He signed the Declaration of Four in 1933, after which his party, the RSP, adhered to the ICL. He left the Fourth Internationalist movement in 1938, and was executed by the Nazis during World War II.


73. Fenner Brockway (1890- ), then secretary of the ILP, later became secretary of the London-Amsterdam Bureau (also called the International Labor Community [IAG]) and an active opponent of the Fourth International.

74. While blocking the achievement of united fronts with Social Democrats and other working-class tendencies not controlled by the Stalinists, the Comintern continued to assert that it was actually in favor of united fronts, provided only that they be "united fronts from below," that is, that they be negotiated with the ranks of the non-Stalinist organizations and not with their leaders.

75. The "third period," according to the schema proclaimed by the Stalinists in 1928, was the final period of capitalism, the period of its immediately pending demise and replacement by soviets. Following from this, the Comintern's tactics during the next six years were marked by ultra-leftism, adventurism, sectarian "red" unions and opposition to the united front. In 1934 the theory and practice of the "third period" were discarded and replaced by those of the People's 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).

76. Epigones are disciples who corrupt the doctrines of their teachers. Trotsky used the term for the Stalinists, who claim to be Leninists.

77. The Norwegian Labor Party (NAP) was the major working-class party in its country, claiming 200,000 members in affiliated unions in 1933. It broke with the Second International and affiliated with the Third in 1919, then left the latter in 1923. It united with the Norwegian Social Democrats but did not return to the Second International. It was one of the sponsors in 1932 of the International Labor Community (IAG) and in August 1933 of the Paris conference, where it opposed the creation of a new International. In 1934 it resumed collaboration with the Scandinavian Social Democratic parties, which prepared the way for its later return to the Second International. In 1935 it became the governing party of Norway and granted asylum to Trotsky. A year later, under Soviet pressure following the first Moscow trial, the Norwegian Labor government interned and silenced Trotsky for four months, after which it shipped him off to Mexico (see *Writings* 35-36).

78. "An Interview by C.A. Smith." *The New Leader* (British), October 13, 1933. Charles Andrew Smith, a member of the ILP's national administrative council who attended the Paris conference, was chosen by other ILP leaders there to visit and interview Trotsky at Saint-Palais.

79. The French occupation of the Ruhr in 1923 was not itself the revolutionary situation in Germany alluded to by Trotsky, but merely
the event that precipitated the revolutionary opportunities that opened up for the Communist Party.

80. The German Stalinists developed an agitation for the "national liberation" of Germany in order to compete with the Nazis as champions of German nationalism in opposition to the oppressive Versailles Treaty. Only the Nazis benefited from this competition. In the summer of 1931, the Nazis demanded a referendum to dissolve the Prussian Landtag, which would mean ousting the Social Democratic government of the state that had a majority of Germany's population. The German Stalinists initially sided with the Social Democrats against the fascists, but on orders from Moscow they abruptly reversed their position and supported the fascist referendum campaign. The Prussian workers revolted against this stupidity and refused to vote, so that the fascists received less than half of the twenty-five million votes needed to ratify the plebiscite. This incident is often referred to as the "Red referendum."

81. "On the Conference of Left Socialist and Communist Organizations Held at Paris, August 27-28, 1933." Internal Bulletin, British section of the ILO, Numbers 13-14, September 27, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov" and presented as a draft resolution for discussion by the ILO. Also in The Militant, October 7, 1933, signed by the International Secretariat after having been adopted by the plenum of the ILO on September 13, 1933. Written three days after the Paris conference, this document was designed to express the Left Opposition's basic attitude toward the conference and its decisions. The conference had given all participating organizations until October 15 to ratify or reject the conference's resolutions.

82. There were three general positions expressed at the Paris conference. On the left was that of the ILO, SAP, OSP and RSP, the signers of the Declaration of Four, a minority position. In an intermediate position were the ILP and the Swedish Independent Communist Party, headed by Karl Kilbom, also in a minority. On the right was a majority led by the Norwegian Labor Party (NAP), whose resolution was supported by a number of small groups (the French Party of Proletarian Unity [PUP]), the Italian Maximalists, the Independent Socialist Party of Romania and the representative of a group of Left Social Revolutionaries of Russia)—and by two of the signers of the Declaration of Four, the SAP and the OSP. The major point in the majority resolution read: "Considering the bankruptcy of the policies and the organization of the Second and Third Internationals, the socialist workers of the world are more than ever faced with the enormous aim and the necessary task of regenerating the international movement of the working class and retrieving the international unity of this class on a revolutionary socialist basis. The first step should be made by convening a world congress and representing all organizations that accept the basis of revolutionary struggle for the realization of socialism. This world congress should have as its principal task the studying of a general expose of the principles and policies for effective revolutionary action, which will be prepared and submitted to the parties by the independent socialist parties. These parties will take the initiative for the meeting of the congress at a date that will be determined later, and they will make an appeal for this congress to all workers' organizations" (The Milit-

84. The French Party of Proletarian Unity (PUP) was a short-lived centrist group set up by people who had been expelled from the Communist Party and had left the Socialist Party. The Italian Maximalists were a centrist tendency of the Italian Socialist Party, who continued activity in exile after Mussolini came to power. The Catalan (or Iberian) Federation, led by Joaquin Maurin, later united with former Bolshevik-Leninists led by Andres Nin to create the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). Dr. Joseph Kruk headed a small group, the Independent Labor Party of Poland. I. E. Steinberg was a left-wing Social Revolutionary who was people's commissar for justice in the Soviet government prior to the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in March 1918.

85. Hugo Urbahns (1890-1946), a leader of the German Communist Party, was expelled in 1928 and helped to found the Leninbund, which was associated with the Left Opposition until 1930.

86. The Independent Communist Party of Sweden, headed by Karl Kilbom, formerly associated with the Brandlerites, later changed its name to the Socialist Party of Sweden.

87. August Thalheimer (1884-1948), a founder of the German Communist Party, was expelled with Heinrich Brandler in 1929, and with him organized the Communist Right Opposition (KPO).

88. The Two-and-a-Half International (or 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, and their main function was to act as a counterbalance to growing Communist influence among the workers. In May 1923 it reunited with the Second International.

89. Martin Tranmael (1879-1967) was the leader of the Norwegian Labor Party (NAP). Louis Sellier (1885- ), general secretary of the French Communist Party in 1923, was expelled from the CP in 1929 over tactical differences. He was a founder of the centrist Workers and Peasants Party (POP), which later evolved into the Party of Proletarian Unity (PUP). He became a People's Front deputy in 1936. Joaquin Maurin (1897-1973), a leader of the Spanish Communist Party and a supporter of the Bukharinist Right Opposition, was expelled from the Comintern in 1929. He formed the Workers and Peasants Bloc (also known as the Catalan Federation), which became a part of the London-Amsterdam Bureau. In 1935 Maurin's group united with the ex-Left Oppositionists led by Andres Nin and Juan Andrade, to create the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). He was elected to parliament in February 1936 as part of the People's Front government. When the civil war broke out, he was arrested by Franco's troops and imprisoned. Upon his release, he went into exile and ceased all political activity.

91. Victor Serge (1890-1947) was born in Belgium of Russian parents and became an anarchist in his youth, for which he was sentenced to five years in prison. Attracted to Bolshevism after the 1917 Revolution, he moved to the Soviet Union and worked for the Comintern. Arrested as an Oppositionist and then freed in 1928, he was rearrested in 1933. Thanks to a campaign by intellectuals in France, he was released and allowed to leave the country in 1936. He developed differences with the Fourth Internationalist movement soon after and left it. He wrote several important historical works as well as novels.

92. The Reichstag fire of February 27, 1933, shortly after Hitler became German chancellor but before he had consolidated power, was set by the Nazis and blamed on the Communist Party as a pretext for banning it and other antifascists.

93. GPU was one of the abbreviated names for the Soviet political police department; other names were Cheka, NKVD, MVD, KGB, etc., but GPU is often used in their place. Pyotr Wrangel (1878-1928) was one of the counterrevolutionary generals in the Russian civil war of 1918-21.

94. Pravda (Truth) was the official paper of the Bolshevik Central Committee from April 1912; it became a daily in March 1917.

95. "How to Influence the ILP." Internal Bulletin, British section of the ILO, Numbers 15-16, October 24, 1933, where it was titled "From a Letter of L. D."

96. Witte, a representative of the Greek section, was a member of the International Secretariat.


98. The British miners union fought a bitter strike from May 1 to November 1926. In solidarity and self-interest, the British Trades Union Congress called a general strike, starting May 3, 1926, but the reformist General Council of the TUC called it off after nine days. The Minority Movement was a left-wing grouping inside the TUC and its unions; Trotsky's criticism was that the British Communist Party had not provided revolutionary leadership to the Minority Movement or an alternative to the "left" union bureaucrats.

99. The Order of the Garter is a high British honorary title.

100. The Profintern, the Red International of Labor Unions, was organized by Moscow in 1921 as a rival to the reformist International Federation of Trade Unions.

101. Walter Citrine (1887- ) was general secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, 1926-46. Knighted for his services to British capitalism in 1935, he was made a baronet in 1946.

102. Oswald Mosley (1896- ) left the British Labour Party to become the leader of the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists.

103. The Social Revolutionary Party (SRs), founded in 1900, soon became the political expression of the Russian Narodnik (Populist) currents; prior to the 1917 Revolution, it had the largest share of influence among the peasants. Its right wing was led by Kerensky. The Left SRs were in a coalition government with the Bolsheviks
after the October Revolution, but soon moved into opposition "from the left," organizing counterrevolutionary actions.

104. Lavr G. Kornilov (1870-1918), a czarist general who was commander of the southwestern front in 1917, became Kerensky's commander-in-chief in July 1917 and led a counterrevolutionary putsch against Kerensky in September 1917. Arrested, he escaped to lead the counterrevolutionary forces until April 1918, when he was killed.


106. Max Seidewitz (1892- ) and Kurt Rosenfeld (1877-1943) were left-wing leaders of the German Social Democracy, who were expelled in 1931 and helped to found the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), of which they were leaders for a short time. Seidewitz became a Stalinist functionary in East Germany after World War II.

107. When Trotsky went to Copenhagen to make a speech in November 1932, an informal meeting of Left Opposition representatives was hastily convened in that city. The Amsterdam antiwar congress, held in August 1932, was a gathering sponsored by the Stalinists at which the Left Opposition intervened with a criticism of such congresses.

108. The "question of the Comintern" refers to the differences between the Left Opposition and the RSP prior to 1933 over whether to continue efforts to "reform" the Comintern or to try to build new parties, as the RSP did beginning in 1929.

109. Boris Souvarine (b. 1893) was one of the founders 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. For Trotsky he was a prototype of the cynicism and defeatism that characterized the renegades from Bolshevism.

110. Karl Kautsky (1854-1938) was regarded as the outstanding Marxist theoretician until World War I, when he abandoned internationalism and opposed the Russian Revolution.

111. Zimmerwald (in September 1915) and Kienthal (in April 1916) were the sites in Switzerland of conferences to reassemble the antiwar and internationalist currents that had survived the debacle of the Second International. Although most of the participants were centrists, these conferences proved to be steps in the direction of a new International.

112. Georg Ledebour (1850-1947) and Adolf Hoffmann were members of the German delegation, Albert Bourderon (1859-1930) and Alphonse Merrheim (1871-1923) came from France, Robert Grimm (1881-1958) was a Swiss, and Paul Axelrod (1850-1925) and Julius Martov (1873-1923) were Russian Mensheviks.

113. *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word) was a small Russian-language daily published in Paris during the first two years of World War I, whose editors, including Trotsky, expressed an antiwar position despite the censorship. The paper was suppressed at the request of France's czarist ally, and Trotsky was ordered out of France in September 1916; this was the deportation order that was not revoked until 1933.

114. "Principled Considerations on Entry." *Internal Bulletin*, Brit-
ish section of the ILO, Numbers 15-16, October 24, 1933. Signed "G. Gourov."


116. The Jewish Group of the Communist League of France was intended to promote Left Oppositionist propaganda among Jewish workers in that country; for a while it published a Yiddish paper, Klorkeit (Clarity). Trotsky's friendly letter to this paper in May 1930 is reprinted in Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question. Later the Jewish Group became a faction in the French League, and Trotsky accused it of trying to turn the League into a federation of national groups (see Writings 32).


118. Albert Grzezinsky (1879-1948) was the Social Democratic police chief of Berlin, who offered only token resistance when the Social Democratic government of Prussia was dismissed by Papen's coup of July 20, 1932. Trotsky discussed the possibility of a united front with Grzezinsky—and with the devil's grandmother—in "For a Workers' United Front Against Fascism" while Grzezinsky was still police chief, and discussed it again after he was ousted from that post in The Only Road; both are reprinted in The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany (Pathfinder Press, 1971).

119. Ernst Torgler (1893-1963), the leader of the CP delegation in the German Reichstag, and Georgi Dimitrov (1882-1949), a Bulgarian CP leader who had emigrated to Germany, were defendants in the Reichstag fire trial. Both were acquitted, but Torgler was imprisoned until 1935. He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1935 and joined the West German Social Democratic Party after the war. Dimitrov was permitted to leave Germany, became a Soviet citizen and executive secretary of the Comintern, 1934-43, and after World War II was premier of Bulgaria, 1946-49.

120. Hermann Goering (1893-1946) was the top Nazi in charge of the Reichstag fire frame-up.

121. "The USSR and the Comintern." The New Republic, November 1, 1933, where it appeared under the title "Russia and World Revolution." This was printed half a month before President Roosevelt granted diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union.

122. Maxim Litvinov (1876-1951), an Old Bolshevik, was people's commissar for foreign affairs, 1930-39, ambassador to the United States, 1941-43, and deputy commissar for foreign affairs, 1943-46. Stalin used him to personify "collective security" when he sought alliances with the democratic imperialists and shelved him during the Stalin-Hitler pact period and the cold war.

123. Georgi V. Chicherin (1872-1936), who had been a diplomat in the czarist ministry, supported the Social Revolutionaries in the 1905 Revolution and was forced to emigrate. Returning to Russia in January 1918, he became a Bolshevik, succeeding Trotsky as commissar of foreign affairs in 1918 and serving in this post until 1930.

124. Bela Kun (1886-1939), leader of the defeated Hungarian
Revolution of 1919, moved to Moscow and became a Comintern functionary, noted for a bent toward ultraleftism. He was reportedly shot during the purges of Communist exiles in the late 1930s.

125. NEP was the New Economic Policy initiated in 1921 to replace the policy of "military communism," which prevailed during the civil war and which led to conflict between the workers and the peasants as industrial production declined drastically and grain was requisitioned and confiscated from the peasants. To revive the economy after the civil war, the 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 sections of the economy. The NEPmen, who benefited from this policy, were viewed as a potential base for the restoration of capitalism.

126. The Versailles Treaty, signed June 28, 1919, returned Alsace-Lorraine to France, deprived Germany of other territory in Europe plus all her overseas colonies, limited Germany's military strength, and provided for payment of war reparations by Germany to the Allied powers. It was engineered to accomplish the dismantling of German economic and military strength in favor of the other imperialist powers, but it also had the aim of stemming the revolutionary tide in Germany. It was a major factor in Hitler's coming to power.

127. In August 1933 French Radical leader Edouard Herriot visited the Soviet Union, where he met with Molotov and praised Stalin; although he went as a "private citizen," everyone knew it was a move toward French-Soviet collaboration, induced by Hitler's victory earlier that year. In September, Pierre Cot, the French minister of aviation, and eleven associates followed Herriot to Moscow, where they were cordially received by the government. When they left, they promised to send a mission of military, naval and public works experts.

128. Hamilton Fish (1888- ) was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, 1919-45, best known for his vigorous attacks against communism and his strong isolationist policy. He opposed U.S. recognition of the USSR in 1933.


130. John Paton, secretary of the ILP from 1927 to 1933, attended the Paris conference and visited Trotsky for discussion at the end of August 1933.


132. The Lovestone group was named after Jay Lovestone, a leader of the American Communist Party in the 1920s who was expelled in 1929 shortly after the downfall of his international ally, Bukharin. The Lovestonites maintained an organization until World War II, when they dissolved. Lovestone later became cold-war adviser on foreign affairs for AFL-CIO president George Meany.

133. Brest-Litovsk was a town on the Russo-Polish border where a treaty ending hostilities between Russia and Germany was signed.
by the Soviet delegation on March 3, 1918. The terms were exceedingly unfavorable for Soviet interests, but the new Soviet government felt it had to sign because it was unable at that time to fight back. Later, the November 1918 Revolution in Germany and the German defeat in the war restored to the Soviet government most of the territory lost through the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.

134. Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881) was a participant in several nineteenth-century uprisings and spent thirty-three of his seventy-six years in prison. "Blanquism," as used by Marxists, is the theory of armed insurrection by small groups of selected and trained conspirators, as counterposed to revolution based on mass action and organization. As used by reformists, it is often an epithet directed against revolutionaries.

135. Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) was one of the first theoreticians of anarchism.

136. Franz von Papen (1879-1969) was appointed German chancellor in June 1932 and greased the way for Hitler by dissolving the Social Democratic government of Prussia; he became Hitler's vice-chancellor in January 1933. His successor as chancellor in December 1932 was Kurt von Schleicher, the "social" general who tried to arrange a coalition with both the trade unions and a dissident wing of the Nazis; Hitler had him murdered during the "blood purge" of June 1934. Engelbert Dollfuss (1892-1934), chancellor of Austria, crushed the workers of Vienna when they resisted repression in February 1934; friendly to the Italian fascists and hostile to the German fascists, he was assassinated by the Nazis during an unsuccessful uprising in July 1934. Hendrik Colijn (1869-1944) was premier of the Netherlands in 1925-26 and 1933-39.

137. Trotsky's later thoughts on Soviet Bonapartism are expressed in "The Workers' State, Thermidor and Bonapartism," February 1, 1935 (see Writings 34-35).

138. Leon Blum (1872-1950) was the chief leader of the French Socialist Party in the 1930s and premier of the first People's Front government in 1936.

139. V. K. Makhaiisky, a Russo-Polish socialist, was the leader of an anarchist trend hostile to Marxism, whose program was outlined in Makhaiisky's The Intellectual Worker. He considered the intelligentsia a parasitic class and attempted to foster among the Russian workers antagonisms toward the revolutionary intelligentsia.

140. G. I. Myasnikov (1889-1946), an Old Bolshevik, was expelled in 1923 for violating party 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 (see Writings 30).

141. Robert Louzon (1882- ), a revolutionary syndicalist and for a short time in the 1920s a member of the French Communist Party, was a collaborator of Pierre Monatte in the foundation of La Revolution proletarienne in 1925. Trotsky's polemics against Louzon and Monatte will be found in Leon Trotsky on the Trade Unions (Pathfinder Press, 1969).

142. Hermann Gorter (1864-1927) was a Dutch writer and poet in the left wing of the labor movement. During World War I, he held an internationalist position. After the defeat of the German Rev-
olution (1918-19), he became an incurable sectarian, along with the majority of the Dutch Communist Party leaders. He founded the antiparliamentary Communist Labor Party. The German Communist Workers Party was a group of ultraleft putschists who were expelled from the Communist Party in the fall of 1919. Lenin supported this expulsion in his pamphlet Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder. However, Zinoviev, Bukharin and others opposed the expulsion, and the group was subsequently recognized as a "sympathetic section" of the Comintern. Although it began with a membership of several tens of thousands, the Communist Workers Party lost its best elements within two or three years and became transformed into a sect, which remained hostile to the Comintern and the USSR.

143. Fernand Loriot (1870-1930) was a leader of the French Socialist Party left wing during World War I and supported the Zimmerwald Left. In 1920-21 he took an active part in the split of the Socialist Party and the formation of the Communist Party, in which he became a leader. He attended the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921 and was elected to the presidium. A few years later, he founded a group, Against the Current, and then dropped out of the movement. Karl Korsch (1889-1961) was one of the Germans expelled from the Communist Party in 1929 as part of Stalin's international struggle against "Trotskyism." Korsch was a theorist who in 1923 had been minister of the Communist-Socialist government of Thuringia, a state of the Weimar Republic. Following his expulsion from the CP, he formed a tiny, ultraleft sect. Books by Korsch translated into English are Karl Marx (1938) and Marxism and Philosophy (1971).

144. "To Dispel Misunderstandings." The Militant, October 21, 1933, where it appeared under the title, "Trotsky Writes to the British New Leader." The New Leader did not print the letter.

145. The Daily Worker was the British CP newspaper.


147. The illegible words could be "young workers."

148. The majority of the British section voted against entering the ILP. A minority did enter, however.

149. "Private Opinions and Public Statements." Arbetarrerelsens Arkiv (Archive of the Working Class Movement), Stockholm. Translated from the German for this volume by Russell Block. "Comrade W.," to whom this letter was addressed, was Jacob Walcher (Schwab). Mikhail Tomsky (1886-1936), the head of the Soviet trade unions and a leader of the right wing in the CPSU, was an ally of Stalin during the period of the Anglo-Russian Committee in the mid 1920s. He was disgraced and dismissed from his posts when Stalin broke with the right wing at the end of the decade, and committed suicide during the 1936 Moscow trial.

151. Kurt Landau (d. 1937) was a leader of the Austrian and German Oppositions before his split in 1931; he was assassinated by the Stalinists during the Spanish civil war. M. Mill was chosen by the Russian Opposition as a member of the Administrative Secretariat, largely because of his knowledge of Russian; after being removed from this post on account of his personal intrigues, he became a Stalinist agent in 1932. Roman Well was one of two Latvian brothers named Sobolevicius, who were prominent in the Opposition before they capitulated to Stalinism in 1932; as "Dr. Robert Soblen" he committed suicide in 1962 when he was being prosecuted as an espionage agent in the U.S. Trotsky's sociological-political analysis of the Mill-Well types will be found in Writings 32-33, which also contains the following remarks on "Landauism": "Thanks to the special conditions of its origin, the Left Opposition was composed during a certain period (the period of decay) of individuals and little grouplets, predominantly of intellectual or semi-intellectual character, without clear political views and without roots in the working class. Accustomed neither to serious work nor to responsibility, closely tied up to nothing and nobody, political nomads without baggage, who carried some cheap formulas, some smart critical sentences and some practice in intrigue from town to town and from country to country, such 'oppositionists'—Landau is their most complete representative—for a long time put a brake on the development of the Opposition and compromised it in the eyes of thinking workers. The cleansing from the Opposition of 'Landauism' has taken no little time in the last four years; and the success in this field, as in others, is indisputable. But the real victory over the spirit of intrigue and of petty quarreling is conceivable only through the creation of a leadership out of firm proletarians, who are bound up with the masses and feel themselves to be the masters in their own organization" ("On the State of the Left Opposition," December 16, 1932).

152. "Doubts, Hesitations and Fears." International Bulletin, ICL, English-language edition by the Communist League of America, Number 2, September 1934. Signed "G. Gourov." In the autumn of 1933 the Belgian section of the Left Opposition opened negotiations for possible fusion with the Belgian League of Communist Internationalists. The latter, then headed by A. Hennaut, originated out of a split with the Left Opposition in 1930. The 1933 fusion attempt was not successful.

153. Amadeo Bordiga (1889-1970), a founder of the Italian Communist Party, was expelled from the Comintern on charges of "Trotskyism" in 1929. The Left Opposition tried to work with the Bordigists but failed because of the latter's inveterate sectarianism.

154. The "spirit of Stalin-Kamenev (March 1917)" refers to the conciliationist approach toward the capitalist Provisional Government by Stalin and Kamenev in the first weeks after the February Revolution. It was not until Lenin's return to Russia in April 1917 that the Bolshevik Party was reoriented to the struggle for power against the Provisional Government.

156. The Saar, a western region of Germany and one of the richest coal basins in Europe, was part of France in the eighteenth century and then was divided between Prussia and Bavaria by the 1815 Treaty of Paris. After World War I, the Versailles Treaty took the Saar from Germany, putting its administration under the League of Nations and its coal mines under the control of France. Provisions were also made for a referendum in 1935 that would permit the people of the Saar to vote on three propositions: (1) for the continuation of a state autonomy; (2) for annexation by France; (3) for return to Germany. The Nazi takeover of Germany in 1933 obviously introduced a new element into the picture. The German Social Democrats, who had previously been for returning the Saar to Germany, now switched their position to support of autonomy. That, although for different reasons, was also the stand of Trotsky and the ICL. Trotsky's brief statement here was occasioned by Stalinist statements in the summer and autumn of 1933, which at first sought to avoid the essence of the question through a display of verbal radicalism but then moved toward support of returning the Saar to Germany. Later the Stalinists changed their minds and supported the autonomy position, that is, against annexation by France or return to Germany. Despite the Stalinist and Social Democratic opposition, the Saar voted overwhelmingly on January 13, 1935, to be returned to Germany.

157. "Our Present Tasks." The Militant, December 9, 1933. Signed "L. T." Most of the articles preceding this one were written at Saint-Palais. Trotsky moved to Barbizon, not far from Paris, at the beginning of November 1933, where he wrote this article and others dated prior to mid-April 1934. In a French translation this article also appeared as the preface to a Belgian pamphlet, La situation politique après les pleins pouvoirs, where it was preceded by the following remarks: "Our Belgian friends have written me requesting an introduction for a pamphlet analyzing the political situation and the tasks of the proletariat in Belgium. I must admit I have not had the possibility of following the internal life of Belgium in recent years. I shall, of course, try to remedy that lack. In any event, however, I do not think I have any right today to speak in as concrete a manner as is necessary on the current practical questions regarding the struggle of the Belgian working class. Moreover, there is no need for me to do so. As the pamphlet itself indicates, our Belgian comrades know how to find their way without aid from abroad. Instead of a preface, I propose to set forth some general observations on the political situation in Europe and on the tasks of the proletarian vanguard flowing from them. What is said in the following pages likewise concerns Belgium to the extent that the general crisis of capitalism, the spread of fascism and the war danger set their decisive imprint on the internal life of all the European countries."

158. Emile Vandervelde (1866-1938) was a Belgian Social Democratic reformist who served as president of the Second International, 1929-36.

159. "Maria Reese and the Comintern." The Militant, November 25, 1933. Also used as the preface to a pamphlet, I Accuse Stalinism by Maria Reese.
160. *Unser Wort* (Our Word) was the paper of the ICL's German section, published abroad and smuggled into Germany.

161. Maria Reese was a Communist Party deputy in the German Reichstag who broke with Stalinism and joined the Bolshevik-Leninist movement when her efforts to secure a discussion inside the Communist Party proved in vain. Soon after, however, she broke with Marxism altogether and went over to the Nazis. For Trotsky's later comments, see "Notes of a Journalist," January 10, 1936, in *Writings 35-36*.

162. Chiang Kai-shek (1887- ) was the military leader of the bourgeois nationalist Kuomintang (People's Party) of China during the revolution of 1925-27. He stood in the right wing of that party, into which the Communists had entered on the orders of the Stalinist Comintern leaders. The Stalinists hailed him as a great revolutionary until April 1927 when he conducted a bloody massacre of the Shanghai Communists and trade unionists. Joseph Pilsudski (1867-1935) was exiled to Siberia while a student for an alleged attempt on the life of Alexander III. On his return in 1892, he founded the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). Interned in 1917 by the Central Powers, he was freed by German revolutionists in 1918 and returned to Warsaw to become chief of the newly created Polish Republic. In March 1920 he led his army against the Soviet Union in the Ukraine, an adventure crushed by the Red Army in June. He retired in 1923, but led a coup in May 1926 that returned him to power and was dictator of Poland from various posts until his death.


164. "Hitler the Pacifist." *The Militant*, December 30, 1933, with corrections of the translation in *The Militant*, January 6, 1934. This was written a little over a month after Nazi Germany withdrew from the League of Nations and a disarmament conference. Trotsky's previous article on this subject was "Hitler and Disarmament," June 2, 1933 (see *Writings 32-33*).

165. Carl von Ossietzki (1889-1938) was a leading German pacifist intellectual, editor of *Die Weltbuehne* (The World Stage), and defendant in a spectacular treason trial in 1932. He lost the case, went to prison and was seized by the Nazis when Hitler came to power. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1936, while in a hospital prison with tuberculosis, of which he died soon after being released.

166. The Leipzig trial referred to here was the sensational "Reichstag fire" trial, then under way.

167. Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934) was a Prussian field marshal who fought in the Franco-Prussian War and commanded German forces in World War I. Against Social Democratic opposition he was elected president of the Weimar Republic in 1925, succeeding Ebert, and, with Social Democratic support, he was reelected in 1932. He appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933.

168. "A Political Trial Without a Political Axis." *The New Republic*, January 3, 1934, where it appeared under the title "Politics in the Reichstag Trial." It was introduced with the following editorial note:
"This article was written before the German Supreme Court handed down its verdict. Trotsky asks whether it would 'seek inspiration in the classic decision of Kiev justice.' It did. Like the czarist court in the Beyliss [Beilis] case, it was forced by evidence and world opinion to acquit the principal defendants—convicting only the irresponsible van der Lubbe—but it did everything in its power to maintain the hypothesis that some unknown Communists really burned the Reichstag. And although it acquitted Torgler, Dimitrov and their two comrades, it did not set them free."

169. Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935) was a Jewish officer in the French army general staff who was framed up in 1894 on charges of selling military secrets to Germany. This case evoked widespread social protest and divided France politically. Dreyfus was freed from prison in 1899 and fully vindicated in 1906. M.T. Beilis was a Russian Jew who was framed up in Kiev in 1913 on charges of having ritually murdered a Christian boy, Yushchinsky. The czarist government staged the trial to stir up anti-Semitism and made use of anti-Jewish pogroms. Following a number of protest demonstrations throughout the country, Beilis was acquitted.

170. "Nationalism and Economic Life." Foreign Affairs, April 1934. Translated by John G. Wright, who made minor stylistic corrections for the version in Fourth International, September 1945, which is used here. Fourth International was the successor to The New International and the predecessor of International Socialist Review.

171. Erich Ludendorff (1865-1937) was a Junker general who supported Hitler and took part in the Kapp putsch of 1920 and the Beer Hall putsch of 1923.

172. Aristide Briand (1862-1932) was expelled from the French Socialist Party in 1906 for accepting office in a capitalist cabinet. He was premier several times and representative to the League of Nations. On September 19, 1929, at a diplomatic luncheon attended by representatives of twenty-seven countries, he called for the establishment of a United States of Europe, which Trotsky used as the occasion to write an essay entitled "Disarmament and the United States of Europe" (Writings 29).

173. Joseph Caillaux (1863-1944) was a Radical who served as premier of France, 1911-12, and several times as finance minister.

174. "Contribution Toward a Discussion on the Basic Theoretical Conceptions of the International Communist League." International Bulletin, ICL, English-language edition by the Communist League of America, Number 2, September 1934. An editorial note identified the article as Trotsky's reply to "the theses of Comrade L.P. who was formerly close to the Brandlerites and who today sympathizes with our organization." L.P.'s full name was Ladislaus Pforzoli.

175. Karl Radek (1885-1939) was a left-winger in the Polish, German and Swiss sections of the Second International before World War I, a leading propagandist of the Comintern in Lenin's time, and a member of the Russian Left Opposition against Stalinism until 1929, when Trotsky was deported to Turkey. Then he capitulated to Stalin, was readmitted to the Communist Party and served as an abject apologist for the Kremlin, especially its foreign policy.
He was indicted and convicted in the 1937 Moscow purge trial. The "polemic with Radek" is Trotsky's book, *The Permanent Revolution.*

176. Nicholas II (1868-1918), of the Romanov dynasty, was the last Russian czar.

177. Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) was the leader of the nationalist movement that later became the Congress Party of India. He organized mass opposition to British rule, but insisted on peaceful, nonviolent, passive resistance methods.

178. Nikolai Bukharin (1888-1938) was an Old Bolshevik and the second president of the Comintern (after Zinoviev), 1926-29. He joined with Stalin against the Left Opposition, but they split in 1928 and Bukharin formed a Right Opposition before he was expelled in 1929. He capitulated, but was convicted and executed after the 1938 Moscow trial.


180. The two-class "workers' and peasants' parties" was a formula used by the Stalinists in the 1920s to justify support for the Kuomintang and other bourgeois parties in the Orient. Trotsky's critique appears in *The Third International After Lenin and Problems of the Chinese Revolution.*

181. The Peasant International (Krestintern), formed by the Comintern in 1923, was an experiment that did not meet much success. It disappeared without publicity some time in the 1930s.

182. Angelica Balabanov (1878-1965) was a Russian-Italian leader in the Italian Socialist Party before World War I. She was a delegate to the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences during the war, and then secretary of the early Comintern. She broke with the International after the Kronstadt rebellion in 1921, going back into the Serrati wing of the Italian Socialist Party. Paul Louis (1872-1948), journalist and author of books on labor history, was a member of the centrist Party of Proletarian Unity (PUP).


184. Lev Semyanovich Sosnovsky (1886-1937), an outstanding Soviet journalist, was, like Rakovsky, among the early supporters of the Left Opposition and one of the last to capitulate.

185. "A Conference of the Bloc of Four." *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, Number 38-39, February 1934. This Russian-language magazine (Bulletin of the Opposition) was founded by Trotsky shortly after his exile to Turkey in 1929. It had been printed in Berlin in 1931-32, but was banned by the Nazis when they came to power, and its place of publication was shifted to Paris in 1933. Translated for this volume by Tom Scott. Although the representatives of the SAP at this December 1933 conference voiced no objections to its proceedings or decisions, the SAP soon after withdrew completely from the commission established to promote the next steps toward the new International.

186. "Anatole Vasilievich Lunacharsky." *Biulleten Oppozitsii*, Num-
ber 38-39, February 1934. Translated for this volume by George C. Myland. Lunacharsky (1875-1933) joined the Russian Social Democracy in 1898 and the Bolsheviks after the split in 1903. He worked for the October Revolution and became first people's commissar of education until 1929. His short book about the leaders of the Russian Revolution was published in English under the title, *Revolutionary Silhouettes*.

187. People's Will (Narodnaya Volya) was the party of the Narodniki (Populists), Russian intellectuals organized to liberate the peasants with anarchistic conceptions and terrorist methods. After the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881, the organization was smashed by the czarist government.

188. Alexander Herzen (1812-1870) was a founder of the Narodnik (Populist) movement and the father of Russian liberalism. He agitated against czarism and for liberation of the peasantry through his revolutionary journal *Kolokol* (The Bell), which he published from exile in Europe.

189. George Plekhanov (1856-1918), Paul Axelrod (1850-1925), Vera Zasulich (1849-1919), Julius Martov (1872-1923) and Alexander Potresov (1869-1934) were all associates of Lenin in the leadership of the Russian Social Democracy until 1903, when a factional struggle took place over party program and methods. They became leaders of the Menshevik faction, Lenin of the Bolshevik.

190. A. Bogdanov (pen name of Alexander Malinovsky) (1873-1928) became a Bolshevik after the Second Congress in 1903. In 1908 he lead the *otzovist* movement, which contended that the party must work strictly through illegal organizations during that period of reaction. He was expelled from the Bolshevik Party in 1909. He created his own philosophical system, empirio-monism, which was a variant of the subjective idealism in Machist philosophy that Lenin criticized sharply in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. After the October Revolution, he became an organizer and leader of Prolecult, which was a school of artists attempting to create a proletarian culture.

191. 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 criticism of the Soviet regime in the 1930s.

192. "Cardinal Questions Facing the ILP." *The Militant*, January 27, 1934, where it appeared under the title "For the Fourth International: Letter to a Member of the Independent Labour Party."

193. John McGovern (1888-1968), a member of the House of Commons, 1930-59, was an ILP leader of mass protest demonstrations against unemployment in Britain during the early 1930s. He carried their demands to the floor of the House of Commons, as well as leading a hunger march from Glasgow to Edinburgh and London, and was several times suspended from the House for his defiance. As the Second World War approached, he concluded that the enemy of the working class was not the British ruling class, but Nazi Germany. He broke with the ILP in 1947 to join the Labour Party, subsequently became a leader of the religion-oriented Moral Rearmament movement and finally supported the Conservative Party.

195. The London or London-Amsterdam Bureau was originally called the International Labor Community (IAG), and, starting in 1935, was also known as the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity. It was set up in Berlin in May 1932 at the initiative of the Norwegian Labor Party and the British Independent Labour Party in collaboration with the SAP and the left wing of the Dutch Social Democracy, which later became the OSP.

196. "Revisionism and Planning." *The New International*, March 1945. Signed "G. G.," it was a letter to the Belgian section of the ICL. Until April 1940 *The New International* was the magazine of the Socialist Workers Party; following a split in the SWP and Fourth International that month, it became the publication of a revisionist minority led by Max Shachtman; it ceased publication in 1958 when the Shachtman group entered the Socialist Party. The SWP began publication of *Fourth International* in May 1940.

197. The Belgian Labor Party (POB) was the Belgian section of the Second International. Its youth affiliate was the Young Socialist Guard (JGS), and its daily paper was *Le Peuple* (The People).

198. Hendrik de Man (1885-1953) was a leader of the Belgian Labor Party's right wing and author in 1933 of a "labor plan" to end the depression and promote production, which won the support of the Belgian labor movement. Other articles on the de Man plan appear in *Writings 34-35* and *Leon Trotsky on France*.

199. Paul-Henri Spaak (1899-1972) was a leader of the Belgian Labor Party left wing and editor of the left-wing *Action Socialiste* in 1933-34. He visited Trotsky at Saint-Palais and asked for his advice. But he followed other advice, becoming a member of the Belgian cabinet in 1935 and secretary-general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the 1950s.

200. Otto Bauer (1882-1939), the chief theoretician of Austro-Marxism, was a leader of the Austrian Social Democracy and a founder, with Friedrich Adler, of the Two-and-a-Half International (1921-23).


202. Solomon Lozovsky (1878-1952) was in charge of the Profintern, the Red International of Labor Unions, and the ultraleft tactics it imposed on Stalinist trade-union work throughout the world in the "third period." According to *Khrushchev Remembers*, Lozovsky was arrested and shot on Stalin's orders during an anti-Semitic campaign.

203. Albert A. Purcell (1872-1935) was a leader of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress and of the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee during the betrayal of the British general strike of 1926.
Writings of Leon Trotsky (1933-34)

204. "Are There No Limits to the Fall?" The Militant, March 10, 1934.

205. Hermann Remmele (1880-1937) and Heinz Neumann (1902-1937?) were leaders of the German Communist Party during the years when the Nazis rose toward power. They fled to the Soviet Union in 1933, where Remmele was executed by the GPU in 1937 and Neumann was arrested and disappeared the same year.

206. Otto Braun (1872-1955) was Social Democratic prime minister of Prussia, 1920-21, 1921-25, 1925-32. Carl Severing (1875-1952) was Social Democratic minister of the interior of Prussia, 1919-26, 1930-32. Both were deposed by von Papen's coup d'état of July 20, 1932. Heinrich Brüening (1885-1970), the leader of the Catholic Center Party, was appointed chancellor of Germany by Hindenburg in March 1930. He ruled by decree from July 1930 to his dismissal in May 1932.

207. Hermann Müller (1876-1931) was the last Social Democratic chancellor of pre-Nazi Germany, 1928-30; he was followed by Brüening.

208. 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 a Stalinist spokesman and a secretary of the Comintern from 1922 to 1931.

209. The Hotel de Luxe in Moscow was where non-Russian functionaries of the Comintern were lodged.

210. The General Federation of Labor (CGT) was the major union federation in France, dominated by a reformist leadership. A split in 1921 resulted in the formation of a radical but smaller rival, the Unitary General Federation of Labor (CGTU), which lasted until the two were reunified in 1936.

211. The Polish Socialist Party (PPS) was a reformist nationalist organization founded by Pilsudski and others in 1892. In 1906 a left wing split away; in 1918 the left PPS united with the Social Democrats of Poland and Lithuania to form the Communist Party. The PPS itself systematically carried on anti-Communist propaganda and supported a policy of aggression against the Soviet Union. Following Pilsudski's coup in May 1926, the PPS nominally was in opposition, but did not conduct an active fight against the regime.

212. 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.

213. On November 12, 1933, new "elections" for the Reichstag were held for which there was only one slate of deputies, the National Socialist list, so that the voters could only vote "yes" or "no." At the same time, a plebiscite was also held in which the voters were to state whether or not they approved of Hitler's foreign policy, which was designated as a policy to preserve the peace. As Trotsky indicates, the vote was overwhelmingly "yes."

214. Marcel Cachin (1869-1958), an ardent social patriot during World War I, moved into the CP with the Socialist Party majority in 1920, became a Stalinist and, with World War II, again became an ardent social patriot. Jean Jacquemotte became the leader of the Belgian Communist Party after the Oppositionists were purged in
1928.

215. Friedrich Stampfer (1874-1957) was a leader of the German Social Democracy and editor of its paper Vorwaerts (Forward).

216. Pierre Renaudel (1871-1935) was a leader of the right wing of the French Socialist Party, the "Neo" group that was expelled in November 1933.


218. Giacinto Serrati (1872-1926) was a prominent leader of the Italian Socialist Party and editor of its daily central organ, Avanti!, 1915-23. At the Second Congress of the Comintern, 1920, he supported maintaining unity with the reformists and thus bore some responsibility for the defeat of the Italian workers in autumn 1920. He subsequently joined the Italian Communist Party.

219. Louis Fischer (1896-1970) was a European correspondent for The Nation, serving chiefly in the Soviet Union, and author of several books on European politics. Trotsky viewed him as an apologist for the Stalinists.

220. Gustav Noske (1868-1946) was a right-wing leader of the German Social Democracy and minister of war in the cabinet that crushed the November 1918 Revolution.

221. Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919) at first followed Social Democratic discipline in voting for war credits in the Reichstag on August 4, 1914: But then he broke discipline, publicly opposed the war and organized opposition to it. After helping to found the German Communist Party, he and Rosa Luxemburg were assassinated by government order in January 1919.


223. The Conference for Progressive Labor Action (CPLA) was founded in 1929 to promote militancy, union democracy and industrial unionism inside the American Federation of Labor. One of its founders was A. J. Muste (1885-1967), a Protestant minister and pacifist who became involved in the labor movement during World War I. In 1933 the CPLA organized the American Workers Party, a centrist group moving to the left. At the end of 1934, the AWP merged with the Communist League of America to form the Workers Party of the United States, of which Muste was secretary. In 1936, after the WPUS had voted to enter the Socialist Party, Muste broke with Marxism and returned to pacifism and the church. In the 1950s he was one of the few to defend victims of the witch-hunt and helped form the American Forum for Socialist Education to encourage systematic exchange of radical views. In the 1960s he played a leading role in building the antiwar movement.


225. Ivan Bunin (1870-1953) was the Russian author of verse, short stories and realistic novels that dealt mainly with the decay of the Russian nobility. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1930 while he was in exile in Paris.
226. Sydney Webb (1859-1947) was the chief English theoretician of gradualism and a founder of the Fabian Society. He and his wife, Beatrice Potter Webb (1858-1943), coauthored numerous books on trade unionism and cooperation, one of which Lenin translated into Russian. They became apologists for Stalinism in the 1930s.


228. Throughout 1933 the Dollfuss regime of Austria kept whittling away the workers' and democratic rights, and the powerful Austrian Social Democracy kept protesting and threatening to fight back if Dollfuss went too far. A showdown came early in 1934 when government provocations went so far that the Social Democrats called a general strike and the workers of Vienna fought arms in hand February 11-16, before the government's artillery pounded them into surrender and defeat. Hundreds were killed and thousands imprisoned, and the Social Democracy, despite the heroism of the workers, was destroyed.

229. Leon Jouhaux (1870-1954) was the general secretary of the CGT, the chief labor federation of France. He was a reformist, social patriot and class collaborationist.

230. The Independent Social Democratic Party (USP) of Germany was founded in 1917 by centrist elements from the Social Democratic Party. The majority of the USP fused with the German Communist Party in 1920, while the minority continued to exist as an independent organization adhering to the Two-and-a-Half International until 1922, when the USP returned to the ranks of the official Social Democratic Party, with the exception of a small centrist group headed by Ledebour.

231. "France Is Now the Key to the Situation." The Militant, March 31, 1934, where it was entitled "For the Fourth International." Signed "International Secretariat, International Communist League."

232. On February 6, 1934, fascists, royalists and other rightist groups staged a violent demonstration at the Chamber of Deputies in Paris against the Radical cabinet headed by Daladier. Fourteen were killed and hundreds hospitalized in the street fighting that lasted through the night. Daladier fell the next day, and Gaston Doumergue, a retired ex-president of France, was called to Paris to form a strong, "nonparty" government, which included Herriot, Tardieu, Barthou, Sarraut and Laval as ministers. On February 12 the labor movement responded with a one-day general strike and demonstrations throughout the country. Trotsky saw the beginnings of Bonapartism in the Doumergue regime and began to stress the danger that France would follow the path of Germany in the period preceding Hitler's victory unless a viable revolutionary alternative were presented to the French workers.

233. Rudolf Hilferding (1877-1941) was one of the Social Democratic leaders in Germany prior to World War I and author of a pioneering work in political economy, Finance Capital. A pacifist during the war, he became a leader of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USP) and returned with it to the Social Democracy. He served as finance minister in 1923 and 1928 and fled to France.
in 1933. The Petain government turned him over to the Gestapo in 1940, and he died shortly afterward in a German prison.

234. "Rakovsky's Declaration of Submission." The Militant, March 10, 1934. L'Humanite on February 19, 1934, printed a dispatch from Moscow announcing that Christian Rakovsky had given up the fight against Stalinism. Trotsky made this statement in a letter to the International Secretariat on February 21, but it was not released until later.

236. Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969), an early supporter of Stalin, was a member of the Political Bureau from 1926 and president of the revolutionary military council and people's commissar of defense, 1925-40. He became president of the USSR, 1953-60.
237. Mikhail Tukhachevsky (1893-1937), an outstanding military commander in the Russian civil war, was appointed marshal of the USSR in 1933. On Stalin's orders, he was tried before a closed military tribunal in 1937 and executed on charges of treason. After Stalin's death, he was exonerated of these charges.

239. J. de Kadt was a leader of the Dutch OSP right wing, hostile to the ICL and Trotsky. He and his group resigned in the summer of 1934, strengthening the OSP forces who wanted to work with the ICL.
240. De Nieuwe Weg (The New Road) was the journal of the Dutch Revolutionary Socialist Party.
241. Joseph Weydemeyer (1818-1866), a friend of Marx and Engels, was prominent in the German and American working-class movements, fighting in the 1848-49 revolution in Germany and in the American Civil War on the side of the North.
242. Antonio Labriola (1843-1904), Italian socialist philosopher, wrote Essays on the Materialist Conception of History and Socialism and Philosophy.
243. Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932) was a German Social Democrat who was literary executor of Engels. He developed a revisionist theory of evolutionary socialism in 1896 that served to rationalize the opportunism of the right wing of the Social Democracy.

245. De Fakkel (The Torch) was the paper of the Dutch OSP. It had published a criticism of Trotsky's article on centrism and the OSP's affiliation to the London-Amsterdam Bureau (IAG).
246. The Neo-Socialists, or Neos, were the right wing of the French Socialist Party, whose leaders were expelled in November 1933 because they had violated party discipline in the Chamber of Deputies by voting with the Radicals to cut the salaries of civil-service employees.
247. In February 1934 the youth section of the OSP sponsored an international youth conference to be held in Laren, Holland. In attendance on February 24 were youth groups of many of the organizations that had attended the August 1933 conference in Paris,
including the ICL. The Dutch police broke into the conference, arresting all the foreign delegates, turning four over to the German Nazi police and deporting the others to Belgium. Except for the four in the hands of the Nazis, the other delegates reassembled in Belgium on February 28 and reconstituted the conference, but this time under the sponsorship of the ICL and SAP youth. The conference established the International Bureau of Revolutionary Youth Organizations, dedicated to working for a new youth international, and a subcommittee, the Stockholm Youth Bureau. Trotsky's remark near the end of this article about the handling of an international conference "as though it were a matter of a picnic," resulting in "a catastrophe with a toll of heavy human sacrifices," probably refers to the OSP role at this youth conference.

248. Finn Moe (1902- ), a member of the Norwegian Labor Party, was foreign editor of Arbeiderbladet and became a leader in the Second International.

249. "Greetings to La Verita." La Verita, March 1934. This was the newly established paper of the Italian section of the ICL. Translated for this volume by Tony Elder. The obvious omission in the third sentence of the last paragraph existed in the copy of the only text available for this edition.

250. Giustizia e Liberta was a movement founded in Paris in 1929 by a group of Italian antifascists. Its main leader and inspirer was Carlo Rosselli, author of Socialisme Liberal, who interviewed Trotsky while he was in France. The political ideas of the movement were outlined in Quaderni di Giustizia e Liberta, which was printed in Paris and sent illegally into Italy. The organization was formed in an attempt to synthesize liberalism and socialism by advocating a socialism on entirely "new" bases, which would reject Marxism, the necessity of class struggle and revolution. In April 1943 this organization joined with others to form Partito d'Azione, a party that was active in the partisan warfare during the end of World War II.

251. Trotsky's letter to the Zurich workers, June 25, 1932, will be found in Writings 32.

252. Pietro Nenni (1891- ) became the principal leader of the Italian Socialist Party after World War II and a close collaborator of the Communist Party until 1956; during this period he was awarded the Stalin peace prize. After Khrushchev's denunciation of the Stalin cult, Nenni broke his alliance with the CP and moved to the right, finally becoming deputy prime minister in coalition governments led by the Christian Democrats.

253. "The Proposed Fusion in the United States." Attached to a letter sent to the members of the National Committee, Communist League of America, April 12, 1934.

254. Arne Swabeck (1890- ) a founder of the American Communist Party and the Communist League of America, was CLA secretary in March 1934, when he sent a report about the CLA's negotiations with the AWP to the International Secretariat and to Trotsky, asking for their opinions. He was a founder of the Socialist Workers Party in 1938 and one of its leaders until the 1960s when he became a Maoist; he left the SWP in 1967.

256. Andre Malraux (1901- ) was a member at this time of a committee formed to provide security for Trotsky in France; see appendix for his friendly account of discussions he held with Trotsky. During the People's Front period, he collaborated actively with the Stalinists and refused to speak up for Trotsky against the Moscow trial slanders. After World War II, he became a Gaullist government official. Two 1931 articles by Trotsky on Malraux appeared in *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*.

257. Sergei Kirov (1886-1934), member of the Political Bureau and head of the CP's organization in Leningrad, was assassinated in December 1934, partly as the result of GPU bungling of a plot designed to smear Trotsky (see *Writings 34-35*).

258. The Chinese Eastern Railroad was the portion of the original route of the Trans-Siberian Railroad which went through Manchuria to Vladivostok. Earlier, Trotsky had been a caustic critic of those in the Left Opposition who argued that since the Chinese Eastern Railroad was a czarist, imperialist venture, therefore a workers' state must disown it by giving it to the Chinese bourgeoisie. Stalin hung onto the railroad until 1935, when he sold it to the Japanese puppet government of Manchukuo in an effort to ward off a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union. The railroad came under Soviet control again in World War II. Although the forces headed by Mao Tse-tung took over the Chinese mainland in 1949, it was not until 1952 that Stalin ceded the route to the new Chinese government.

259. Eugene Preobrazhensky (1886-1937), one of the secretaries of the Bolshevik Central Committee in 1920, wrote *The New Economics* in 1926, a creative analysis of the problems facing the Soviet economy. A member of the Left Opposition, he was expelled from the party in 1927, readmitted in 1929, expelled again in 1931 and again readmitted. His last public appearance was at the Seventeenth Party Congress, 1934, where, like other oppositionists, he apologized for past misdeeds and denounced Trotsky. During the purges, Preobrazhensky refused to make a confession and was shot without a trial.


262. "Off With All the Blindfolds!" *La Verite*, April 27, 1934. Translated for this volume by A. L. Preston. Unsigned. The demands that Trotsky be ousted from France after the local police accidentally discovered he was living at Barbizon in mid-April 1934 exceeded those that had greeted him on his arrival from Turkey. This time, however, the new government, headed by Gaston Doumergue, was not at all unhappy about a pretext for getting rid of its guest, and Albert Sarraut, minister of internal affairs, promptly signed a decree deporting Trotsky. The decree could not be enforced because no other country would let Trotsky in, but the police tried to make up
for that by harassing him. He was ordered to leave Barbizon at once and given a series of restrictions about where he could not live. As a result, he was compelled to live on the move, traveling incognito and never knowing for certain where he would sleep each night, until June, when he found a place in an Alpine village acceptable to the police. This unsigned article and the others that follow it in this volume were written under those conditions. Here Trotsky sought to show that the change in his personal conditions was directly connected with the shift to the right by the government following the events of February 6, 1934.

263. The Left Bloc (Cartel des Gauches) was a coalition of the Radical and Socialist parties that had held office in the 1920s, under the leadership of Edouard Herriot. The People's Front, starting in 1935 and embracing the Communist as well as the Radical and Socialist parties, was to be an expanded version of the Left Bloc.

264. Camille Chautemps (1885-1963), a French Radical Socialist, was premier in 1930 and 1933-34, a post from which he retired in disgrace in January 1934 because of his involvement in the Stavisky scandals. He became premier once more, 1937-38. Edouard Daladier (1884-1970), a Radical Socialist, was premier in 1933 when Trotsky was admitted to France and again in February 1934 when an attempted coup d'état by fascists and monarchists led to his ouster and replacement by Doumergue. He later became premier again, 1938-40, and a signer of the capitulation to Hitler in the Munich crisis.

265. Gaston Doumergue (1863-1937), Radical deputy and minister and president of the republic in 1924, retired in 1931. After the attempted coup of February 6, 1934, he replaced Daladier as premier, promising a "strong" government. When he lost the confidence of the Radicals, his government fell in November 1934.

266. A considerable number of CP members and sympathizers actually did fight alongside the fascists and royalists on February 6, 1934, some of them under the banner of a CP-led veterans' organization.

267. *Le Matin* (The Morning) was a right-wing, French bourgeois daily paper founded in 1884.

268. Andre Tardieu (1876-1945) was the right-wing politician in the Doumergue cabinet who had the assignment of preparing amendments to the French constitution that would strengthen the state, that is, curtail democratic rights.

269. "Conversation with a Dissident from Saint-Denis." *The Militant*, June 30, 1934. Unsigned. Jacques Doriot, a CP leader and mayor of Saint-Denis, an industrial suburb where the CP was strong, became an advocate of a united front against fascism early in 1934, before Moscow did. When the CP would not discuss his proposals, he made them publicly in the paper *l'Emancipation*. When the CP moved to cut him down, he resigned as mayor but was reelected and retained the support of the great majority of the CP members in Saint-Denis. Shortly after the "conversation" of this article, Doriot refused to go to Moscow for "discussion" and was expelled from the CP. For a while he toyed with the centrist elements connected with the London-Amsterdam Bureau, then swung to the right and formed
Notes for Pages 287 to 332

a fascist party in 1935.

270. *Action Socialiste* (Socialist Action) was the publication of a left tendency in the SFIO, the Comité d’Action Socialiste et Révolutionnaire, whose leaders included Claude Just.

271. Maurice Thorez (1900-1964) sympathized with the ideas of the Left Opposition in the mid-1920s but later became the chief Stalinist in France, defender of all the Comintern's zigzags and, after World War II, a minister in de Gaulle's government.


273. Paul Faure (1878-1960) was general secretary of the French Socialist Party, after the majority left to affiliate with the Comintern in 1920, and a collaborator of Leon Blum until the Munich deal of 1938. He supported the Vichy regime in 1940 and was expelled from the SP in 1944.


275. In 1933 and 1934 the French imperialists frequently reported the use of airplanes, tanks, cavalry and infantry to subdue rebels in North Africa, particularly the Berbers in Morocco. When they announced victory over the rebels in March 1934, they claimed that some 150,000 Moors had yielded up their arms.

276. Jean Zyromsky (1890- ), founder of the Bataille Socialiste tendency in the French Socialist Party, was a party functionary with pro-Stalinist leanings. An advocate of "organic unity" (SP-CP merger) in the mid-1930s, he joined the CP after World War II. Marceau Pivert (1895-1958) belonged to the Bataille Socialiste group in the French Socialist Party; in 1935 he organized the Gauche Révolutionnaire tendency when Bataille Socialiste faded out. He served as an aide of Leon Blum when Blum became People's Front premier in 1936. After his group was ordered dissolved in 1937, he left the Socialist Party and founded the Workers and Peasants Socialist Party (PSOP) in 1938. After World War II, he returned to the Socialist Party.

277. Gregory Potemkin (1724-1791) was authorized by the Russian empress, Catherine the Great, to organize "New Russia." He brought old ports up to date and set up new villages, but his critics alleged that his villages were cardboard fronts built to deceive the empress when she toured the area.

278. "Leon Trotsky" by Andre Malraux. *The Modern Monthly*, March 1935. Retranslated by Ellen Ward from *Comunismo*, the journal of the Spanish Left Opposition. Malraux's talks with Trotsky were held at Saint-Palais, near Royan, in August 1933, shortly after Trotsky arrived in France, although his article about them was not completed or published until the spring of 1934, after the government had ordered Trotsky deported.

279. Boris Pasternak (1890-1960), the Russian poet whose early
work Trotsky discussed in *Literature and Revolution*, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1958.

280. The campaign in Poland came in 1920, in the final stages of the Russian civil war. Poland had been egged on by France to act as a spearhead of the anti-Soviet crusade. In March 1920 the Poles attacked the Soviet border. By June the Bolsheviks had made major victories and continued to push further toward Warsaw. But in mid-August the Red Army was soundly defeated and in full retreat, and the Soviets signed a provisional peace with Poland in October. The Soviet forces were led by Army Commander Mikhail Tukhachevsky, the Polish by Marshal Josef Pilsudski, and the French by General Maxime Weygand.

281. Marquis Joseph Dupleix (1697-1763) was governor general of all French colonies in India from 1742 until he was recalled "without honors" in 1754.

282. G. Bessedovsky was a Soviet diplomat who defected to the capitalist world in 1928 and wrote *Revelations of a Soviet Diplomat*.

283. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was discussed by Trotsky in *Culture and Socialism*, a pamphlet.

284. At the time of this discussion, Trotsky was almost fifty-four.

285. Nicola Sacco (1891-1927) and Bartolomeo Vanzetti (1888-1927) were radical Italian emigrants who were arrested on charges of robbery and murder of the paymaster in the shoe-factory payroll robbery in Braintree, Massachusetts, in April 1920. They were tried and convicted in 1921. Their case was appealed and aroused massive worldwide support and protests because of its frame-up character. They lost their appeal and were executed in August 1927.

286. At the time of this article, Trotsky's third exile had entered its sixth year.
INDEX

Adler, F., 363
Alexander II, 362
Alexander III, 359
American Forum for Socialist Education, 365
American Workers Party, see AWP
Amsterdam Bureau, see IAG
Amsterdam International, see International Federation of Trade Unions
Andrade, J., 350
Andreyev, L., 340
Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee, 41, 53, 56, 59, 73, 129, 168, 187, 204, 208, 228, 234, 267, 341, 356
Archimedes, 161
Austro-Marxism, 49, 116, 263, 266, 321, 347, 363
Autonomous Federation of Employees (France), 291
AWP, 229, 271, 365, 368
Axelrod, P., 82, 182, 233, 352, 362
Balabanov, A., 170, 361
Barbusse, H., 23, 318, 341
Barthou, J.L., 14, 366
Bataille Socialiste (France), 371
Bauer, E., 52
Bauer, O., 198, 226, 261, 310, 321, 363
Beilis, M., 149, 360
Bernstein, E., 263, 367
Bessevedovsky, G., 335, 372
Blanqui, L., 355
Bogdanov, A., see Malinovsky, A.
Bolshevik-Leninists, see ILO
Bolshevik Party, Bolsheviks (USSR), 20, 33, 77, 82, 91, 118, 120, 138, 172, 182, 196, 247, 274, 275, 281-283, 324, 325, 339, 340, 343, 357, 362
Bordiga, A., 357
Bordigists, 133, 207, 233
Bourderon, A., 82, 83, 352
Bourtzev, V., 28, 343
Braun, O., 210, 364
Brenner, A., 142-144, 359
Briand, A., 157, 360
Brockway, F., 53, 100, 229, 347, 348
Bruening, H., 210, 317, 364
Bukharin, N., 165, 173, 205, 215, 267, 286, 346, 356, 361
Bunin, I., 231, 365
Cachin, M., 219, 239, 288, 295, 364
Cadet Party (Russia), 343
Caillaux, J., 159, 360
Campbell, T., 30, 344
Cannon, J., 340
Catalan Federation (Workers and Peasants Bloc, Spain), 66, 350
Catherine II (the Great), 258, 371
CGT (General Federation of Labor, France), 213 364
CGTU (Unitary General Federation of Labor, France), 213, 364
Chautemps, C., 14, 287, 370
Chiang Kai-shek, 141, 359
Chicherin, G., 95, 353
Citrine, W., 77, 78, 129, 141, 205, 351
Colijn, H., 107, 355
Columbus, C., 155
Comite d’Action Socialiste et Revolutionnaire (France), 291, 363, 371
Comintern, see Third International
Communist International, see Third International
Communist League of America, 73, 179, 339, 342, 356, 357, 360, 365, 368, 369
Communist League of France, 48, 88-91, 130, 280, 281, 342, 347, 353
Communist Parties: Austria, 213; Belgium, 192, 213, 357, 364; Britain, 34, 53, 54, 55, 56, 75, 77, 189, 212, 213, 214, 351; Bulgaria, 152, 213, 341; Chile, 341; Czechoslovakia, 214; Denmark, 213; Finland, 213; France, 15, 23, 88, 213, 214, 286, 290, 295, 296, 317, 341, 350, 370; Germany, 10, 18, 37, 50, 69, 73, 77, 92, 141, 150, 152, 153, 154, 201, 202, 209, 210, 213, 214, 239, 317, 339, 340, 341, 344, 346, 347, 349, 350, 351, 356, 358, 359, 365, 366; Holland, 347; Italy, 270, 357, 368; Norway, 213, 214; Poland, 213, 364; Spain, 213; Sweden, 213; Switzerland, 213; USSR, 18, 19, 20, 21, 43, 168, 176, 222-227, 245, 340, 360, 369
Communist Workers Party (Germany), 119
Communist Youth League (USSR), see Young Communist League
Conference for Progressive Labor Action (United States), see CPLA
Congress Party of India, 361
Conservative Party (Britain), 362
Cot, P., 252, 354
CPLA (United States), 229, 365
Cromwell, O., 257
Daladier, E., 9, 13, 14, 287, 346, 366, 370
de Kadt, J., 260-264, 367
de Man, H., 192-199, 239, 311, 363
Dimitrov, G., 92, 149-154, 337, 353, 360
Dollfuss, E., 14, 107, 341, 355, 366
Doriot, J., 15, 295, 296, 370
Doumergue, G., 11, 14, 15, 288, 366, 370
Dreyfus, A., 149, 360
Dupleix, J., 335, 372
Ebert, F., 347, 359
Engels, F., 40, 202, 203, 225, 263, 274
Fabian Society (Britain), 366
Faure, P., 295, 371
Federation of Charleroi, 129
First International, 342
Fischer, L., 224, 225, 365
Fish, H., 99, 354
Frank, P., 48, 347
Freud, S., 336, 372
Froelich, P., 85, 87, 347
Gandhi, M., 164, 361
Gauche Revolutionnaire (France), 371
General German Workers Union, 341
Gestapo (Germany), 367
Giacomi, 131
Giustizia e Liberta (Justice and Liberty, Italy), 269, 270, 368
Goering, H., 92, 140, 149, 151, 154, 353
Gorky, M., 184, 362
Index

Gorter, H., 119, 355
GPU (USSR), 69, 211, 225, 285, 351, 369
Grimm, R., 82, 239, 308, 311, 352
Grzesinski, A., 92, 353
Heckert, F., 18, 29, 140, 340
Henderson, A., 239, 300
Hennaut, A., 132-134, 357
Herriot, E., 14, 287, 345, 353, 366, 370
Herzen, A., 181, 362
Hilferding, R., 239, 366
Hindenburg, P. von, 146, 195, 359
Hoffmann, A., 82, 352
IAG (International Labor Community, London-Amsterdam Bureau), 127, 188, 205, 208, 267, 343, 345, 348, 351, 363, 370
ILP (Independent Labour Party, Britain), 13, 33, 34, 53-57, 58, 61, 66, 67, 71, 72-78, 84-87, 123, 125, 127, 186-190, 229, 234, 266, 271, 311, 345, 348, 349, 351, 356, 362, 363
Independent Communist Party (Sweden), 66, 169, 170, 229, 349, 350
Independent Labor Party (Poland), 66, 350
Independent Labour Party (Britain), see ILP
Independent Social Democratic Party (Germany), see USP
Independent Socialist Party (Holland), see OSP
International Bureau of Revolutionary Youth Organizations, 367
International Communist League, see ICL
International Federation of Trade Unions, 49, 347
International Labor Community, see IAG
International Left Opposition, see ILO
International Secretariat of the ICL, 126, 131, 179, 271, 279, 280, 347, 351, 366, 367, 371
International Workingman’s Association, see First International

Jacobins, 343
Jacquemotte, J., 219, 364
Jaurès, J., 98, 346
JGS (Young Socialist Guard, Belgium), 199, 263
Jouhaux, L., 232, 300, 366
Just, C., 371

Kaganovich, L., 340
Kalinin, M., 340
Kamenev, L., 134, 325, 345, 357
Kant, L., 105
Karwahne, 172
Katz, I., 172
Kautsky, K., 82, 118, 226, 261, 352
Kerensky, A., 28, 343, 352
Khrushchev, N., 363, 368
Kilbom, K., 349, 350
Kirov, S., 275, 276, 340, 369
Klement, R., 342
Koltzov, M., 172, 173
Korsch, K., 119, 356
Kornilov, L., 77, 352
Kossior, S., 340
KPO (Communist Right Opposition, Germany), 46, 71, 101, 119, 135, 137, 168, 169, 343, 346, 347, 350, 360
Krestintern (Peasant International), 214, 319, 361
Kruk, J., 66, 350
Kuibyshev, V., 340
Kun, B., 96, 353
Kuomintang (China), 60, 164, 234, 341, 359
Kuusinen, O., 211, 213, 215, 216, 219, 275, 364
Labour Party (Britain), 34, 54, 56, 125, 186, 188, 212, 265, 266, 345, 347, 362, 363
Labriola, A., 262, 367
Landau, K., 130, 357
Lansbury, G., 188, 239, 363
Lassalle, F., 22, 190, 341
Laurat, L., 111, 112, 113, 116
Laval, P., 14
League of Communist Internationalists (Belgium), 129-131, 132, 357
League of Nations, 147, 293, 300, 314, 359, 360
Ledebour, G., 82, 83, 352, 366
Left Bloc (France), 287, 345, 370
Left Opposition: Austria, 357; Belgium, 129, 132-134, 179, 191, 200, 363, 364; Britain, 84, 86, 87, 125, 351, 352, 353, 354; Germany, 46, 47, 201-208, 346, 359; Greece, 130, 131, 279-284, 351, 369; Italy, 179; Spain, 371; USSR, 9, 11, 14, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30, 37-44, 56, 69, 70, 79, 80, 82, 85, 90, 114, 116, 123, 168, 170, 179, 245, 273-278, 344, 356, 360, 361
Lemberg, 334
Leninbund (Germany), 66, 110, 350
Liebknecht, K., 226, 243, 295, 320, 325, 347, 365
Litvinov, M., 94, 294, 353
London-Amersterdam Bureau, see IAG
Loriot, F., 119, 356
Louis, P., 170, 361
Louzon, R., 114, 355
Lovestone, J., 101, 354
Lozovsky, S., 10, 17, 205, 275, 339, 363
Ludendorff, E., 157, 360
Lunacharsky, A., 181-186, 361, 362
Luxemburg, R., 50, 226, 243, 309, 325, 347, 365
Makhaisky, V., 112, 355
Malinovsky, A., (pseud. Bogdanov, A.), 184, 362
Malraux, A., 275, 331, 369, 371
Manos, 279
Manuilsky, D., 17, 18, 66, 211, 215, 275, 339
Mao Tse-tung, 369
Martov, J., 82, 182, 233, 340, 352, 362
Marx, K., 19, 28, 40, 51, 61, 63, 132, 194, 202, 203, 220, 261, 262, 263, 342, 367
Maurin, J., 66, 67, 206, 350
Maximalists (Italy), 66, 123, 350
Maxton, J., 33, 345
McGovern, J., 193, 362
Meany, G., 354
Mensheviks (Russia), 76, 77, 84, 91, 138, 182, 219, 227, 281, 282, 292, 324, 325, 340, 352, 362
Merrheim, A., 82, 352
Mezhrayontzi (Inter-District-Group, Russia), 339
Mill, M., 130, 357
Miller, General, 31
Miliukov, P., 28, 343
Minority Movement (Britain), 75, 351
Moe, F., 267, 368
Moliere, J., 196
Molinier, R. ("M"), 48, 347
Molotov, V., 340, 354
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monatte, P.</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosley, O.</td>
<td>77, 351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement for the Fourth International</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mueller, H.</td>
<td>210, 317, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muenzenberg, W.</td>
<td>22, 23, 140, 214, 318, 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muranov, M.</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mussolini, B.</td>
<td>156, 158, 270, 276, 350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muste, A.</td>
<td>229, 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myasnikov, G.</td>
<td>112, 355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napoleon Bonaparte</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narodnaya Volya (People's Will, Russia)</td>
<td>181, 362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nenni, P.</td>
<td>269, 270, 368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neos (Neosocialists, France)</td>
<td>13, 265, 266, 365, 367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neumann, H.</td>
<td>209, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas II</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nin, A.</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Labor Party</td>
<td>see NAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noske, G.</td>
<td>226, 347, 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordzhonikidze, S.</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ossietzki, C. von</td>
<td>145, 359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oustric, A.</td>
<td>22, 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papen, F. von</td>
<td>107, 145, 147, 355, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parijanine, M.</td>
<td>231, 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party of Proletarian Unity (France)</td>
<td>see PUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasternak, B.</td>
<td>332, 371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paton, J.</td>
<td>100, 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant International, see Krestintern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pericles</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry, Admiral M.</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petain, Marshal P.</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pforzoli, L. (&quot;L.P.&quot;)</td>
<td>163-171, 360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piatnitsky, O.</td>
<td>215, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilsudski, J.</td>
<td>141, 168, 359, 364, 372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pivert, M.</td>
<td>311, 371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plekhanov, G.</td>
<td>182, 233, 362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POB (Belgian Labor Party)</td>
<td>191, 265, 363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politburo (Political Bureau, USSR)</td>
<td>18, 340, 345, 367, 369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potemkin, G.</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potresov, A.</td>
<td>182, 362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification, Spain)</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS (Polish Socialist Party)</td>
<td>213, 359, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pradek, A.</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proutzhenskii, E.</td>
<td>276, 369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proudhon, P.</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profintern (Red International of Labor Unions)</td>
<td>75, 212, 214, 318, 347, 351, 363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSOP (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party, France)</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUP (Party of Proletarian Unity, France)</td>
<td>66, 133, 292, 349, 350, 361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purcell, A.</td>
<td>129, 205, 363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radek, K.</td>
<td>163, 226, 360, 361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical Party (Radical Socialist Party, France)</td>
<td>15, 287, 345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakovsky, C.</td>
<td>11, 14, 31, 69, 116, 245, 273-278, 344, 361, 367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red International of Labor Unions, see Profintern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reese, M.</td>
<td>140, 141, 153, 358, 359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remmele, H.</td>
<td>209, 364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renaudel, P.</td>
<td>219, 239, 365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Socialist Party (Holland), see RSP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenfeld, K.</td>
<td>80, 352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenfeld, O.</td>
<td>31, 344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosselli, C.</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RSP (Revolutionary Socialist Party, Holland), 41, 52, 63, 65, 67, 79, 88, 119, 123, 178, 346, 347, 349, 352

Sacco, N., 337, 372


Schwab, J., see Walcher, J.


Sedova, N., 9, 13

Sellier, L., 67, 350

Serge, V., 69, 351

Serrati, G., 223, 365

Severing, C., 210, 364

Seydewitz, M, 80, 343, 352

SFIO, see Social Democracy (France)

Shachtman, M, 363

Smith, C., 58, 123, 348

Sneevliet, H., 52, 67, 80, 260-264, 346, 347

Soblen, Dr. R. (Well, R.), 127, 130, 357

Social Democracy: Austria, 14, 213, 347, 363, 366; Belgium, 136, 191, 192, 213, 219, 363; Denmark, 213; Finland, 213, 364; France, 13, 15, 23, 171, 213, 266, 287, 292, 295, 296, 310, 350, 355, 360, 364, 365, 367, 371; Germany, 37, 93, 197, 201, 210, 211, 212, 266, 341, 343, 352, 358, 359, 360, 366, 367; Holland, 66, 213, 266; Italy, 269, 350, 365, 368; Norway, 213, 263, 348; Poland, 213, 360; Russia, 182, 213, 340, 362; Scandinavia, 83, 213, 348; Spain, 213; Sweden, 66, 213, 269; West Germany, 353

Social Revolutionary Party (Russia), 77, 138, 151, 319, 343, 353

Socialist Party (France), see Social Democracy (France)

Socialist Party (Poland), see PPS

Socialist Workers Party (Germany), see SAP

Socialist Workers Party (United States), see SWP

Sosnovksy, L., 173, 276, 361

Souvarine, B., 81, 91, 106, 114, 116, 132, 133, 352

Spaak, P., 193, 198, 199, 363

Spartakusbund (Germany), 347


Stampfer, F., 219, 365

Stavisky, S., 14, 370

Steinberg, I., 66, 350

Sun Yat-sen, 341

Suvorov, A., 258

Swabec, A., 271, 368

SWP (Socialist Workers Party, United States), 363, 368

Tardieu, A., 14, 288, 366, 370

Thaelmann, E., 18, 276, 337, 339, 342

Thalheimer, A., 66, 344, 346, 350

Third International (Comintern, Communist International), 9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 38, 39, 40, 42, 50, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 67, 68, 72, 73, 74, 77, 80, 81, 84, 85, 88, 93, 94, 99, 101, 102, 116, 121, 123, 128, 134, 136, 137, 138, 140, 141, 152, 153, 167, 168, 171, 180, 188, 189, 190, 193, 197, 205, 207, 209-221, 224, 228, 233, 234, 235, 239, 240, 242, 243, 244, 269, 276, 277, 286, 288, 292, 310, 313, 314, 318,
319, 320, 325, 328, 337, 339, 342, 346, 348, 352, 356, 357, 358, 360, 361, 364, 365, 371
Thomas, B., 85
Thorez, M., 276, 291, 295, 297, 371
Tomsky, M., 129, 356
Torgler, E., 92, 93, 353, 360
Trades Union Congress (Britain), see TUC
Tranmael, M., 67, 83, 169, 170, 205, 206, 207, 263, 267, 310, 350
TUC (Trades Union Congress, Britain), 54, 74, 77, 351, 363
Tukhachevsky, M., 253, 334, 367, 372
Urbahns, H., 66, 107-111, 114, 119, 133, 350
USP (Independent Social Democratic Party, Germany), 236, 366
van der Lubbe, 152, 360
Vandervelde, E., 137, 192, 196, 198, 199, 232, 239, 241, 300, 311, 313, 358
van Heijenoort, J., 342
Van Overstraeten, E., 129, 130, 357
Vanzetti, B., 337, 372
Voroshilov, K., 251, 252, 253, 340, 367
Walcher, J., (Schwab), 46, 52, 85, 87, 343, 347, 356
Webb, B., 366
Webb, S., 231, 366
Weil, S., 31, 114, 344
Well, R., see Soblen, R.
Wels, O., 17, 141, 234, 239, 266, 321, 339
Weygand, M., 334, 372
Weydemeyer, J., 261, 367
White, J., 342
Wilson, W., 95
Witte, 71, 100, 127, 130-131, 279, 282, 351
Workers and Peasants Socialist Party, see PSOP
Wrangel, P., 69, 70, 351
Young Communist League (USSR), 69, 255, 257
Young Socialistic Guard (Belgium), see JGS
Yushchinsky, 360
Zasulich, V., 182, 362
Zimin, 174
Zinoviev, G., 96, 215, 286, 345, 356, 361
Zyromski, J., 311, 371