

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

FI G H T

FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
ORGAN OF THE MARXIST GROUP (TROTSKYISTS)

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EDITORIAL

FOR REVOLUTIONARY INDEPENDENCE

"**M**ARXISM enables us not only to explain the world but also to change it. It is both a weapon of criticism and a criticism of weapons. It must therefore not only be studied, it must be wielded. Marxism is living Marxism only when this great weapon is kept keen at edge and bright at blade by active use in the struggle against capitalism and its apologists."

Six months ago the Marxist Group set itself the task of forging such a weapon, the independent revolutionary party. We did not expect that such a gigantic task would be accomplished within a few months. We did expect that within such a period valuable lessons as to the justification or otherwise of our perspective would be learned. We make no exaggerated claims. We are weak numerically; we have still a great deal to learn; but we are making progress. There were some who warned at the outset that our action was precipitate, that the time was "not ripe," that we must "win the masses" from inside the reformist Labour Party or the I.L.P. To them we replied that the building of the independent section of the 4th International was as unpostponable as the class struggle itself. With the intense sharpening of the social antagonisms, with the collapse of capitalist world economy as a progressive force,

with an imperialist war on an unprecedented scale an impending reality, we had no choice. We could not shelter behind the cowardly formula of leaving it to the "historic process." The historic process had already put the question squarely before us. The great revolutionary army of the working classes was preparing for a life or death struggle against the oppressors. Only the political vanguard of disciplined Marxists could lead them to victory. There was little time to waste; the 2nd and 3rd Internationals were firmly rooted in the camp of reaction; therefore we called for the independent party. We believe that we were justified.

Other parties and groups claim that they are pursuing the same task. It is time for us to take stock where we stand in relation to them.

In 1915 Lenin wrote about the I.L.P. "We pay the I.L.P. the tribute of greatest respect for its courageous struggle against the English government in war time. But we know that this party has never accepted the principles of Marxism, while, in our conviction it is the chief task of the Social-Democratic opposition at the present moment to raise the banner of revolutionary Marxism, to tell the workers firmly and defiantly, how we look upon imperialist wars, to put forth the

slogan of mass revolutionary action, i.e., to turn the period of imperialist war into the beginning of a period of civil wars." Since then the I.L.P. has experienced a series of convulsions; it has experimented with every brand of political quackery. Maxton has crouched on hundreds of platforms, wagged the warning finger at thousands of workers, but nobody pays much attention to him nowadays except the caricaturists. Compared with the large working class parties, however, the I.L.P. is definitely advanced. It stands for workers power; for the social revolution, for international socialism; but like all other "centrist" parties, the words are everything, the application is nothing. On every question that demanded a translation of words into action the I.L.P. has proved its non-Marxist basis. John McGovern, who can mix Roman Catholicism with his "Marxism," was able to mix the "poor little Abyssinia" of 1935 with the "poor little Belgium" of 1914. He contended that in both cases assistance meant war. Poor little Belgium had 10 million slaves in Africa, whereas the Abyssinians were struggling to remain free from Italian slavery. Belgium always was and still remains a link in the European imperialist chain. Abyssinia was only a victim of imperialist appetite. To treat the two as being equal was purest nonsense. The I.L.P., however, supported McGovern. Pacifism, as always, lined up with predatory imperialism. The simplest lessons of Marx and Lenin meant nothing to them. The Abyssinian episode cannot be forgotten; it is one of the blackest marks against the I.L.P. and is a warning of future betrayals.

On the question of unity the I.L.P. reveals all the damnable traits inherent in centralism. "As imperialist war approaches and bourgeois chauvinism is thereby placed in the position of being able to attack ferociously the revolutionary internationalists, wavering elements, the so-called centrists, will capitulate with dead certainty before the tide of chauvinism, just prior to or soon after the outbreak of war. Naturally they will hide behind appeals to the necessity of unity, of avoiding the danger of isolation from the mass organisations, etc. The hypocritical formulae which serve the centrists as a means of hiding their cowardice are varied, but they have only one purpose, to draw a veil over their capitulation. "Unity" with social-patriots—not the temporary co-existence in one and the same organisation for the purpose of fighting against it, but unity as a principle—is equivalent to unity with one's own imperialism, and, in consequence an open rupture of the ties with the proletariat of other nationalities." (Trotsky). Jenny Lee is partial to the Popular Front. Maxton writes in favour of it. The I.L.P. is learning nothing; we can expect nothing from it but brave words.

On the international field, this false appreciation of "unity" leads to a rupture with revolutionary internationalism. It could not be otherwise. It is the logical outcome of confusion and non-acceptance of basic Marxian principles. Nearly two years ago Trotsky criticised the I.L.P.'s "internationalism." That criticism constituted a damning indictment. Maxton, Brockway and Co. did not accept the challenge and wage a polemical battle in defence of their ideas, they merely launched a campaign of defamation and abuse.

The Trotskyists were "sectarians," "splitters," "disgruntled communists," etc., to be hounded from the I.L.P. On such questions the language of the centrists and that of the Stalinists is dangerously alike.

We reproduce a part of Trotsky's criticism:

"The International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity."

"It is true that the I.L.P. is holding in reserve a certain international association: the London Bureau. Is this the beginning of the new International? No, certainly not. More decisively than any other member, the I.L.P. has expressed itself against "splitting." Not without reason the Bureau of the split away organisations has written on its banner the slogan of . . . "Unity." Unity with whom? As far as the I.L.P. is concerned it would like to see united in one all embracing International all revolutionary socialist organisations and all sections of the Comintern, and it would also like to see this International adopt a good program. The way to hell is paved with good intentions. The position of the I.L.P. is all the more hopeless, since no one else in the London Bureau is sharing it. On the other hand, the Comintern, drawing social-patriotic conclusions from its theory of Socialism in a single country is drawing towards an association with the strong reformist organisations, and certainly not with the weak revolutionary groups. The April theses of the I.L.P. console us: "But they (the other organisations belonging to the London Bureau) agree that the question of a new International is now theoretical (!) and that the form (!) which the reconstructed International will take will depend upon the historical events (!) and the development of the actual working class struggle." (page 20). A remarkable view! The I.L.P. proposes to unite the "revolutionary socialist organisations" with the sections of the Comintern, but neither the one nor the other desire such unity, nor can they desire it. "But" the I.L.P. consoles itself, "the revolutionary socialist organisations agree . . ."—on what? On the point that one cannot foresee the "form" the reconstructed International will take. For this reason the question of an International (Workers of the world unite!) is theoretical! With the same justification one could declare that the whole question of Socialism was theoretical, for it is yet unknown what form it will take; furthermore, one could not carry through the social revolution with a "theoretical" International.

The question of the national Party and the question of the International are, for the I.L.P., on two different planes. We have been told that the danger of Fascism and War demands immediate work for the creation of the national party. As far as the International is concerned this question is . . . "theoretical." In no other respect is opportunism expressed so clearly and indisputably as in this principled counter-posing of national parties and the International. The banner of "Revolutionary Socialist Unity" merely plays the part of a veil covering the gaping hole in the policy of the I.L.P. Are we not entitled to say that the London Bureau is a provisional asylum for the wavering, the homeless, and all those full of hope that they may be "invited" to join one of the existing Internationals?"

The warnings and criticism of Lenin twenty-two years ago and of Trotsky two years ago have had little effect. On the three fundamental issues, Unity, War and the International, the I.L.P. in the past two years has shown not the faintest glimmering of revolutionary understanding. With the passing of the Comintern to the camp of counter-revolution, with the Labour Party echoing the jingoism of Chamberlain and Eden, it is easy to exaggerate the revolutionary significance of the I.L.P. We must remember that the leadership has demonstrated its confusion and opportunism time and time again; that its programme is riddled throughout with radical phrases that are impossible of practical application; and that its organisational form still reflects the needs of a parliamentary clique rather than the needs of revolutionary action.

The theoretical and practical conclusions to be drawn from an analysis of the I.L.P.'s role during the past two years are, that it reached the limit of its "left" swing in early 1935, and that since then it has continually been moving back to the political "Sargasso" where Maxton, no doubt, will continue to wag the warning finger at the other lifeless hulks and exhort them to join the revolutionary Armada. To think that the I.L.P., as a party, can be won for revolutionary Marxism, is, in fact, not to think at all. The Marxist Group in relation to the I.L.P. reaffirms its stand of independence and asks for support in building the British section of the 4th International.

What of the groups working inside the Labour Party? Where do we differ from them? Their line of reasoning as against ours, runs along the following lines. "The Labour Party is the mass organisation of the British workers, therefore the cadres of the far distant revolutionary Party must be developed from inside the Labour Party. It is preferable to whisper in a full room (the Labour Party branch rooms) than to shout in an empty room (as the Marxist Group does because of its "isolation"). We must win the masses. We must be with the masses. Objective conditions are not favourable for launching the independent revolutionary Party," etc., etc. Everywhere without stopping to take breath, our critics shout about the "masses." Let us see if there is any substance to their arguments. The Labour Party's mass basis is the Trade Unions. They comprise more than nine-tenths of the membership. The Marxist Group can work to the limit of its strength and capabilities inside the T.U.'s, the factories, etc., carrying into them the programme and principles of the independent party, but this means nothing to our critics — we are still "isolated." The individual membership of the Labour Party numbers 400,000. Of this number, expert opinion suggests that not more than 40,000 are in the least active. We must further subtract the paid element, the humanitarians, the "true" Christians (Lansbury-ites), the anti-vivisectionists, parliamentary reformists (proportional representation, speed-up of debates, etc.), League of Nations brethren, Hannen Swaffer spiritualists, and all the budding petty bureaucrats who angle for Local Council of parliamentary seats. When this process is completed we arrive at the "masses." Fear of Trans-

port House necessitates circumspection in approaching these "masses." Elementary socialist principles are whispered into chosen ears. ("The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims.") Thus the semi-legal, furtive band, prepare the toiling masses for the revolutionary struggles ahead.

Despite all this our critics are not convinced. They have confused the Labour Party's voting supporters with the Labour Party's active membership. When this is pointed out to them they lapse into the profundities of relativity. "Yes," they will say, "the Labour Party is not so big as we first thought, but still, in comparison with our numbers it is a mass organisation." Compared with the "Trotskyists" the I.L.P. is also a mass organisation, its rank and file membership is undoubtedly vastly superior theoretically to the Labour Party, yet the Trotskyists abandoned the I.L.P. Here we see the "relative" approach is as hollow as the other. They still have another argument. "Some years ago the attempt was made to form an independent party, but it completely failed. How do you account for that?" As if it were not the duty of those who pose the question to account for it and tell us, nevertheless we will answer it. At that time the Stalinists were enjoying their "ultra-left" period. They attacked everything and everybody, called the Labour Party social-fascist, said that a vote for the Labour Party was a vote for Fascism, etc. Still, to the worker who was interested politically they appeared as revolutionaries, although rather mad ones. The Stalinist bureaucracy was still condemning the League of Nations as a "gathering of imperialist robbers"; the mass murders in the Soviet Union had not been publically broadcast; "Trotskyism" as the only consistent development of Marx-Leninism was known to very few. The basis of the 4th International had not been laid. With the capitulation of the Comintern, the sharpening of class-contradictions, the exposure of the Moscow Trials, Trotskyism was publicised throughout the world. We know that it was distorted by the Stalinists and their apologists into the complete opposite of what it really was, but nevertheless the most advanced sections of the political vanguard were not satisfied with the crude Stalinist slanders. They wanted to know more about it. They started reading the history of Bolshevism. In all working class organisations discussions arose, the advanced workers were moving away from Stalinism.

Under such conditions and with imperialist war threatening daily, the call for the independent party was historically opportune. Obviously the conditions that existed some years ago are not the conditions of today. To put the question as it has been put, "How does the call for the revolutionary party differ from the call made some years ago?" is to forget that history is a process, that as the objective world changes, so also do the ideas of political groupings. Some people, however, always reason backward: events have to take them by the throat before they realise that they exist. It is our task now to raise the red flag of International Socialism. The workers are searching for it: they will not find it hidden away in the rotten archives of the Labour Party.

REMINDEERS

LENIN ON WAR (AND SPAIN).

"THE war continued to be Imperialist in Russia even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois democratic republic, since it was being carried on by the bourgeoisie in the position of a ruling class."

"Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted upon efficiency in the army . . . This means praising reformism and submission to the Imperialist bourgeoisie, blaming the revolution and abjuring it. For the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of the army meant, under Kerensky, its maintenance under the bourgeois, albeit republican, command."

"Not a single great revolution ever did or could do without a so-called disorganisation of the army, the strongest instrument of support of the old regime . . . The Counter-Revolution never tolerated and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. In France, Engels wrote, after each revolution, the workers were found to be armed: "Hence the first commandment in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, on seizing the helm of State, was to disarm the workers." The armed workers were the germ of a new army and the nucleus of organisation of a new order."

"The Proletarian Revolution" by Lenin.

PALME DUTT ON DEMOCRACY

or GHOSTS FROM THEIR PAST

"It is precisely within the forms of so called democracy that Fascism is prepared. (Dutt's italics). This is the whole lesson of Germany. The entire Fascist regime was prepared step by step, within the four corners of the Weimar "democratic" constitution. All the emergency regimes, the dictatorship, the suppression of every liberty were carried out under one clause and another of the Weimar Constitution. They were carried out by the parties of "democracy," always in the name of "saving democracy."

"The sole path to defeat Fascism is not the path of trust in capitalist "democracy" . . . but the path of the class struggle . . . of the united working class front in Action."

"What does the Labour Party mean when it speaks of democracy? What the Labour Party means is capitalist "democracy" -- that is, the existing British Capitalist State."

"In all class society, so long, that is, as classes exist, there is inevitably dictatorship. One class rules in reality and one class is subject, whatever the form."

--From "Democracy and Fascism," by R. Palme Dutt. Published May 1st, 1933.

R. P. DUTT ON "THE WAR CRISIS."

"There is the Labour Party line. We all know it . . . They preach trust in the Government and trust in the League of Nations -- i.e., trust in Imperialism which is preparing war."

"Labour Monthly, May, 1932,"

LENIN'S WIDOW WRITES TO TROTSKY.

A few days after Lenin's death, Krupskaya wrote The following letter to L. Trotsky:

"Dear Leo Davydovitch,

I write to tell you that about a month before his death, as he was looking through your book, Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) stopped at the place where you sum up Marx and Lenin, and asked me to read it over again to him; he listened very attentively, and then looked it over again himself. And here is another thing I want to tell you. The attitude of V. I. toward you at the time when you came to us in London from Siberia, has not changed until his death. I wish you, Leo Davydovitch, strength and health, and I embrace you warmly.

N. KRUPSKAYA."

WHERE STALIN FINDS HIS SUPPORT.

"THE larger landowner's and capitalists have not disappeared in Russia. They have only been submitted to complete expropriation. They have been completely crushed politically as a class, and the remnants of this class are dissolved among the State employees of the Soviet Power."

"Decisions of the 3rd Congress of the Communist International," published by the C.P.G.B., 1921.

"IS FIGHT OUT?"

THAT is a frequent question asked at the bookshops.

During the beginning of the month, your first question to your wife when you come home after work is: "Has my Fight come?"

You know what we are going to say, so surely there is no need to waste three quarters of a page on it this month!

Very, very seriously, comrade, FIGHT needs your assistance. If you cannot send even sixpence, well, you cannot. We understand. But if you can and don't! just come along to 97, Kings Cross Road, and we will give you a proletarian opinion on the matter!

Out with it! A tanner. Post it now.
P.S. Dear "Intellectual," we know your soul bleeds for the working class. If the literary style of the above hurts your sensitive eyes, send us a fat cheque, and we will be more polite next month.

Anyway, forget your bleeding soul and fork out!

WHO DEFENDS THE WORKERS ?

TODAY many workers are well aware of the impending War situation. They observe with great uneasiness the colossal re-armament programmes and the widespread patriotic propaganda of the World Imperialists. At the same time they are experiencing in country after country, widespread attacks upon their freedom to organise and agitate, and even upon their physical existence. They react against such pressure in a militant fashion, and desire to take action against Capitalism and War. Yet despite this fact, the events of the last few years have resulted in reducing the international working class movement to a state of confusion, demoralisation, and grave weakness.

In order to understand the forces operating to produce such a result and from this understanding draw the necessary conclusions, we must relate the "material" war preparations of the bourgeoisie with those of an ideological character. As the war situation grows sharper, the Imperialists seek to ensure "national unity." Thus in addition to their propaganda methods, we see them organising counter-revolution, repression, the annihilation of the revolutionaries, and planning the corruption and paralysing of the working class movement where it is allowed legal existence. The "spectre of Communism" still haunts Europe. Our masters fear the proletarian revolution, and having learned from the experiences of 1914-1921, prepare to destroy the effectiveness of their "gravediggers," the proletariat.

This is the meaning of present day world events. Diplomatic manoeuvring for alliances, re-armament, etc. are accompanied by an international campaign against the working class and its vanguard.

As against the plans and intentions of the Imperialists, the workers have the task of carrying forward the class struggle and of preparing the way for the ending of war by the overthrow of Capitalism. Of the greatest importance for the future conflicts is the extent to which the workers can defend their organisations now from the attacks of reaction, and develop them as instruments of struggle for the ultimate objective of class emancipation.

So far not even such a defensive struggle is being waged. To the contrary we are seeing the destruction of the working class as a fighting force in the Fascist countries, and steady preparations for such a destruction in the "democratic" states, e.g., Spain, France, and Britain. Desire to struggle and readiness for action are not enough. It becomes necessary to examine the actions of the working class as an organised force, under the leadership of the predominant political parties. To the degree that this leadership is responsible for the proletariat's failure, to that extent the workers must draw the necessary conclusions. It is certain that the bourgeoisie, despite their great power, would be unable to achieve their objectives without the co-operation of working class leaders.

What then are the major influences that determine working class politics and actions? Although weakened by the destruction of German Social Democracy, and regarded with distrust, because of its great record of betrayal, by thousands of advanced workers, the Labour and Socialist International still wields through its national parties and the Trade Unions a powerful influence over millions of workers. The most reactionary and chauvinistic section of the Second International is the British Labour Party and its "economic" partner, the Trade Union Congress. The other predominant world influence is that wielded by the Communist International. Although of lesser mass content than the Second International, the C.I. by reason of its identification with the banner of the 1917 revolution is able to exercise a powerful ideological influence over the masses. Its British section, the C.P.G.B. has a record since its inception of continual blunders, false policies and tactics, veering from rank opportunism and capitulation to sectarianism and ultra-leftism. Although it has consequently been unable to win mass support for a revolutionary position, with the new "line" it is enjoying growing support from the Left Book Club "Communists."

Apart from the existence of various left-wing groupings, and the growing Trotskyist opposition which associates itself with the task of creating the revolutionary Fourth International, the Second and Third Internationals have the leadership of the working class. What are the methods of these two Internationals in defending the workers and of carrying on the class struggle, which they claim to be doing? The answer can be given by examining their roles historic and present.

The responsibility of Social Democracy for the triumph of Fascism and reaction in Europe since the war, is a matter of history. Reformist leadership will always choose can only choose the path of class collaboration, service to the bourgeoisie and betrayal of the workers at each decisive moment. Today, in the few remaining "democratic" countries, as the need for "national unity" becomes sharper for the bourgeoisie, their lackeys, the labour leaders, seek to assist by the crushing of militancy within the working class movement. In this task they receive the greatest assistance from the Comintern. In its role as the world agency of the Soviet bureaucracy, through its sections it stifles the class struggle, and actively assists in the destruction of the revolutionaries (Moscow Trials in Madrid), in order to consolidate the alliances with the "new friends of the Soviet Union," the "democratic" Imperialists. Its so-called policies of the popular front, for peace and democracy, for unity against the Fascist aggressors, are still part of a drive to secure the unity of the workers behind their "democratic" masters for Imperialist War, to be sure "in defence of the Soviet Union!"

Such policies and tactics provide valuable weapons for the Reformist leaders. The old and discredited methods of betrayal are now replaced by up-to-date

Stalinist slogans. The defence of peace and democracy, etc., all the old lying means of deceiving the workers assume a "left" character. The workers' desire to preserve the gains of 1917 and to move forward to Socialism is canalised by such "revolutionary" phrases into social-chauvinistic channels.

The deadly effect of this duel process of betrayal can be clearly seen in operation by reviewing the British situation. Although here by reason of the slower tempo of events, the struggle has not yet reached a critical stage, an examination reveals tendencies, which are a reflection of the international clash of class forces. If the betrayals of the Reformists and Stalinists are stifling the class struggle in Britain, the more rapid march of events abroad demands and obtains the open betrayal of the foreign workers, e.g., France Spain, etc.

The British Imperialists, still able to rule through the so-called democratic parliamentary machine, utilise this democratic mask to conduct a steady attack upon the workers hard-won rights of freedom of speech and organisation. The Emergency Powers, Trades Dispute, the Sedition, and Public Order Acts, are powerful weapons in the hands of the British ruling class for use against the workers. War preparations are accompanied by sharper "police" measures against disrupters of "national unity." In this work the Labour Party has proved a valuable partner. The leadership holds the Party in a state of inactivity. A

the policy of an alliance of peace loving people (read Imperialists) against the Fascist aggressors. No exposure of the Reformists, no correct united front tactics, no propaganda for revolutionary socialism and no class struggle leads, now come from the respectable C.P.G.B. The Labour Party uses the stifling effect of this non-revolutionary rubbish to chain the workers more securely to Capitalism, while contemptuously rejecting the demand of the Stalinists for affiliation. The "left wing" in the Labour Party either continues to repeat pathetically the chauvinistic "anti-fascist" nonsense of the Stalinists, or organises into opposition groups for "socialist" propaganda. The futility of these latter groups, however sincere their intentions, to provide a substitute for the revolutionary party in fighting the Stalinists and Reformists will be borne out by events.

Of greatest importance at this stage in the working class movement are the happenings on the industrial field.

While politically the workers appear apathetic, yet industrially under the pressure from the rising cost of living and worsening conditions, consequent upon the effect of the re-armament programme, the workers are reacting in a very militant fashion. 1937 has seen the rapid growth of strikes, particularly "unofficial," and the bourgeoisie, with memories of the last war's industrial activity, become alarmed. The strikers have invariably created their own organs of struggle, the

STOP !

Sorry to interrupt but, "Fight" is late because you "forgot" to send us that donation.

CARRY ON !

—Editor.

purely formal and liberal opposition in Parliament, they support the war preparations with the necessary "peace loving" reservations. Their speeches and propaganda are confined to vague references to a Commonwealth of Nations -- the British Empire under a sweeter name -- advocacy of a programme of liberal reforms, and preparations for non-class struggle electoral combats. On Spain, they supported non-intervention, now oppose it (Mr. Morrison, "Ladies and gentlemen" . . . Against the Fascist International), but adapt their activity or lack of it to the needs of British Imperialism. Politically the Labour Party stands bankrupt. Yet, in the face of growing unrest, of the formation of opposition groupings, of the revolt of the constituency parties, etc., the Labour leadership is able not only to keep its membership subdued, but to attack the "left wings," Stalinist or not. One great contributory reason for this achievement is the "assistance" given by the C.P.G.B. The Reformist workers turning from their leaders move left and meet the Stalinist party and its agents, Cripps, Mellor & Co. These give out the slogan, -- back to the Labour Party, reform the leaders to be more peace loving friends of the Soviet Union! Agitate for more democratisation, acceptance of C.P.G.B. affiliation, for the popular front. Criticism must be restricted to the failure of the Labour bureaucrats to line up behind

Shop or Factory committee. They have demonstrated that these committees linked up with the Union Branches and District Committees and Trades Councils can become powerful class weapons. The danger is not overlooked by the ruling class. Through their State machine and with the Labour leaders they plan to crush these militant formations and to isolate the leading fighters.

The success of these tactics depends on the workers being confused and without revolutionary assistance. The magnitude of the present confusion can be realised, when we observe that the T.G.W.U. and N.U.R. Conferences defeat militant action, and the C.P.G.B.'s so-called unity proposals, while all the Union Conferences pass resolutions supporting the League of Nations, collective security, defence of democracy, etc., etc., which might well have emanated from Moscow itself. Caught in the toils of Stalinism, the workers see their treacherous leaders advocating this "revolutionary" policy. The repudiation of the class struggle by the pseudo-revolutionary party weakens the class hostility of the rank and file to their T.U. leaders' subtle betrayals.

Who then defends the workers from the attacks of bourgeois reaction? The two mass parties not only fail to do this, but in fact ally themselves with the ruling class. The road of Reformism and of Stalin-

ism is the road of disaster for the proletariat. Of the other existing organisations the I.L.P. fails to provide the revolutionary alternative. Its vacillations capitulations to Stalinism and Reformism and its function as a platform for its parliamentary clique, only add to the general confusion of the left-moving workers. The task remains for the workers themselves to take up the struggle in their organisations against the reactionary forces. In each locality, Union, Trades Council, etc., must spring up militant groups, who can plan systematically to purge the movement of anti-working class elements, to organise action in defence of workers' rights, to develop their organs of struggle in the factories, mines and mills. In every industry these groups must be formed for the tasks of defence and preparation for attack.

The Revolutionary Party, based on Marx-Leninism, and with its roots deep down among the workers, applying its revolutionary theories by participating and leading the working class in the class struggle against Capitalism and War, has yet to be born. The Marxist Group placing before itself the task of preparing for the creation of such a Party, will assist the workers in the fight against reaction and betrayal, and link this up with the main objective, the revolutionary overthrow of Capitalism.

To illustrate this process and the role of the two leading working class parties we can analyse some of the major recent industrial disputes.

Miners Federation of Great Britain.

The Harworth dispute was settled by the Union Executive in the teeth of an overwhelming vote for a national stoppage. A delegate conference and the Notts. Miners have been persuaded to accept a compromise (in reality a betrayal) in the form of a fusion with the Spencer (scab) Union. The terms include the retention of Mr. Spencer as permanent President, and for two years, half the local committees, officials and delegates are to be from Spencer's Union. This is the end of a strike, bitterly fought, with savage repression by the police, and which gave to 12 miners, from two years' to four months' hard labour.

The settlement was effected with the help of the Minister of Mines, and Mr. Jones (M.F.G.B. President) at their Conference pays "tribute" to Col. Cruikshank and the Notts. owners! It is certainly a triumph for the bourgeoisie that they can stop a national coal strike and get the workers to accept the strikebreaking class collaborationist Mr. Spencer and his lieutenants into their organisations and give them leadership.

The rank and file are hostile to the settlement, as is instanced in a letter to the "Tribune" July 16th, from a Welsh miner,—“It is very much against our grain to pay 6d. per week out of our non-living wage to keep this fellow in luxury after what he has done during the last ten years. He has done his level best to ruin the Federation and at last he has beaten us to a frazzle. It is a crying shame on our leaders. There is more grumbling and discontent among a section of the South Wales coalfield about this affair, than I have heard for years.” In May *FIGHT* we said: “Also Mr. Spencer holds forth in the Capitalist press about the joys of working in the most peaceful and contented

coalfield in Britain — “Daily Telegraph” Industrial correspondent, — but I am informed that they, the Miners' leaders, have agreed with prominent members of the T.U.C. and even higher authority, that a strike would be unwise.” So the T.U. bureaucrats, in the name of fair play and national necessity, sacrificed the struggle against “scab” unionism.

The Stalinists hailed the Harworth settlement as a victory, which would lay the basis for a unified drive for better wages and conditions in the industry, the leadership of this drive of course remaining with the Executive.

As to what these gentlemen intend in view of their Harworth record, it is not difficult to conjecture. The Miners Conference has agreed to leave the wages matter in the hands of the E.C. without taking a vote. The “News Chronicle” July 21st, adds “A few years ago such an attitude was unthinkable — This means a long period of peace and stability in the coal fields.”

So the leaders once again break the struggle, and the Stalinists “down below” break the left wing.

Amalgamated Engineering Union.

The engineers have been particularly militant during this year. Thousands of workers have conducted great strike struggles. Yet again and again the Executive Council has declared the strikes unofficial, and taken steps to prevent the Union branches from taking solidarity action. (General Secretary's letter to Branches 1st April). Berridge, Chairman of the London D.C. was expelled for helping the Rolls Royce Strikers. The Barrow D.C. was suspended for banning overtime, and the unofficial Aircraft Shop Stewards Council, with considerable influence among aircraft workers, but controlled by the Stalinists, has been viciously attacked by the E.C. The Conference of the National Committee expressed clearly the hold by the reactionary leadership upon the A.E.U. Practically every militant resolution was defeated (as reported in our last issue). One concrete step was taken — the reactionary one of setting up an Aircraft Co-ordinating Committee, which has the task of liquidating the militant National Aircraft Council.

The general drive of the leadership is to crush the militant struggles, either by declarations of unofficial, or by recognition and quick settlement (compromises), and to attack the militants. There are already clear indications that, while reserving the right to defend their craft interests, the E.C. will co-operate in the re-armament programme.

In the A.E.U. the left wing is entirely dominated by the Stalinists. They will sacrifice the struggle against the bureaucracy, surrender their “rank and file” Aircraft Council, and place the bewildered workers in the hands of the E.C., and we may expect them shortly to oppose unofficial action (as disruptive, of course). Apart from direct betrayal however, the C.P.G.B. assists the T.U. leadership ideologically. The A.E.U. journal each month combines furious attacks upon the militants with “anti-Fascist” and “peace loving” propaganda. “Mr. Little, President of the Union opening the Conference emphasised the danger of Fascism to democracy and

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THE APOTHEOSIS

THE great throne room in the Kremlin, with its gilded columns, is crowded with delegates and guests. The obsequious diplomatic corps is present, accompanied by military attaches in gala uniform. Those of the fascist states like the rest. Delegates have come from the farthest corners of the Russian continent. There are Eskimos, Yskuts, Nentis (who used to be called Samoyeds) in white fur trimmed with red and black; the peoples of Central Asia, Tadjuks, Turkomans, Uzbeka, Sarts, Kazaks are there in long striped robes; Georgians, Adjars and Abkhazes with engraved silver daggers at their belts; Mongols, Buriats, Oysats representing a corner of China. The scarlet silk bandanas of the working women are like poppies scattered in the crowd. Decorated aviators, official dramatists, distinguished mechanics, Alexei Stakanhov, Count Alexei Tolstoy — a crowd of more than two thousand delegates, all ears straining towards the speakers' platform. On the platform are marshals, bedizened with golden stars and decorations, the Order of Lenin, the Order of the Red Flag, the Order of the Red Star of Central Asia; and the new parade uniforms, striped with gold, of the Commissars of the all-powerful "Comissariat of Public Safety."

The next day every newspaper in the sixth part of the world will rhapsodize as follows: "The 24th of November, O day never to be forgotten! The most beautiful day of our lives, the most beautiful day in the lives of a hundred peoples, the most beautiful in history." (Approximately textual.) Stalin appears.

There are no words to express the ovations, the hurrahs, the thunder, the storms, the tempests, the hurricanes of applause. The entire hall is on its feet, seized by a sacred frenzy. One calm observer noted that this went on for thirteen minutes and twenty-four seconds. There are Spanish anarchists in the hall. They too applaud the dictator, the most powerful state head in the world, who, along with everything else, has crushed anarchism beneath the walls of prisons. They know at this very hour Madrid is bleeding from all its veins. That on the Aragon front their brothers are anxiously counting their cartridges.

Workers' Catalonia, free Catalonia, this man can save you. They regard him with eyes aflame, some perhaps drunk with a sort of exultation, some swallowing their rage. They would gladly applaud not thirteen minutes but thirteen hours, if only the militia could have ammunition.

He is a man of about fifty-five, heavily built, with much grey in his hair. He is dressed in a military tunic, with neither stripes nor decorations nor insignia, and military boots. No one here is more simply dressed, and his simplicity contrasts sharply with the regalia of the marshalls and the high police chiefs who, turning toward him with unctuous smiles, likewise applaud him for thirteen minutes and twenty-four seconds.

He speaks for almost two hours on the new Constitution. He speaks with few gestures. He turns to the Spanish delegation and says. "Communism will

triumph throughout the world!" Applause! That is a good sign. Madrid will be saved, Barcelona will be saved. People of Spain, he said that ... But next day this exclamation is suppressed in the reports. A bad sign. Had he changed his mind? They are worried. Had they offended him?

He announces that nothing will change. One party, one word, one chief. Secret ballot as in Germany and Italy. He covers with heavy ridicule the benighted foreign critics of the Constitution. In the Soviet Union no one criticised it. No one. He regards one amendment as justified and it is added to the basic law. The law guarantees personal property and inheritance. Every time he pauses, two thousand men stand and applaud. Applause after he has finished. The Nentis, the Uzbeks, the Turkomans, the Eskimos, the Yakutz, the Tadjuks, the Kolhozniki who have come to this stupendous festival from the tundras and the steppes exult: they have seen the incomparable leader.

Delegations bring their presents to him on the platform. The finest is that of the mechanical engineers, the precision mechanics shut up in some concentration camp: it is a giant clock which in ringing the hours, shows three sculptured figures: Lenin, Stalin and Yagoda, the former G.P.U. chief. The symbolism is more profound than its builders imagined: the hour of Lenin, the hour of Stalin, the hour of Fouche. But this marvel of captives' art and servility has in the political sense lost track of the time: Yagoda is in disgrace. Stalin smiles: in that smile lies the hope of pardon.

For days the monster cast files before this platform, all repeating his praise, receiving ovations whenever they pronounce his name. They all recite verse in his praise borrowed from the poets of their country, they all describe his power: everything that has been accomplished has been his work.

Two million workers in White Russia sign a message in verse addressed to the beloved leader!

"Oh wise master, genius of geniuses!

Sun of the workers! Sun of the peasants, Sun of the world!

Power of rivers, glory and pride of labour!"

Pravda goes on like this for five crowded columns.

Pater Vetchora, the Ukrainian poet, exclaims:

"Stalin's greatness is a halo
Around the constellations of the firmament
Around men and factories."

The poet Kabard:

"Stalin thou golden sun, thy name
speaks the death of our enemies."

The Georgian poet, Gabrindoshvili, sings his goodness:

"He bends over the children
as a wise gardener over his flowers."

1,487,000 inhabitants of the Karabakh territory address him again in verse:

"Oh wisest and best-beloved father ... "

The Turkoman fishermen write to him:

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THE BOLSHEVIK - LENINISTS OF SPAIN DEMAND YOUR AID IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

THE bloody insurrection of May in Barcelona gave fresh proof of the revolutionary energy and magnificent heroism of the Spanish working class. For several days the Catalonian government was at the mercy of the workers. In spite of this the struggle ended with a set-back to the workers, because they carried it on without a plan, without leadership.

The Stalinist officials were on the other side of the barricades; the anarchist leaders showed once more their reformist and conciliatory character; the POUM leadership was not even capable of an independent policy; it timidly clung to that of the CNT and slavishly repeated their defeatist slogans. The tragedy of the Spanish proletariat is always the same: it is without a revolutionary party which would be capable of leading it to victory.

But in spite of this lack the situation is not hopeless. Ten months of revolution are a long and rich experience. Today in every revolutionary party the best revolutionaries are organising fractions which approach — if only tentatively — the correct line. The Friends of Durruti — now expelled by the Anarchist bureaucracy — are the most important among them. No doubt they are still imbued with anarchist prejudices, but they are beginning to pose the problem of the seizure of power in a semi-bolshevik sense. The "revolutionary Junta of workers, peasants and soldiers," their principal slogan, is nothing else than the Soviets advocated by the Bolshevik-Leninists. One of the most important signs of the progressive character of the Friends of Durruti is that the slanders of the Stalinists against the Trotskyists have no effect on them: on the contrary they are ready to collaborate with us. In the Libertarian Youth an analogous wing is forming. In the POUM also, differentiation between the incorrigible centrists and consistent revolutionaries is making considerable progress. The violent campaign of the Executive Committee of the POUM against Trotskyism has not prevented the left wing from taking up our criticisms and to some extent our slogans. Its expulsion is only a question of time.

The speed with which all these fractions develop towards the political position of the 4th International depends, in the first place, on the effective activity of the Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain. The Friends of Durruti, like the other revolutionaries who have seen the Trotskyists by their side on the barricades during the May days, are ready to listen to them in discussion, to read their papers and leaflets, to think over what they propose.

The Bolshevik-Leninist organisation was rebuilt with enormous difficulty. When Nin and Andrade had betrayed the flag of the 4th International, while they liquidated their own organisation and sowed confusion among the militants, the situation seemed without issue. In a period when thousands and tens of thousands of new members were flowing into the existing workers' parties, it was not easy to muster a few reliable comrades faithful to Marxism and the 4th International. In the months which have passed the Trotskyists lacked the most convincing argument, that of force. Ideas alone are not enough.

Still today the Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain see before them enormous obstacles which they cannot surmount without international aid. In this country, in spite of the war, there is considerable unemployment, not to be under the protection of a party means not to be able to find work, and to be exposed to poverty as in every other capitalist country. For many oppositionists, expulsion from their party means the loss of their livelihood. Many of our militiamen were sent back from the front for "Trotskyist activity" that is to say for their revolutionary propaganda, and they lost their salary of 10 pesetas a day with which they were supporting their organisation. How are we to find the necessary means for the organisation, for printing and leaflets? We are forced to rely on the solidarity of all sections and groups of the 4th International, and all sympathisers. With their aid we shall soon get over this critical period which is only transitional.

We apply to all sister organisations and ask them

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THE APOTHEOSIS *(Continued)*.

"As a lighthouse gives light to the fishermen,
of the sea, thy very name fills us with strength
and ardour ..."

Etcetera, etcetera. Let your imagination do its best in this genre. You will be far behind the truth.

For his is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory,
for ever and ever, Amen!

Extract from a brilliant study of the degeneration of the Comintern, "From Lenin to Stalin" by Victor Serge.

(Victor Serge was a life-long revolutionary worker,

a linotypist, who joined the Russian Communist Party during the Civil War. He became a gunner in a special battalion and a member of the Military Defence staff. Serge participated in the 1st Congress of the Communist International and became editor of the "Communist International." This is the type of worker now branded as a counter-revolutionary fascist, while the Webbs, Pritt, the Duchess of Atholl, the Dean of Canterbury, etc., etc., are held up before the working class as "Friends of the Soviet Union." Serge's book, loaded with irrefutable evidence, is obtainable from the Marxist Centre, 97 Kings Cross Rd., W.C.1., price 2/3.)

THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

TRADE UNIONS represented a gigantic step forward for the working class at the beginning of the development of capitalism, as the transition from the disintegration and hopelessness of the workers to the rudiments of class organisation. The direct historical product of the new economic relationship of commodity production, their function was chiefly that of collective bargaining between individual crafts and individual employers. The growth of large-scale industry, of colonial expansion, of huge monopolies, of finance capitalism and world economy, could not proceed without altering the early features of Trade Unions. The number of craft unions decreased; huge mass organisations, sometimes representing a whole national industry, came into being. Separate T.U.'s were linked up in the T.U.C. They had international associations. They had organised the workers on a world scale; they believed in a vague sort of international brotherhood. By the beginning of the century they realised the necessity of political representation and the Labour Party came into being. The economic struggle of the workers had now assumed a political character, but the political character of the struggle could not rise above the social economic conditions upon which the Labour Party took root. Mass political consciousness is not generated automatically from the economic struggle. It requires the help of Marxist theoreticians who, operating from outside, imbue the proletariat with a consciousness of its tasks.

The political demands of the Labour Party, in line with the needs of Trade Unionism, were naturally reformist. At best it fought for the right to strike, for the removal of all juridical hindrances to the Co-op and T.U. movement, for laws protecting women and children, for the improvement of conditions of labour by means of sanitary and factory legislation, etc. We say "at best" because the Labour Party does not fight for even these mild reforms to-day. The leadership has developed into a highly paid bureaucracy, divorced from the class it is supposed to represent. It has succumbed to the unctuous flattery of the exploiters and become the agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers' organisations. Trade Union leaders openly sabotage the struggles of the workers. They stick to their "gentlemen's" agreements and facilitate the wage cutting demands of the employers. In Parliament, the L.P. operates the State machine on traditional capitalist lines. The workers may starve, but the Labour Party "has proved that it can govern"—for the glory of Capitalism.

Bearing in mind that Trade Unionism cannot express anything other than the economic reformist demands of the workers, that the Labour Party, even cleansed of its bureaucrats and traitors, could never become a revolutionary party, we must nevertheless realise that they represent the organised masses, and therefore demand all the help that we can give them. We must wage a ruthless war against the bureaucrats, against the legalistic, constitutionalist, bourgeois-democratic prejudices. Our task in the T.U.'s and Labour Party are tremendous. We

do not shirk such tasks, but rather we must be in the

forefront of the battle, working with a capability that earns the greatest possible support from the workers and "respect" from the bureaucrats.

Unfortunately, however, some Socialists regard this work as the *only* important work that a Socialist undertakes. The T.U.'s and the Labour Party claim all their attention. This is "practical" work, "mass" work, nothing else matters. Such small things as the T.U.'s only representing one fourth of the industrial workers, and the L.P. members not numbering many thousands, seem to escape their notice. This petty bourgeois idea of revolutionary activity Lenin had cause to expose many years ago. "Social Democracy represents the working class, not in its relation to a given group of employers, but in its relation to all classes in modern society, to the State as an organised political force. Hence, it not only follows that Social Democrats must not confine themselves entirely to the economic struggle; they must not even allow the organisation of economic exposures to become the predominant part of their activities. We must actively take up the political education of the working class and the development of its political consciousness. . . . It is not enough to *explain* to the workers that they are politically oppressed (any more than it was to *explain* to them that their interests were antagonistic to the interests of the employers). Advantage must be taken of every concrete example of this oppression for the purpose of agitation. And inasmuch as *political* oppression affects all sorts of classes in society, inasmuch as it manifests itself in various spheres of life and activity, in industrial life, civic life, in personal and family life, in religious life, scientific life, etc., is it not evident that *we shall not be fulfilling our task* of developing the political consciousness of the workers *if we do not undertake* the organisation of the *political* exposure of autocracy in all its aspects." (*What is to be done?*)

We need the breadth of Lenin's vision and the courage to build the organisational form necessary to apply it. "Give us an organisation of revolutionists" he says "and we shall overturn the whole of Russia."

Here Lenin demonstrates how particular aspects of the struggle must be subordinated to the political struggle as a whole. This does not mean that those particular aspects are weakened, but, on the contrary, that they are enormously strengthened. The revolutionary party that Lenin demands is the instrument that fulfills this task. With the aid of the party, an isolated economic struggle can be developed into a major political struggle. To harness the sum total of economic, social and political struggle is to give revolutionary force to all who suffer from oppression. Those who submerge themselves in the reformist political and industrial organisations of the workers dissipate their energies by ignoring the inter-relationship of seemingly diverse problems. In this centre of world Imperialism we have an infinitely greater opportunity than ever Lenin had. "Give us an organisation of revolutionists and we will overturn the whole of the world."

THE ALLIANCE WITH HITLER AND THE MIKADO

THE following is an extract from Trotsky's final speech to the Preliminary Commission of Enquiry. (Mexico, April 17th, 1937).

"To support the already too improbable accusation of an alliance of the Trotskyites with Germany and Japan, the foreign lawyers of the GPU are circulating the following versions:

(1) Lenin traversed Germany during the war with the agreement of Ludendorff in order to carry out his revolutionary tasks.

(2) The Bolshevik government did not stop at the cession of a great deal of the territory and paid tribute to Germany in order to save the Soviet regime. Conclusion: Why not admit that Trotsky entered into agreement with the same German general staff in order to procure, through the cession of territory, the possibility of realising his aims in the remaining part of the territory?

This analogy represents in reality a tremendous and venomous calumny against Lenin and the Bolshevik party as a whole.

(1) Lenin really travelled through Germany by utilising the false hopes of Ludendorff of the decomposition of Russia through an internal struggle. How did Lenin proceed in this matter? (a) He did not hide for one moment either his program or the aim of his trip. (b) He convoked a small conference of internationalists from different countries in Switzerland who gave full agreement to Lenin's plan to travel to Russia through Germany. (c) Lenin did not enter into any political agreement with the German authorities and made the condition that no one was to enter his car in his trip through Germany. (d) Immediately after his arrival in Petrograd, Lenin explained before the Soviet and the worker masses, the sense and the character of his trip through Germany.

The audacity of decision and the carefulness of preparation characterise Lenin also in this episode; but no less is he characterised by the full and unconditional honesty before the working class, to whom he is ready at every moment to render an account for each of his political steps.

(2) The Bolshevik government really ceded great territory to Germany after the peace of Brest-Litovsk, in order to save the Soviet regime in the rest of the territory. But: (a) the Soviet Government had no other choice. (b) The Soviet Government did not hide for one moment before the masses of the people that the peace of Brest-Litovsk signifies a transitory and partial capitulation of the proletarian revolution before capitalism.

We have in this case full correspondence between the aim and the means and unconditional honesty of the leadership before the public opinion of the working masses.

Let us see now what sense there is in the accusation made against me. I have allegedly concluded an agreement with Fascism and militarism on the following basis: (a) I agree to renounce socialism in

favour of capitalism. (b) I give the signal to disrupt Soviet economy and exterminate soldiers and workers. (c) I hide from the whole world my real aims as well as my methods. (d) My whole open political activity serves only to fool the working masses about my real plans, into which are initiated only Hitler, the Mikado and their agents.

The activity ascribed to me had consequently nothing in common with the above mentioned example of Lenin's activity, but in every respect represents its exact opposite. The Brest-Litovsk peace was a temporary retreat, a compulsory compromise with the object of saving the Soviet Power and realising the revolutionary program. A secret alliance with Hitler and the Mikado means treason to the interest of the working class in the name of personal power, or rather the appearance of power, i.e. the basest of all possible crimes.

True, some lawyers of the GPU are inclined to add water to the over-potent wine of Stalin: perhaps, they say, Trotsky has committed himself only in words to restore capitalism, but in reality he was preparing to realise on the remaining portion of the territory a policy in the spirit of his programme. This version contradicts first of all the confessions of Radek, Piatakov and others. But independently of this fact, it is just as senseless as the official version of the charge. The Opposition programme is the programme of international socialism. How could a grown and experienced man imagine that Hitler and the Mikado, holding in their hands a whole list of treasons and abominable crimes against him, would permit him to realise a revolutionary program? How could one hope anyway to achieve power at the price of high treason in the service of a foreign general staff? Would it not be clear in advance that Hitler and the Mikado, after having used their agent to the limit, would throw him aside like a squeezed lemon? Could the conspirators, six of whom headed the Leninist political bureau, not have understood this? The accusation is thus internally senseless in both its variants: in the official, where it is a question of the restoration of capitalism, and in the semi-official, where the conspirators are granted a secret notion: to fool Hitler and the Mikado.

To this it is necessary to add that it must have been clear in advance to the conspirators, that the conspiracy could not in any case fail to be discovered. In the trial of Zinoviev, Olberg et al, it was stated the "the collaboration of the Trotskyites with the Gestapo was not an exception but a 'system.'" This means that dozens and hundreds of people were initiated into this system. Terrorist acts and especially sabotage, require hundreds and even thousands of agents. Discovery consequently would be entirely unavoidable, and simultaneously the exposure of the alliance of the

Trotskyites with the Fascists and Japanese spies. Who, except fools, could hope to get power in this way?

But that is still not all. The sabotage acts, like those of terror, assume on the part of their executors, a readiness for self-sacrifice. Should a German Fascist or a Japanese agent risk his head in the U.S.S.R. he is driven by a stimulus as powerful as patriotism, nationalism, chauvinism. What courage-bestowing stimulus could the Trotskyites have? Let us admit that the "Leader" has gone mad and had hoped to achieve power by such methods. But what are the driving motives of Berman, David, Olberg, Arnold, and many others who, by taking the practical road of terrorism and sabotage, condemned themselves by this very fact to certain downfall? A man can sacrifice his life only in the name of some higher ideal, even though it be a false one. What higher aim did the Trotskyites have? The desire to break up the U.S.S.R.? The desire to give Trotsky power for the sake of the restoration of capitalism? Sympathy for German Fascists? The wish to give Japan oil for a war against the United States? Neither the official nor the semi-official version gives any answer to the question, in the name of what were the hundreds of "executors" ready to give their heads? The whole construction of the charge has a mechanical character. It ignores the psychology of living beings. In this sense the charge is the logical product of a totalitarian regime, with its inattention and contempt for men when they happen not to be "Leaders."

The second fantastic theory which is put into circulation by the friends of the GPU, says that I, in view of my general position, am allegedly politically interested in the acceleration of war. The usual train of thought is as follows: Trotsky is for the international revolution. It is known that war often calls forth a revolution. Ergo: Trotsky must be interested in the hastening of war.

People who think thus, or who ascribe such thoughts to me, have a very feeble conception of the revolution, of war and their interrelations.

War has in fact often speeded-up revolutions. But precisely for this reason it has often had abortive results. War sharpens social contradictions and the discontent of the masses. That is, however, too little for the **triumph** of the proletarian revolution. Without a revolutionary party, based on the masses, the revolutionary situation leads to the most horrible of defeats. The task is not to "accelerate" war—for this, unfortunately, the imperialists of all countries are working not without success. The task is to use the time which the imperialists still allow the working masses for the building of a revolutionary party and revolutionary trade unions.

The life interest of the proletarian revolution is to push the war off as far as possible, to win as much time as possible for preparation. The more firm, the more courageous, the more revolutionary the conduct of the masses, the more the imperialists will hesitate, the more will it be possible to postpone war, the more chance that the revolution will come about **before** war and perhaps make war **impossible**. Just because the 4th International stands for the international revolu-

tion, it is one of the factors working against war, because, I repeat, the only brake on the road to a new war is the fear of the ruling class of a revolution.

War, it is said, creates a revolutionary situation. But have we had a lack of revolutionary situations in the period from 1917 until to-day? Let us glance at the last period.

- A revolutionary situation in Germany 1918-19.
- A revolutionary situation in Austria and Hungary at the same time.
- A revolutionary situation in Germany in 1923 (the Ruhr occupation).
- A revolutionary situation in China 1927-27 which was not immediately preceded by a war.
- A profound revolutionary commotion in Poland in 1926.
- A revolutionary situation in Germany in 1931-33.
- A revolution in Spain in 1931-37.
- A pre-revolutionary situation in France beginning in 1934.
- A pre-revolutionary situation in Belgium at present.

In spite of the existence of revolutionary situations, the working masses did not carry off any revolutionary victories in any of the enumerated cases. What is lacking? A revolutionary party capable of exploiting the revolutionary situation. The Social Democracy has sufficiently demonstrated in Germany that it is hostile to the revolution. It now demonstrates this anew in France. (Leon Blum). For its part, the Comintern, having usurped the authority of the October revolution, disorganises the revolutionary movement in all countries. The Comintern has, in reality become, apart from its intentions, the best assistant of reaction and fascism in general. Precisely for this reason there rises before the proletariat the iron necessity for building new parties and a new international which correspond to our epoch, an epoch of enormous social convulsions and permanent war danger.

If, in the event of a new war, the masses are not headed by an audacious, courageous, consistent revolutionary party, tested by experience and enjoying the confidence of the masses, a new revolutionary situation will throw society back. A war may, under such circumstances, terminate not with a victorious revolution but with the crumbling of our whole civilisation. One would have to be pitifully blind not to see the danger.

War and revolution are the most serious and tragic phenomena in human history. One must not joke about them. They do not permit of a dilettantish attitude. It is necessary to understand clearly the relation between war and revolution. One must understand no less clearly the relation between the **objective** revolutionary factors which cannot be induced by wishes and the **subjective** factor of the revolution—the conscious vanguard of the proletariat, its party. This party must be prepared with the utmost energy. Can one admit for a moment that so-called Trotskyite the extreme left flank, hunted and persecuted by all other tendencies, would devote their forces to contemptible adventures, sabotage and provocation of war, instead of building a new revolutionary party

capable of encountering the revolutionary situation well-armed? Only the cynical contempt of Stalin and his school for world public opinion, together with his primitive police-craftiness, could create such a stupid and insipid accusation!

I explained in dozens of articles and hundreds of letters that a military defeat of the USSR would inevitably signify the restoration of capitalism in a semi-colonial form under a Fascist political regime, the dismemberment of the country and the definite crushing of the October revolution. Indignant over the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy, some of my former political friends in different countries have arrived at the conclusion that we cannot take upon ourselves the obligation of "unconditional" defence of the USSR. In opposition to this attitude, I explained that we cannot identify the bureaucracy with the USSR; that the new social base must be unconditionally defended against imperialism; that the Bonapartist bureaucracy will be overthrown by the working masses only on the condition that the foundations of the new economic regime of the USSR are preserved. On this question, I broke with dozens of old and hundreds of new friends. My new book ("The Revolution Betrayed") gives an analysis of the military and diplomatic policies of the USSR, precisely from the

point of view of the defence of that country. Now, by the grace of the GPU, it appears that at the same time that I broke with many friends who did not understand the necessity of unconditional defence of the USSR, I actually concluded alliances with imperialists and recommended the destruction of the economic foundation of the USSR. Who will believe it?

Furthermore, it is impossible to understand from the whole trial what precisely was the material contribution to the alliance of Germany and Japan. The Trotskyites sold their heads to the Mikado and to Hitler; what did they receive as reward? Nothing! Money is the nervous system of war; did all these "centres" unified and parallel - at least receive money from Hitler and Japan? Not a single word about this in the trial. The prosecutor is not interested in the question. At the same time it appears from the indications of other financial sources that neither Germany nor Japan gave any money. What then did those countries give to the Trotskyites? The question remains without the shadow of an answer. The "alliance" of the Trotskyites with Germany and Japan has all the earmarks of a police metaphysics. Permit me to add that it is the most ignominious of all the police metaphysics of human history!"

"THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED"

by TROTSKY.

Published by Faber & Faber at 12/6.

EVEN the title and subtitle of this book is worth study. The revolution is betrayed, but not destroyed; Trotsky describes not only what the U.S.S.R. is, but where it is going.

The revolution is betrayed not destroyed, because collective ownership is still maintained. At the very beginning of his book, Trotsky demonstrates the unchallengeable superiority of collective ownership over private, in an analysis impeccably documented. But that is not the whole story. Why, side by side with the successes, have we the tyranny, the reactionary social legislation, and now the mass murders of the purge? It is because, despite unprecedented progress, the Soviet Union still remains a backward country. If, by way of example, where 1 in 12 formerly wore boots, 1 in 3 now wear them, that is progress but not Socialism. Which of the three will wear them? The same with food, clothes, housing, education. If the goods are too few, not enough to give a high standard of living to all (Socialism), then the wages will have to be roughly apportioned according to the labour performed. Who will apportion them? The leaders of industry, the officials of the State. And who will ensure that these decisions are obeyed? In any state it must be the police and the army under the control of "the leaders"; in the U.S.S.R., the Communist Party and its attendant bureaucrats. Forthwith, in the words of Marx "all the old crap" begins again. The bureaucrats in apportioning the good things do not leave themselves out, and as the

economic successes allow the production of a growing number of luxury goods, the struggle becomes keener. "Stakhanovites" with inflated wages move up closer to the bigger bureaucrats. The protests and indignation of the masses, though stifled, increase. The bureaucracy has no answer but repression, and the result is a tense political situation with inevitable explosions. The book we should note was written before the great purge began, and is, therefore, all the more authoritative.

Where is the Soviet Union going? This is the most valuable part of this profound study. The growth of a privileged bureaucracy creates new tendencies in Soviet economy; by its very existence the bureaucracy chokes, first socialist politics, and then, inevitably, socialist economics. Things do not everyday, in every way, get better and better. Trotsky analyses the social classes, the role of the rouble, of the family, of nationality and culture, of the collective farms; in his sure but careful disentangling of the main lines he shows that the U.S.S.R. must move either forward to Socialism by means of the revolution in Europe, or back to capitalism, crushed by the increasing weight of the bureaucracy, and the pressure of world capitalism. Trotsky always unrivalled at large-scale analyses is here at his best. No such piece of social analysis has been produced since Lenin died in 1924.

We who know his scrupulousness must regret that he did not give exact references for all his quotations.

The wit, the vigour and the assurance will sweep

the uncritical but sympathetic reader off his feet, the more sceptical, unacquainted with Marxism and reared on Stalinist lies may find some bold statements incredible, such as the long and fierce opposition of Stalin to industrialisation. Trotsky cannot stay to prove everything. But it is certain that from one reading of this book, the inquirer will grasp more, not only of the Soviet Union, but of European politics, than he will from a score of books by Louis Fischer, Duranty & Co., or a year's study of the daily and weekly press.

And any other explanation of the U.S.S.R. to-day from its "friends," those who still have enough self-respect to refrain from calling Trotsky a Fascist. How silent they have been during the past twelve months—that old established firm, Webb, Webb, Laski, Cole and Cole, Solicitors for Stalinism in the labour movement. Events have moved too quickly for even those tireless scene-shifters. The claims of editorship deny even the boon of silence to Fenner Brockway. As week by week the Stalinist boot registers on his hitherto impenetrable anatomy, the yelps of perplexity issue from the New Leader, which at last breaks forth in the plaintive wail: "there is something wrong in the U.S.S.R." Quite true, Fenner Brockway, and elsewhere too, and nowhere more than in 35 St. Bride Street. If Maxton knows no better, you do. But you and your colleagues will lead your whole party along the road the Stalinists sent that staunch young comrade, Smillie. Anything rather than enlighten the masses by declaring boldly for the Fourth International, anything rather than be called a Trotskyist. As if that will save you. As if that is not exactly what Stalin spends so many millions and so much energy for. The greedy and treacherous bureaucracy knows that what it has to fear most is a movement built on Leninism with the prestige and experience of Lenin's greatest collaborator.

"Whoever seeks physical comfort and spiritual calm let him step aside." Trotsky is a thousand times right when he said these words in the address printed in this volume. Let them step aside all the self-

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world peace and called for a greater effort in support of the Spanish Republic, and a resolution to this effect was carried." (Stalinist—Labour Research Journal report). It is difficult for our "Communists" to explain, why the reactionary Mr. Little is not in their party!

Transport and General Workers' Union.

This Union won a unanimous chorus of praise from the Capitalist press, when Bevin and Co., persuaded it to pass a revision of rule to include provision for repression against the militants. The Union Executive has the record of breaking the Scottish, Home Counties and London Busmen's strikes. Subsequent to the Conference three leading London busmen have been expelled and three suspended from office.

The bus position was adequately discussed in our last issue. Mr. Bevin's actions however, have more than a sectional importance. His treatment of the London busmen is part of a general drive to stamp

seeking careerists and woolly-minded centrists. They come with the flow and they go with the ebb, worshipping only what is "successful" the hall-mark of the small-minded and the third-rate.

We who fight under the banner of the Fourth International know the difficulties of our task better than all those who from the Labour Party or the Soho Cafe, point them out to us. We experience them daily. But we experience also the bewilderment of the politically conscious, their growing distrust of Stalinism as they scent the whiffs of corruption rising from that abscess bursting at last. "The Revolution Betrayed" is a lancet cutting ruthlessly and making our work easier.

And that work? Again Trotsky with his ripe experience tells us: "The masses need your help. The first aid is to let them know the truth." Difficult as that work has been and still is, it is easier to-day. Even a Stalinist cannot explain away the murder of Zinoviev and Kamenev, Piatakov and Tukhachevsky, or their counter-revolutionary policy in Spain.

Those who read and understand this book, and seek neither physical comfort nor spiritual calm, will rally to our assistance in whatever way they can. The battle of ideas grows sharper with events now pressing close upon it. A book like this, at this moment, in its knowledge and mature wisdom, means a deepening and fortifying of convictions, already held, to the enquirers, it is like a window thrown open in a darkened room; in its intellectual integrity and loftiness of purpose it is a stimulus to all that is worth while in the revolutionary movement.

The Marxist Group has organised a Discussion Circle which meets regularly to discuss current political events and Marxist theory.

Any reader who is interested can obtain particulars of time, dates and meeting place, by writing to The Marxist Group, 97, Kings Cross Road, W.C.1.

THE BOOKSHOP AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS
IS OPEN DAILY FROM 2.30 TILL 9.0.

out rank and file independence. The Trade Union Congress General Council (T.U. bureaucracy, Mr. Bevin, Chairman), intends to take on this task. Let Sir Walter Citrine explain the method: in attacking the Stalinists for leading unofficial strikes he says: "The new technique is the tactic of a political party pursued with great determination and with constantly varying expedients to capture the Labour Party. Within the Trade Unions its method is to usurp the power of the democratically elected Executives, by fomenting unofficial strikes, whenever the opportunity presents itself." July issue of "Labour" (Transport House Organ).

Citrine knows quite well that the Stalinists have no longer even militant intentions. Yet he can maintain this method of attack, confident that they will not dare to organise any effective opposition.

Thus the Labour Bureaucracy will use the C.P.G.B. as a "honey" whereby the militants and revolutionaries will be crushed.

WHY THE EIGHT GENERALS WERE SHOT

THEY (the generals) wanted Germany to be embroiled in a war with other capitalist states and Russia to remain outside the conflict. Only when the capitalists were exhausted by such a war and the workers in revolt everywhere, should the Red Army march to establish a Communist state." Stalin's Memorandum ("News Chronicle," 23/6/37).

This was the bombshell which the unfeeling and ruthless bureaucracy of the Kremlin hurled amongst the hapless, politically demoralised leadership of the Comintern national sections. Instantly the "Daily Worker" in its best style of crude aggression, branded the document as a Fascist fabrication, standing on a par with the "Zinoviev letter," and availing themselves of "Reynolds News," reproved Brailsford for having failed to see through such a clumsy invention.

In the "Daily Herald," C. P. Gallagher, M.P., crossed swords with the foreign editor, Williams, in such a hotch-potch of invective and lie, that by comparison a Marxist analysis would seem a life-giving draught of clean and wholesome air, if any controversy could remain clean near Gallagher!

"Militarism is one of the most important and most vital manifestations of the life of most social systems, because it expresses in the strongest, most concentrated form, the national, cultural and class instinct of self-preservation." These words taken from Karl Liebknecht's "Militarism and Anti-Militarism," show in their Marxist lucidity, the need for such a statement as this Memorandum from Stalin, in view of the Franco Soviet pact.

Driven by its inexorable contradictions, international Capitalism to-day more than ever before, breaks into opposing segments, and without scruple each section seeks allies wherever a superiority of physical force—which is the ultimate factor deciding every social relation of power—is to be found. Such is the foundation of the Franco-Soviet pact. Keeping intact the physical basis of the pact is the constant objective of the French General Staff. When the frantic political purge of Stalin removed those whose military genius had contributed in no small way to the success of the October revolution, the traditional descendants of Levassor Sorval and Laeretelle, whose bloody suppression of the Paris Commune even to-day, still shocks the world, are shaken by the fear that the Franco Soviet pact has not the stability which they had hitherto thought. It was at this juncture that the master of intrigue overstepped himself. The French General Staff had no need to show undue concern over the previous Moscow frame-ups, but the trial of Tukhachevsky and the generals made them question the military value of a pact concluded with a State that had to shoot its General Staff for espionage and betrayal of military secrets. To save the situation, Stalin had to expose his hand to his bourgeois collaborators, which meant exposing the trial for the frame-up which it was.

Indubitably the Franco-Soviet pact had its advantages to the bourgeoisie of France, but Stalin has made it the "general line" for Stalinists of the C.I. throughout the world, a fact which the militarists of France were not slow to see, and, turning it to good account, are satisfied with nothing short of a complete renunciation of the historical relationship of revolutionaries to war, a renunciation which they took good care should become public property.

The high-minded, Liberal "News Chronicle" on July 12th, fulfilling its "duty" to its readers, taught the C.P. again that the price of bourgeois co-operation is very expensive, when they published the results of their investigation into the authenticity of the Stalin Memorandum. "It has confirmed as far as it is possible, that what has become known as the Stalin Memorandum was communicated personally by him to the head of a friendly State, who reported it verbally to members of his Cabinet. The allegation that it was a "clumsy Fascist forgery" is, we are satisfied, entirely and even ludicrously, baseless." *News Chronicle*, 12/7/37.

A deathly silence has now fallen on the Stalinist press regarding this subject. We do not accept the Memorandum as literally reflecting the objects of Tukhachevsky, who, having grown up with it, was part and parcel of the bureaucracy. But at times he had stood in opposition to Stalin, a fact proved by his book dealing with the fight against Poland, 1920, and other military articles. His removal and subsequent murder, along with the other generals, was a matter of expediency for Stalin. He saw the possibility of a time when the internal political tension between the bureaucracy and the masses, will break through the iron tyranny which he wields, and in Tukhachevsky and his section of the bureaucracy, a leadership against Stalin might have been found.

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to help us. In all countries make campaigns to help the Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain! In every Trotskyist paper an appeal for the Spanish organisation of the 4th International; In every gathering and every public meeting a collection for the Trotskyists of the country of the revolution.

The Spanish Revolution is at stake. Victory is closely linked with the creation of a new party for the 4th International. The effective solidarity of the whole international vanguard is necessary for victory.

—The Executive Committee of the Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain. Barcelona, May 29th, 1937.

The above is a translation from "La Lutte Ouvriere," 8th July 1937. This is an International document which merits the serious consideration of all revolutionaries.

THE LABOUR PARTY'S "IMMEDIATE FRAUD"

LAST month, after having attacked the basic principles and purpose of the Labour Party's "Immediate Programme," we promised to deal with it in a more detailed manner. The programme is prefaced by the ultimate aim of the Labour Party. This can, in no sense, be regarded as an immediate objective. It is the great vision of the future: the great revelation. It is the considered, scientific prognosis of the only true Socialists, the men who have forgotten more than Marx, Engels and Lenin ever knew, the men who are inspired by the divine spirit (and the workers' pennies) the prophets of Transport House.

"The Labour Party's goal is the Socialist Commonwealth." With these words the testament opens. Isn't it a brilliant beginning, comrade worker? Doesn't it make you proud to know that the men who coined that masterpiece are your leaders? Isn't it marvellous that men like old George Lansbury, who is back after making Hitler eat out of his hand; men like Herbert Morrison, whose transport scheme has made the busmen so happy and contented; and men like the Major himself, who puts the fear of God into the wicked capitalists in Parliament, could find the time to do it.

The British Empire under the softening influence of Labour Party phraseology becomes the British "Commonwealth." The British Commonwealth, when sufficient sinners are converted and Parliament is ruled by the Labour Party hosts, will experience another softening influence—it will become the Socialist Commonwealth. Do you see now, enlightened comrade, the wealth of understanding contained in those few words? Not only are the Leaders thinking about you, but they are thinking also of the poor, oppressed colonial millions who constitute our glorious Commonwealth (Empire).

To be kind, however, one has also to be cruel. If the Indians, for instance, decide that India should be ruled by the Indian workers, and start kicking out British Imperialists, the Labour Party would have to put a stop to such foolishness. They would have to send many aeroplanes (Stalin could offer a "united front" on this and supply a few bombers) and drop nasty bombs on their poor misguided comrades. Of course the bombs would be "socialist" bombs and would carry the message of the higher life. Slogans such as "share this one among you, comrades" would touch the hearts of many. The necessity of such measures should be obvious. We must all hang together (don't interpret this in the Pentonville sense), until George and 'Erb and the Major are ready to bestow their kindness far and wide, and make all the Empire one big, happy, "Socialist" family.

This is the "aim" of the Labour Party, but more wisdom pours from them. They do not merely ask us to accept their gentlemen's word, they even tell us about the economic foundation of this great Socialist "Empire." "Science has placed in our hands the means of attaining this end, but only if finance and trade, industry and agriculture, conform to a national plan under the guidance of the State." Another

masterpiece! Marx and Engels used to tell us that only the mass revolutionary strength of the workers would provide the "means of attaining this end," but now it can all be done by science. The Labour Party has the Marxists beaten to a frazzle. Nobody can argue against "science."

The first thing that will be controlled is finance. Now finance is the greatest mystery in the world. It has something to do with money, and yet when the worker in order to earn money, sweats away for forty eight hours and gets his two-pound-ten-less-insurance, he doesn't become a financier. No doubt he would like to be one, but it never works out that way. On the other hand the people who do not want to be financiers at least they don't appear to, since they don't do any work to earn money, and you can't be a financier without money—they become financiers. It's all very puzzling, because when workers try the do-nothing method, they don't become financiers that way either. But why should we bother our poor proletarian heads when the Labour Party leaders know all about it. Didn't they keep us right about the Gold Standard business a few years ago? or did they?

Some people, however, say that Lenin knew a good deal about Socialism and money. Stalin, of course, shoots anybody who, puts forward the ideas of Lenin, and calls them "fascist dogs," and since all the most respectable people nowadays say that Stalin is greater than Jesus Christ, maybe Lenin didn't know so much after all. This is what Lenin said about real money—gold—and Socialism. "When we conquer on a world scale, we shall, I think, use gold for making public lavatories in the streets of the great cities of the world. That would be the most 'just' and graphically edifying use of gold for those generations which have not forgotten that for gold ten million people were massacred and thirty million crippled in the 'great liberation' war of 1914-18, in the war for the decision of the great question, which peace was worse, the Brest peace or the Versailles peace? And for the same gold they are no doubt preparing to massacre twenty million people and make cripples out of sixty million in another war."

Well, here we have Lenin saying that in a Socialist society, gold would be used for making public conveniences. The Labour Party says that, under Socialism, gold would be the very basis of economy. Perhaps the seemingly contradictory views are not so contradictory when we look a little closer. We know where Lenin got his ideas from. In theory and practice he was the greatest exponent of Marxism. But where did the Labour Party get its ideas from? We continually hear the Leaders talking about Public Utility Corporations as being Socialist bodies. Isn't it possible they got the idea of Public Utility from the idea of Public Convenience? It seems very reasonable, because we cannot imagine a more fitting "universality" for Labour Party theoreticians, than the one which Lenin considered as the Socialist repository for capitalist gold.

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