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C O N T E N T S

Introduction	by Institut Leon Trotsky
"Revolutionary Defeatism"	by J. - P. Joubert
"How Trotsky and the Trotskyists Confronted World War II"	by Pierre Broue

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

(Translator's note: This is the introductory note, for which the Institut Leon Trotsky accepts responsibility, to issue No. 23, in September 1985, of the "Cahiers Leon Trotsky", from which the two succeeding article have been taken in translation.)

DID THE WAR "OPEN OUR EYES"?

The present issue, No. 23, of "Cahiers Leon Trotsky" is a direct result of the work on Volumes 16 to 24 of the "Oeuvres", the French edition of the writings of Leon Trotsky, apart from the easily-available books, between 1933 and 1940. However, No. 23 of the "Cahiers" has subsequently developed almost independently of even our original intentions to prepare issues covering the years 1938 - 1940.

The approach and the declaration of World War II raised before our eyes all the problems of principle and of tactics in the attitude of revolutionaries to the war. Of course, this attitude includes a re-affirmation of the attitude which Lenin formulated in World War I. But it also included the problem of the "defence of the USSR, which came inevitably during the war to influence the line, from the moment when the USSR was linked to one bloc of capitalist powers against another. We discovered, from the letters at least as much from the documents intended for publication, in Trotsky's archives, that nothing was simple, even for him and - to put it another way, that we were dealing with questions simpler than they were then believed to be.

As we went along, we accumulated statements and became aware of contradictions and clues. In brief, we reaped a harvest which really did not properly belong either in the introductions or in the notes to the volumes of the "Oeuvres". Yet it was important to collect, to present systematically, to compare and to discuss these materials. This became clear to us, and we decided to prepare an issue of the "Cahiers" on the war. This we started in May 1984.

"Revolutionary Defeatism" was one of the principal questions which these documents presented. To speak frankly, it seemed to us that Trotsky's defence of revolutionary defeatism in the 1930's rested on a formulation which the Trotskyist militants and organisations of the period did not all interpret in the same way. Moreover, his formulation seemed to us to be slightly different from those which Lenin had been able to provide while he was alive, or the Communist International after his death. Furthermore, it seemed to us that the sustained attention which was devoted in 1939 - 40 to the discussion with those who were for "defeatism in the USSR, at the time of the crisis in the SWP, had concealed to some extent other unquestionably real differences, such as those among the partisans of the "defence of the USSR" themselves. How could one defend the USSR, without becoming to the same extent a "defencist" in one's own country?

Jean - Paul Joubert has undertaken a real study of "revolutionary defeatism", since Lenin first used the term in writing at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, when he was clarifying the revolutionary ranks during the war. Joubert has noted that the slogan was withdrawn, and disappeared from the foreground, after February 1917, and he offers an explanation for this. He has established that the slogan was effaced and relatively reduced to a very secondary place in the arsenal or - if you prefer it - the "theoretical armament" of the Third International in its early years. This long eclipse was followed by a powerful revival with the coming of the "Third Period". "Revolutionary Defeatism" was later consigned to "the waste-basket of history" by the Communist Parties, which approved, in Stalin's words, "the efforts of the French Government on behalf of its national defence", after the Stalin-Laval Pact. But then the slogan - if it had ever really been one - was all the more highly esteemed by the Trotskyists, who wanted to be the continuators of the Bolshevism which Stalin was rejecting. Therefore, Joubert has followed the scent through the International Communist League and then the Fourth International, through the theses "War and the Fourth International" and the discussion of them. This discussion was no doubt a passionate one, but very little of it has survived. Through the contributions of Vereeken and other left critics, the story goes forward to the splendid "Manifesto" of May 1940.

Joubert's work called for an extension, at least in the form of a sketch, of what was concretely the history of the Fourth International during world war II. The thinking of which "Cahiers Leon Trotsky" stands in need has benefitted from the stimulus of the "Oeuvres" and of their preparation on that period also. This has been particularly true for the work on Volumes 23 and 24 of the "Oeuvres", which will include the unfinished fragments which were found in Trotsky's dictaphone or on his desk. At once we understood that we were facing new elements in his thought. Some of these were already known, but we now had new insights into them. Trotsky was outlining an audacious policy, which was not a denial of that of 1914 - 18 but, on the contrary, sought to extend and develop and perfect it. Here we have some dozens of lines, which reached those for whom they were intended only too late, which they sometimes overlooked and which, sometimes shocked those who received them to the point that they deliberately censored them.

These thoughts were, in fact, so surprising, even to those who well knew Trotsky's creative faculty, that some experienced observers saw in them nothing more than prophecies emerging from his astonishingly sharp mind.

It was Pierre Broue who began the study of these texts. He set himself the task of presenting Trotsky's perspectives of world war II, and then of outlining a practical test by which to verify them, on the basis of the revolution in Greece. The Greek revolution rose up against the German occupation, was cut down by the British occupation and was stabbed in the back by Stalin. He then had to attempt the difficult exercise of trying to study the policy of the Trotskyists during the war, from this

viewpoint, in other words, to compare it with the policy which Trotsky outlined. In the last analysis, this exercise led to revealing the divergences between the two methods and, ultimately, two lines, which often diverged and sometimes came into actual opposition. Pierre Broue's conclusion suggests that the few people who read these texts did not understand them, were not convinced by them, and carried on energetically and courageously, at the risk of their lives, a policy during the war which Trotsky had not believed to be capable of leading them to victory - nor even to achieving the first condition for victory, the construction of the revolutionary party.

None the less, the question is far from having been settled. Pierre Broue's article makes no claim to having settled it, but only to opening a discussion. (We should remind our readers that the signed articles in "Cahiers Leon Trotsky" are the responsibility only of their authors and only commit them.) The profoundly important debate on this question has never taken place; it remains to be undertaken now. The other documents which are published in issue No. 23, Marc Loris' article of 1942, the resolution of the National Committee of the SWP of the same period and that of the International Executive Committee on the "national question in Europe", all prove how important the debate was. "Cahiers Leon Trotsky" invites contributions to it today.

The article on "Munich" was part of our original plan. None of the editors saw how it would develop and how it would take its place with the other articles. Our original intention had been simply to show the other side of the accepted mythology, how Munich was prepared against its first victims, the working people of Czechoslovakia. We began with the intention merely to re-establish an historical truth, which is as elementary as it has become unknown. But the general strike, which expressed the movement of an entire class and, around that class, of an entire people, a strike which no one called in an organised way, but which everyone without exception joined, the spontaneous ^{demonstration} of hundreds of thousands of people in the centre of Prague, the demand of these people for a military government, because they knew that they must fight, arms in hand, when they were confronted by their worst enemy, Hitler - all this takes us back straight to Trotsky's remark in 1940:

"The workers want to fight against fascism, but it is not possible to fight fascism in the fashion of Petain. That is why we must become 'militarists', socialist revolutionary proletarian militarists".

Irrespective of our intentions, the link between Kostal's article and that of Broue imposed itself, by way of the "defeatism" of ^{Pétain} and Sirovy, which was not revolutionary at all.

Finally, Guillaume Bourgeois has applied himself, in an original study, to the "turn" in the Communist International in 1939. This subject has until now been both neglected and badly handled; he seems to us to have made a substantial contrib-

We have also considered the Manouchian group, and have reviewed books, because these matters are relevant to what is happening at the present time.

Institut Leon Trotsky

REVOLUTIONARY DEFEATISM

by Jean - Paul Joubert

The formula "revolutionary defeatism is one of those which led to sharp controversies among socialists, in obscure meetings, around the beginning of the century. No doubt it is different from most of those formulae at any rate in the one respect that it has had an astonishing destiny. No formula is more universally known. None has been used more during the succeeding decades. None has received so many different - and even contradictory - explanations. We do not concern ourselves here with its "vulgar" interpretation, which, in the final analysis, is that held by the police, that any "defeatist" is an agent of the enemy.

Study of the writing of Trotsky about world war II have led us to question ourselves about precisely what this formula means, about the different meanings which it can have, about its place in the theoretical arsenal of the Communist International or of revolutionary organisations in general, since it first was coined, in the Tsarist Empire, at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, and from then up to the outbreak in 1939 of world war II.

* * *

The Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904. Lenin immediately declared for a victory of Japan. He regarded Japan as the incarnation of capitalist progress over Tsarist reaction (1). On January 14, 1905 he expressed his delight at the fall of Port Arthur. He regarded "progressive", "advanced" Asia as having dealt an irreparable blow to old, "reactionary", "backward" Europe. The Japanese bourgeoisie were carrying out a "revolutionary" task, at which the international proletariat could only rejoice.

Lenin was not alone in holding this opinion. Nearly all the parties of the Second International shared it, as did an important fraction of the Russian bourgeoisie, who hoped that revolutionary changes would result from a military defeat of Tsarism. Moreover, this viewpoint was fundamentally a return to "the old viewpoint" of Marx and Engels. In their time they had hoped for the victory of the young bourgeoisie in struggles against pre-capitalist classes. They had believed that the proletariat should regard the young bourgeoisie as allies, even when it was organising and fighting for its own interests (2). We also know that Marx and Engels regarded Russia as "the greatest reserve of reaction", the centre and bastion of counter-revolution in Europe.

They were, therefore, above all "against Tsarism" the pillar of the Holy Alliance of 1815, into whose arms, they believed, all the European Governments would ultimately fling themselves in order to stave off the danger of revolution. They constantly repeated in 1848 that the democracy must fight "a revolutionary war" against Tsarism, in order to rid itself of "this nightmare". Once Russian autocracy had been brought

down, the forces of democracy in Europe would find themselves liberated and the coming of the proletarian revolution would be speeded up (3).

Lenin does not appear, therefore, to have introduced anything new with his "revolutionary defeatism" in 1904. However, when he introduced the same formula again, in 1914, in relation to world war I, he did introduce something new. To be sure, his characterisation of this war as an "imperialist" war had its roots deep in the whole heritage of ideas of the Second International and, especially, in the Stuttgart and Basel decisions. But differences emerged on this common basis when it came to action. The celebrated amendment which Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and Martov presented at Stuttgart, requiring the socialists to make use of the crisis created by the war in order to rouse the masses and thereby to hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule, expresses in reality the opinion of the international Left rather than that of the organisation as a whole (4).

This was the basis on which Lenin formulated the policy which he called "defeatist". He intended it, at first, for Russia alone, at the time when the war was declared, and based it on the principle, "when two thieves fall out, let them both perish!". He wrote, on August 24, 1914, that the duty of Russian Social-Democrats was to wage a pitiless struggle against Great Russian chauvinism, and that the defeat of the Russian armies would be the lesser evil (5). Already, however, he was generalising the formula, and declaring that the proletariat should "desire" the defeat of "its own" government, contributing to it in every imperialist country. He explained himself clearly on this point in his article, "On Defeat in the Imperialist War":

"Wartime revolutionary action against one's own government indubitably means not only desiring its defeat, but really facilitating such a defeat... A revolution in wartime means civil war: the conversion of a war between governments into a civil war is, on the one hand, facilitated by military reverses ("defeats") of governments: on the other hand, one cannot actually strive for such a conversion without thereby facilitating defeat." (See Lenin: Collected Works, Vol. 21, pages 275ff.) (6)

We can say, if we are very precise, that Lenin used the term "defeatism" at this time in more than one sense. In the first place, he means that the proletariat, in its fight against its own government, must not stop in the face of a defeat which may be precipitated by revolutionary agitation. He believed, also, that the military defeat of "its own" government helped the civil war of the proletariat. Did Lenin regard the formula as a slogan? Did he think that the attitude which he defined could have a short-term influence on events? In other words, was his polemic about the formula directed at socialist militants or at the masses? After the war, he replied to this question when he said that it was "impossible" to "answer" the war by the revolution in the literal sense of the term. He stated:

"We must explain the real situation to the people, show them that war is hatched in the greatest secrecy and that the ordinary workers' organisations, even if they call themselves revolutionary organisations, are utterly helpless in the face of a really impending war. We must explain to the people again and again in the most concrete manner possible how matters stood in the last war, and why ^{they} could not be otherwise. We must take special pains to explain that the question of 'defence of the fatherland' will inevitably arise, and that the overwhelming majority of the working people will inevitably decide it in favour of their bourgeoisie." (7)

The position of Lenin cannot, therefore, be summed up in the one word "defeatism". He regarded revolutionary defeatism as the result of a strategic line - which he was not alone in recommending - "the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war". When we study his writings closely, we find that he refers to "defeatism" less frequently than the subsequent use of the word by commentators might lead us to expect. In the final analysis, Lenin did not make acceptance of "revolutionary defeatism" a pre-condition, or even a preliminary, to joint activity: the formula is found neither in the unity proposals which he addressed to the Nashe Slovo group in 1915, nor in the draft resolution and manifesto of the "Zimmerwald Left". Zinoviev, who, as we know, was Lenin's faithful imitator at this time, defended Lenin's policy during the war as follows, in his preface to the French edition of their writings in 1918 ("Contre¹⁹Courant"):

"To transform the imperialist war into civil war was the essential slogan which we ^{launched} at the beginning of the war... It was a great source of satisfaction to us to receive a letter from Karl Liebknecht, at the end of the first Zimmerwald Conference, ending thus: 'Civil War, not civil peace - that is our slogan'".(8)

It is clear, then, that Lenin's "revolutionary defeatism" - which was not a slogan - was only one of the positions which the revolutionary internationalists defended. Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky did not adopt this formula. None the less, they declared themselves, without ambiguity, to be opposed to both imperialist camps, to any vote of war-credits and any "civil peace", for irreconcilable class struggle in time of war. They emphasised the victory of the revolution, and counter-posed it to the victory of their own imperialism. But they advocated the defeat of the latter only by the revolution.

In the course of the debate about the Brest-Litovsk peace in 1918, and in a polemic with the Socialist-Revolutionary orator, Lenin declared unequivocally:

"We were defeatists at the time of the Tsar, but we were not defeatists at the time of Tseretelli and Chernov."(9)

Of course, the fact that we were not defeatists - and we shall search in vain for the formula in Lenin's writings from the February Revolution onwards - by no means meant that we supported "defencism". In opposition to those Bolsheviki who believed

that they could go beyond the stage of rejecting national defence, he clearly stated in his farewell letter to the Swiss workers:

"We abide unconditionally by our declaration, which appeared in the Central Organ of our Party, 'Sozial-Demokrat' (No. 47, October 13, 1915, published in Geneva). In it we stated that, should the revolution prove victorious in Russia, and should a republican government come to power, a government intent on continuing the imperialist war, a war in alliance with the imperialist bourgeoisie of England and France, a war for the seizure of Constantinople, Armenia, Galicia, etc., we would resolutely oppose such a government, and would be against 'the defence of the fatherland' in such a war."(10)

At the time of the putsch of Kornilov, a few weeks before the October Revolution, Lenin advanced the following argument:

"It is my conviction that those who become unprincipled are people who (like Volodarsky) slide into defencism or (like other Bolsheviks) into a bloc with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, into supporting the Provisional Government. Their attitude is completely devoid of principle and absolutely wrong. We shall become defencists only after the transfer of power to the proletariat, after a peace offer, after the secret treaties have been denounced and every link with the banks has been broken."(11)

Was the fact that Lenin no longer advocated "defeatism", while at the same time he firmly condemned "defencism", an abandonment of his earlier policy? By no means. In 1917 Lenin was no longer addressing small limited groups of militants or cadres in 1917 (as had happened in 1914 and 1915). In 1917 he was addressing the masses. The question was no longer one of ideological clarification. The question was the advance to the conquest of power. We can find another example of this difference in his attitude to the slogans of "peace". After having energetically opposed them, essentially because they were being used within a pacifist orientation, he now took them up again, and linked them with the demand for power, arguing that the Provisional Government with its association with imperialism could not stop the war or change its character. It was necessary for state power to pass into the hands of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, for a durable, democratic peace without annexations.

Lenin outlined another formulation in 1917, and this signifies the change in the situation itself. He began, in fact, to pose the question of the "revolutionary war". What about the defeats of Tsarist imperialism? They had happened, and had given rise to a revolutionary situation. Defeatism had contributed to turning the imperialist war into a civil war. It was no longer a useful formula, in a situation of open civil war or in the process of becoming open civil war. Lenin therefore posed the question of the revolutionary war; the defence of the fatherland and the revolutionary war would soon be on the order of the day. He had written in his farewell letter to the Swiss workers:

"In No. 47 of 'Sozial-Democrat' we gave a clear, direct answer to the question which naturally arises: what would our Party do if the revolution immediately placed it in power? Our answer was... we would be forced to wage a revolutionary war against the German - and not only the German - bourgeoisie. And we would wage this war. We are not pacifists. We are opposed to imperialist wars over the division of the spoils among the capitalists. But we have always considered it absurd for the revolutionary proletariat to disavow revolutionary wars which may prove necessary in the interests of Socialism." (See "Collected Works", Vol. 23, p. 370, English ed.)

During the six years which followed the Russian Revolution, the term "defeatism" was hardly ever used in any of the major documents of Lenin or of the Communist International. It does not appear in the resolutions of the First Four congresses of the Communist International. We do not find it in the journal "Communist International". The principal programmatic texts in this period of the Bolshevik Party as well as of the Communist International were all drafted by Trotsky and were all adopted without amendment; they include the resolution of the 8th Bolshevik Party Congress (1919), the Manifesto of the First Congress of the Communist International (1919), the Manifesto and Programme of the Second Congress of the Communist International (1920), the Thesis of the Third Congress (1921), the report on war at the Fourth Congress (1922) and the Manifesto of the Fifth Congress (1924). None of these mentions "revolutionary defeatism". However, their argument is centred round "transforming imperialist war into civil war" and the formula of Liebknecht, "the main enemy is in our own country".

However, the term "revolutionary defeatism" re-appears. It is in the writings of Zinoviev in the course of the struggle of the "troika", Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin, against Trotsky and "Trotskyism" and for the so-called "Bolshevisation" of the Communist Parties. To be sure, it is not by chance that the term was used again after six years of eclipse in an article in "Communist International" immediately after Lenin's death, which blandly mentions the past divergences between Lenin and Trotsky. Thereafter, "revolutionary defeatism" was systematically advanced as a principle of "Leninism" as against "Trotskyism" (12). In August 1928 the Sixth Congress of the Communist International adopted the "Theses on the Struggle Against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists": these theses declared:

"The proletariat fights when there is a war between imperialist states. Its ^{view} point is then that of defeatism towards its own bourgeoisie. It seeks to transform the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie. The proletariat of the imperialist countries adopts the same principled position in relation to a war of oppression directed against a national revolutionary movement and especially against colonial peoples. The proletariat must act in the same way if there is a revolutionary war with imperialists threatening the workers' dictatorship."(13)

This resolution was adopted when the "Third Period" was already in full swing. It omitted to make clear what would be the policy of the Communists in an imperialist conflict in which the Soviet Union was allied to one of the groups of belligerents. However, the problem was soon to be posed concretely. Hitler seized power in Germany. We know how the Stalinised Communist International then replied to the question: it decided that a war in which the Soviet Union was fighting for its existence would not be an "imperialist" war. Consequently it called upon the worker in the countries allied to the USSR to form a "sacred union" with their own ruling classes, in order to defend the "socialist fatherland".

* * *

This "turn" in the Communist International in the 1930's meant that "revolutionary defeatism" became a formula for debate among the opponents of war and of Stalinism. It divided, in particular, Trotsky's supporters in the International Communist League and the Fourth International. The basic text is entitled "War and the Fourth International". It consists of a draft by Trotsky, which was modified in the course of discussions lasting several months, as a contribution to the elaboration of the platform of the Fourth International.

We must mention, first, that Trotsky saw no necessity for using the term "revolutionary defeatism" in the document, though it was a long one and was intended to lay down the programmatic positions of the Fourth International. We do not, of course have all the documents about this question that would be needed to clear the problem up conclusively. However, we do have several contributory sources. In the Trotsky Archives at Harvard, we find the first draft of para. 51 of the theses: Trotsky had drafted it as follows:

"Defeatism is not a mere practical slogan, around which we can mobilise the mass during the war. The defeat of one's own national army can be an aim only in a single case, that is, when we have a capitalist army fighting against a workers state or marching against a developing revolution. But in the case of a war between two capitalist powers, the proletariat of neither of them can set itself the defeat of its own national army as a task."(14)

The leader of the German Section, Bauer, with the support of Leonetti, criticised for distancing himself too far from "revolutionary defeatism", in the name of the "defence of the Soviet Union". It is probable that he proposed an amendment. We find an echo of the discussion in a letter from Bauer which is in Abern's archives the Library of Social History in New York. There is also a letter from Trotsky to the International Secretariat: this is dated January 5, 1934 and includes these li

"I cannot accept the amendment on defeatism

a) because it says that we must desire the defeat, without saying whether we must do anything and, if so, precisely what, in order to bring it about.

The Social-Democrats in exile are full of zeal for someone to fight Hitler,

and to relieve them of the necessity of doing anything:

- b) because the defeatist formula of Lenin in 1914 - 1916 had nothing yet to do with war between capitalist states and/^aWorkers' state, and did not draw any of the theoretical consequences which flow from that. Under Kerensky, Lenin was already declaring, 'We are no longer defeatists'. But since the distinctions which I drew in the first sentences of para. 51 disturb you, I strike them out completely, and we may perhaps succeed later in agreeing on the precise statements which we need."(15)

It was in the existence of the workers' state that Trotsky saw the new problem to which an answer had to be given. For many years Trotsky and the Left Opposition had firmly laid down their position in the event of an attack on the USSR. In 1926 Trotsky had recalled the example of Clemenceau, in reply to Stalin and Molotov, who wanted to exploit the war danger to shut the mouths of the Opposition. (Clemenceau had not allowed himself to be overawed by either governmental persecution or demagogic appeals for national unity. He had developed a systematic agitation against the French Government, which he accused of lack of daring. He justified this agitation by arguing that it was precisely because the Germans were marching on Paris that the government had to be overthrown, in order to ensure that the country was really defended.) Trotsky explained that, if as a result of the incompetence or hesitation of the Soviet Government, the imperialist enemy were to advance into the heart of Russia, at precisely that moment the Left Opposition would intensify its efforts to change the regime, because it was the most resolute defender of the Soviet Union.

In 1934 Trotsky was obliged to declare that in the coming world war the weakening of the world revolutionary movement resulting from the policies of Stalin would to all appearances oblige the USSR to ally itself with one or other of the existing imperialist camps. This new situation demanded an appropriate tactic. Trotsky wrote in "War and the Fourth International":

"44. Remaining the determined and devoted defender of the workers' state in the struggle with imperialism, the international proletariat will not 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 proletariat to sabotage the sending of American munitions to the USSR. But the ^{US} proletariat of a country fighting against the USSR would be absolutely obliged to resort to actions of this sort, strikes, sabotage, etc." (See "Writings of Leon

Trotsky (1933 - 34)", p. 315, Pathfinder Press, New York)(16)

Did Trotsky make the concessions which Bauer and Leonetti demanded, as some say he did? In any case, he seems to have stepped back in order to avoid the conflict. He agreed in any case that the formula of "defeatism" could be used. But he warned his comrades against using it carelessly:

"The formula of Lenin, according to which 'defeat in the lesser evil', does not mean that the defeat of a given country is an evil less than that of the enemy country. It means that a military defeat, which results from the development of the revolutionary movement is infinitely more beneficial for the proletariat and the people as a whole than a military victory which is secured thanks to 'social peace'. Karl Liebknecht gave us a formula for proletarian policy in time of war which has never been surpassed: 'The enemy is in our own country. The transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war is the general strategic task, to which the whole of the work of a proletarian party must be subjected during the war...' (17)

Trotsky did not succeed in getting his point of view as a whole adopted in the theses on "War and the Fourth International". From that time onwards he was to find means to spell out his positions in relation to specific questions. The first of these was the question of "just", "progressive" wars, in which the question of defeatism does not arise.

As we know, Lenin never excluded the possibility of "just wars", "progressive", "national", "revolutionary" wars for "the defence of the fatherland". He explained all this many times during world war I, especially in discussion with Inessa Arman and Zinoviev, for whom the "imperialist" character of the war implied refusing to support "national" wars. Of course, Lenin pointed out that in world war I this "national" character was represented "only" by the war of Serbia against Austria, and that it consequently had a secondary character, which did not affect the generally "imperialist" character of the war. These essential remarks by Lenin were of little practical importance at the time they were uttered. But they did become important afterwards.

The events in Spain (1936 - 39) provided Trotsky with the opportunity to elaborate the attitude of revolutionaries in a civil war directed against a developing revolution, with the government under attack remaining a "bourgeois" one. On April 17, 1937, in the course of the work of the Commission of Enquiry into the Charges Made Against Trotsky in the Moscow Trials, Benjamin Stolberg, the New York author and journalist, asked him:

"With which side would you side at the present time in Spain?"

Trotsky replied:

"Every Trotskyist in Spain must be a good soldier, on the side of the Left. Naturally, it is so elementary a question - it is not a question worth discussing. A leader... of the working class cannot enter the bourgeois government. We did not enter the government of Kerensky in Russia. While we defended Kere- sky against Kornilov, we did not enter his government. As I declared, I am ready to enter into an alliance with Stalin against the fascists or an alliance with Jouhaux against the French fascists. It is an elementary question." (S "The Case of Leon Trotsky", the report by the Commission of Enquiry, published Secker and Warburg, London, 1937, p. 296.)

The civil rights lawyer from Washington D.C., John F. Finerty, then asked Trotsky:

"If you were in power in Russia today, and your help was asked by the loyalists Spain, would you condition yourself on the basis that the land was given to the peasants and the factories to the workers?"

Trotsky replied:

"Not on that condition, not on this question. The first question would be the attitude of the Spanish revolutionary party. I would say: 'No political alliance with the bourgeoisie', as the first condition. The second: you must be the best soldiers against the fascists. Thirdly, you must say to the soldiers, to the soldiers on the other side and to the peasants: 'We must transform our country into a people's country'. Then, when we win the masses, we will throw the bourgeoisie out of office and then we will be in power and we will make the social revolution." (18)

He wrote a document entitled "Against 'Defeatism' in Spain" on September 14, 1937. His problem was to answer questions which a Los Angeles militant had put to him. Without going so far as to take up the position of certain groups which saw in the civil war only a struggle between two bourgeois clans - by analogy with an "imperialist" war - and who took a position in favour of "revolutionary defeatism", a group of American militants came out against any political or material support to the loyalist bourgeois government: Trotsky answered them as follows:

1. The difference between Franco and Negrin is the difference between decayed bourgeois democracy and fascism:
2. Everywhere and always, wherever and whenever revolutionary workers are unable to overthrow the bourgeois regime immediately, they defend even rotten bourgeois democracy, but by their own methods, that is, by the methods of the revolutionary class struggle...
3. The workers defend bourgeois democracy (e.g. Popular Fronts, electoral blocs or governmental coalitions etc.) but by their own methods, that is, by the methods of revolutionary class struggle. Thus, while participating in the military struggle against fascism, they continue at the same time to defend the

own organisations, their rights and their interests against the bourgeois-democratic government." (19)

Trotsky then explained:

"The defence of bourgeois democracy against fascism is only a tactical episode, subordinated to our line, which was to overthrow bourgeois democracy and to install the dictatorship of the proletariat."

However tactical the distinction might be, it was none the less essential, in Trotsky's opinion. He added:

"One can object to this: during a war between two bourgeois states, the revolutionary proletariat, independent of the political regime in its country, must take the position that 'the defeat of our own government is the lesser evil'. This rule is equally applicable to a civil war in which two bourgeois governments confront each other, is it not? It is not! In a war between two bourgeois states, the object of the struggle is imperialist competition and not the struggle between democracy and fascism. In the Spanish civil war, the question is democracy or fascism." (See "The Spanish Revolution (1931 - 1939), published by Pathfinder Press, New York, p. 283. However, the text in this English-language edition of Trotsky's writings on Spain is incomplete. The editor has omitted the section in which Trotsky explained what he meant when he characterized Negrin and Stalin as "defeatists" in the Spanish civil war. The full text can be found, in French, in Pierre Broue, "La Revolution Espagnole (1930 - 1939)", Editions de Minuit, Paris, p. 431).

Trotsky's distinction shows that, in his opinion, we could not be "defeatists" in Spain, any more than we could be "neutral", but, on the contrary, we must be "defencists":

"We are 'defencists': the 'defeatists' are Negrin, Stain and Co. We take part in the struggle against Franco as the best soldiers and at the same time, in the interests of defeating fascism, we agitate for the social revolution, and we prepare to bring down the defeatist government of Negrin."

This "defencist" task is not restricted to the people who are actually fighting in Spain. It is an international task:

"12. Let us take an example. Two ships with armaments and munitions start from France or from the United States, one for Franco and the other for Negrin. What should be the attitude of the workers? To sabotage both ships? Or only the one for Franco? We are not neutral. We will let the ship with the munitions for the Negrin government pass. We have no illusions: from these bullets only nine out of every ten would go against the fascists; at least one would go against our comrades. But out of those marked for Franco, ten out of every ten would go to our comrades. We are not neutral..." (20)

The second example has to do with the Sino-Japanese conflict. Thanks to the study which Pierre Broue has devoted to Chen Duxiu, we know that this question deeply divided the Chinese Trotskyists. In general Chen supported a "patriotic" orientation: this gave rise to energetic attacks denouncing his "opportunism" and "capitulation". From the first incidents onwards, Trotsky took his stand alongside the great Chinese revolutionary: his reaction was immediate: a press statement declared that the Trotskyists throughout the world were on the side of China and of the Chinese people in the just war against Japanese imperialism. He wrote:

"If there exists in the world a just war, it is the war of the Chinese people against its oppressors. All workers' organisations, all progressive forces in China, without abandoning their programmes or their independence, will carry out to the end their duty in the war of liberation, regardless of their attitude toward the government of Chiang Kai-shek."(21)

He declared, in a discussion with Li Furen on August 11, 1937 (in which he criticised some of the formulations of his Chinese comrades):-

"Japanese workers' organisations have no right to be patriotic, but the Chinese have a right."(22)

These statements, at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War, provoked opposition in the Trotskyist ranks. Trotsky answered it firmly:

"We never have, and we never shall, place all wars on the same plane. Marx and Engels supported the revolutionary war of the Irish against Britain, and that of the Poles against the Tsar, even though the leaders in these two national wars were mostly bourgeois and sometimes even feudalists, and in any case were Catholic reactionaries. When Abd El-Krim revolted against France, the democrats and social-democrats spoke disdainfully about the struggle of a 'savage tyrant' against 'democracy'. The party of Leon Blum defended this standpoint. However, we Marxists and Bolsheviks regarded the war of the Rif against imperialist domination as a progressive war. Lenin wrote hundreds of pages to show that we must distinguish between the imperialist countries and the colonial and semi-colonial nations, which form the great majority of humanity. To speak of 'revolutionary defeatism' in general, without distinguishing between oppressor countries and oppressed peoples, is to turn Bolshevism into a wretched caricature and to place this caricature at the service of imperialism."(23)

Trotsky was specially definite in the case of China, but we can generalise from it. In other documents he considered the case of a war between "democratic" Britain and a semi-colonial country such as Brazil, with a fascist-type government. He defended the standpoint that revolutionaries must support the just war of the oppressed people, without regard to the political complexion of their government. Likewise,

at the time of the war between Italy and Abyssinia, he believed that it was correct to support Ethiopia (Abyssinia) against Italy, without regard to the reactionary, medieval character of the government of the Negus, the King of Ethiopia, and at the same time denouncing "sanctions" which expressed the policies of the imperialist powers.

Evidently, the most complex question arose from the case of an "imperialist" was, in which the USSR would be involved and would be in an alliance with one of the imperialist camps. The "defeatist" formula of Lenin had not been worked out to deal with such a situation. The discussion which "War and the Fourth International" had started in 1934 opened up again on this question. Trotsky's statement to the Commission of Enquiry (Dewey Commission), in reply to a question from Stolberg about what he would advocate in the event of a war in which the USSR would be allied with France, occasioned new discussions... and new conflicts. This is what Trotsky replied to Stolberg:

"In France I would remain in opposition to the government, and would systematically develop this opposition. In Germany I would do anything I could to sabotage the war-machinery. They are two different things. In Germany and in Japan, I would apply military methods, as far as I am able, to fight, oppose and injure the military machinery of Japan, to disorganise it, both in Germany and Japan. In France it is political opposition to the bourgeoisie and the preparation of the proletarian revolution. Both are revolutionary methods. But in Germany and Japan I have as my immediate aim the disorganisation of the whole machinery. In France I have the aim of the proletarian revolution."(24)

This declaration by Trotsky was developed in an article by Klement in December 1937. It also drew down upon him a vigorous criticism from Georges Vereecken, the leader of the Belgian P.S.R. Vereecken wrote on December 15, 1937, that Trotsky's reply permitted the belief that:

"Trotsky does not hold the opinion that we must be defeatists in France."

Vereecken went on to discuss the position of the French Section:

"What should the POI do? There are two solutions which, in practice, come down to one single one. The POI will not sabotage the war-machine of French imperialism. It will not be defeatist. In a word, it will remain neutral in relation to the war-machine. This will mean that it will facilitate the victory of French imperialism, or that it will be consistent and struggle for the victory of 'its own' country. The proper name for this is 'joining the sacred union'"
(25)

The International Secretariat replied to this major accusation, through Klement, and Trotsky un-reservedly supported Klement.

Klement did not agree with Vereecken's definition of revolutionary defeatism, because Vereecken thought that it was the same as military sabotage. Klement drew attention to the fact that this definition was consistent neither with the position of Lenin in 1914 - 16 nor with that of the Fourth International. The latter had always stressed that revolutionary defeatism does not consist of "blowing up bridges nor of terrorist actions against the General Staff itself, but of continuing the class-war in time of war. This social and political struggle takes on a military character only at its highest point, that of the armed insurrection and the civil war.

Klement and Trotsky strongly attacked Vereecken for regarding revolutionary defeatism as being the same as sabotage. They saw here not merely an incorrect definition of defeatism, but still more a sign of refusal to take into account the fact that the coming war would not be "imperialist" on every side, unlike world war I. Therefore the proletariat must recognise the progressive character of one of the camps. If it started from that point, it could not apply just one single tactic. The proletariat was in the difficult position of having to combine revolutionary defeatism with support for progressive wars. The Stalinists and Social-Democrats were making the situation all the more difficult by their efforts to justify the "sacred union". The proletariat had to recognise the progressive character of certain struggles. It could not be victorious, as in the imperialist camps, at the price of military defeat. On the contrary, it could be victorious only by way of the military victory of the camp which was waging a just war, i.e. colonial and semi-colonial countries such as Abyssinia and China, workers' states such as the USSR and democracies waging civil war against fascism, as in Spain.

What was new in Trotsky's answers to the Dewey Commission (Commission of Enquiry) was that the struggle for the victory of the camp of the oppressed must be complemented by the use of military sabotage within the camp of their enemies. For example, the workers of Germany or Japan would sabotage the military machine of Germany to defend the USSR, and that of Japan to defend China. In that case, the masses would understand that such activity, and the defeat of their own country, far from being a "lesser evil", could become an objective. When the war takes on such a character as this, the proletariat has the duty not only to struggle for the revolution through "defeatism", but also to sabotage the military machine of the hostile imperialism for the benefit of its

These clarifications brought out more and more sharply the relationship between the defence of the USSR, that of the colonial and semi-colonial countries and, in civil wars, the defence of democracy. They likewise made it possible to distinguish fully revolutionary defeatism from military sabotage, which is a method of ensuring the immediate military defence of the ally of the proletariat. What remained to be spelled out were the tasks of the proletariat in the imperialist countries allied to the USSR. Vereecken had in fact accused Trotsky, the International Secretariat and Klement of preparing to integrate the proletariat into the "sacred union" in the

countries allied to the USSR.

Trotsky accepted full responsibility for what he had said before the Dewey Commission. This is clear from a letter which he wrote to Jan van Heijenoort, on January 2, 1940. He explained that the question at the heart of the differences was how to "know whether or not we have an obligation to defend the USSR... in case of war, without abandoning revolutionary opposition, and, if so, by what means". He stressed that reactionary struggles and progressive struggles are linked together in an international conflict, with the result that the tasks of the proletariat are combined and are necessarily different, according to the country. Trotsky laid down that the proletariat had the duty to sabotage the military machine of imperialism for the benefit of its allies who are waging a just war. Klement laid down, however, that military sabotage for the benefit of the non-imperialist enemy of one's own bourgeoisie could not be extended for the benefit of the imperialist ally of one's own bourgeoisie. He gave the example of a war in which the USSR was allied with France at war with Germany. The German workers must try to disorganise the Eastern Front in order to help the USSR. But in France, the ally of the USSR, as well as in Germany on the Western Front, as Klement stressed, this did not mean either sabotage or aiming at defeat. It did mean pursuing the class struggle and the struggle for the revolution without hesitation in the face of the eventual consequences.

Finally, the essence of the contributions of Trotsky and of Klement to the 1937 - 1938 polemic is to be explained by their conviction that the coming war would be worldwide and that the USSR would necessarily be involved as an ally of one of the imperialist camps. In these conditions the formula of "revolutionary defeatism" did not suffice. It did not answer ^{precisely} the crucial question. Moreover, it was precisely on the question of the "defence of the USSR" that the crisis broke out after the conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact. Under the pressure of public opinion, an important section of the Socialist Workers' Party in USA, led by Burnham and Shachtman, began to argue that the event was important enough to justify questioning the traditional analysis of the "nature of the USSR" and, consequently its defence. Trotsky regarded the Pact as an unprincipled manoeuvre, which revealed the weakness of the Soviet bureaucracy and its hope of avoiding involvement in the war. He did not think, however, that this cynical agreement - for which there was no lack of precedents in Stalin's policies - was such as to call into question the social bases of the USSR. He continued to think that the Fourth International must defend the progressive social regime of the USSR, the "conquests of October", by the methods of the class struggle, while at the same time it waged a pitiless struggle to prepare the overthrow of the Kremlin oligarchy by the Soviet workers and peasants, through all the variations of alliances and military fronts. The subject of the debate is so well known, and documents so accessible, that we need not return to it here.

* * *

We have seen the reasons why Trotsky felt obliged on occasions to refine the word

"defeatism", and even to refrain from using it. But, at the same time, he powerfully defended this same "defeatism" against those for whom the coming war would be one between "democracy" and "fascism" and who believed that the proletariat must line up in the camp of the democracies.

The 1934 theses had already stressed that the war would not be a conflict between democracy and fascism, but a new struggle for a new share-out of the world and a new re-distribution of colonies. The theses pointed out that both camps included democratic as well as fascist states and that, while revolutionaries have the duty always of defending democracy against their "own" government, they can never repeat the social-democratic treachery of supporting their "own" imperialism against the foreign imperialism.

In the course of the argument at the end of the 1930's, Trotsky concluded that he must vigorously attack the interpretation according to which he was advocating two distinct policies, one for democratic countries and the other for fascist countries, on the ground that in the last analysis the war would not be a competition between opposing "political regimes", but a social struggle to re-divide the world, to subjugate China and to re-conquer the Soviet territories.

On March 11, 1939, he polemicised against the Palestinian group Haor, which made defeatism obligatory only in the fascist countries and renounced it in the democratic countries. He characterised this position as "a dangerous step towards social-patriotism", remarking that it failed to take into account the place of the USSR, which, it was not excluded, Stalin might line up in the camp of Hitler. He then criticised the definition which Haor gave of defeatism, which it conceived as "a special and independent system of activities aimed at provoking defeat". This seemed to him to be "too equivocal":

"It is not so. Defeatism is the class policy of the proletariat, which considers in time of war as in peace, that its main enemy is in its own imperialist country. Patriotism, on the contrary, is a policy which locates the main enemy outside 'one's own country'. The idea of defeatism is in reality as follows: to conduct an intransigent revolutionary struggle against one's own bourgeoisie as the main enemy, without being concerned whether the struggle can lead to the defeat of one's own government. In the case that defeat results from a revolutionary movement, the defeat of one's own government is a lesser evil. Lenin never said, nor wished to say, anything different. It is impossible even to speak of any other kind of contribution to defeat. Are we to renounce revolutionary defeatism in the non-fascist countries? That is the nub of the question. That is the point on which revolutionary defeatism stands or falls."

The last fundamental document which Trotsky wrote about the war again takes up this question. The "Manifesto on the Imperialist War and the World Proletarian Revolution" which he wrote for the so-called "Emergency" Conference in May 1940, condemns

the slogan of "war for democracy". Trotsky posed once again the question of knowing whether the working class must aid the democracies in their struggle against German fascism. His reply was un-ambiguous:

"That is how the question is put by broad petty-bourgeois circles, for whom the proletariat remains only an auxiliary tool of this or that faction of the bourgeoisie. We reject this policy with indignation. Naturally there exists a difference between the political regimes in bourgeois society, just as there exists a difference in comfort between different cars in a railway train. But when the whole train is plunging into an abyss, the distinction between decaying democracy and murderous fascism disappears in the face of the collapse of the entire capitalist system."(26)

Why did Trotsky not utilise the term "revolutionary defeatism" in the "Manifesto"? We know that he did not generally refuse to use it, though he did refuse to turn it into a magic incantation and never used it as a slogan. But had not the formula of "defeatism" already had a remarkable destiny by 1940? It had been elaborated by Lenin when he was the firmest of internationalists. It had then been used to struggle against "Trotskyism" by counter-posing it to "Leninism" in the Fourth International as well as in the Third. No doubt Trotsky was too clearly aware of the content of these polemics to allow himself to be trapped in a discussion which was all the more pointless in that the problems which world war II posed - especially in connection with the existence of the USSR - could not be solved by the best of the formulae of the preceding war. But at the same time, he had no reason to abandon this part of the heritage of Lenin to his opponents.

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NOTES

(The content of these notes and the details of sources included in the above text have been slightly amended by the translator from the original French text. Wherever possible references have been given to English-language sources and some relevant information has been added in places)

- (1) See especially the three articles by Lenin in the Collected Works:
"The Fall of Port Arthur", d. January 14, 1905, in Vol. 8, p.47
"European Capital and the Autocracy", d. April 5, 1905, Vol. 8, p.267
"Debacle", d. June 9, 1905, Vol. 8, p. 482
- (2) Marx and Engels did not elaborate a "specific theory" of war. They adopted Clausewitz's formula, and regarded war as "the pursuit of policy by different means". Their policy in relation to any given war was not worked out from theory a priori, but on the basis of an analysis of the specific conflict. They investigated the specific conflict in order to determine that camp the victory of which would be most advantageous to the working class. During the American Civil War, Marx took up his position in favour of victory of the North against the slave-owning South. We know Engels' formula in 1866: "The greatest desire is that Prussia gets itself defeated. Then there will be a

revolution in Berlin." In 1870 Engels began by supporting the national interests of Germany against the French Empire. But, at the same time, he recommended the German Social-Democracy to preserve its complete independence, and approved the decision of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel to vote against the military credits. But, as soon as German unity was assured, and the French Empire was overthrown, Engels radically changed his position. He estimated that the continuation of the war from then on was aimed at enabling the Prussian Junkers to dominate Germany, and a Prussified Germany to dominate Europe. He at once placed himself on the side of a war of defence by France and thought that this war might become a revolutionary factor.

(3) See especially the article (in French) by G. Haupt and Claudie Weill, "Marx and Engels and the problem of nations". See also "Socialism in France and Germany and the Problem of War", by Milovad Drachovitch, Geneva, 1953, pp. 221 - 244.

(4) Drachovitch, op. cit. pp 323 - 330

(5) Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 21, "The Tasks of Revolutionary Social-Democracy in the European War", pp. 15ff.

(6) This article was written by Lenin on July 26, 1915, in reply to a polemic by Trotsky in Nashe Slovo, No. 105. Trotsky wrote that "the desire for a Russian defeat is an uncalled-for concession, and an unjustified concession, to the methodology of social-patriotism. It substitutes for the revolutionary struggle against the war and against the conditions which caused it an extremely arbitrary orientation towards the line of the lesser evil, in similar circumstances."

Lenin's reply was written in the heat of a vigorous polemic. Later on it was frequently used against Trotsky. Lenin was evidently inspired by the example of the Paris Commune and that of the Russian Revolution of 1905. He believed that the proletariat must "contribute effectively to defeat". None the less he was careful to point out that this in no way means that "one wishes for the victory of Germany". He completely excluded military sabotage as an obviously ridiculous method of revolutionary defeatism. He wrote that a perceptive reader would easily see that the question is not one of "blowing up bridges" or of "organising military mutinies which are doomed to defeat and, in general, of helping the government to crush the revolutionaries". Lenin excluded the use of special military means from which the enemy would directly profit, but which would not advance the proletarian cause.

Lenin's article is in Vol. 21, pp. 275ff, entitled, "The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War".

(7) Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 33, p. 447, in "Notes on the Tasks of our Delegation to the Hague", December 4, 1922.

(8) Zinoviev, "Contre le Courant", p. 10

(9) Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 27, p. 193, "Closing Speech on the Report on the Ratification of the Peace Treaty", March 15, 1918.

(10) Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 23, p. 369, "Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers", March 26, 1917.

(11) Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 25, p. 289, "Letter to the Central Committee of RSDLP", September 12, 1917.

(12) Martynov, "The Great Proletarian Leader", in "Communist International", No. 1 (new series), February 1924, p.4, and Zinoviev, "War and Leninism", idem, No. 1 June 1924, pp. 6 - 7.

- (13) See "Theses and Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International", or the extracts in Degras, "The Communist International, 1919 - 1943", Vol. 2, p. 525 especially.
- (14) Harvard "Closed Archives", V.84.
- (15) Harvard 8009. This letter is not in the French edition of the "Oeuvres" because it was not discovered until after the volumes devoted to 1934 had been published.
- (16) "War and the Fourth International", in "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1933 - 34)" Pathfinder Press, New York, p. 321
- (17) *ibid.* p. 320
- (18. "The Case of Leon Trotsky", pp. 294 - 299
- (19) Dick Lorre was a member of the left-wing formed in the American Socialist Party round the Trotskyist militants. The question was about the attitude of revolutionaries to the Negrin Government, which, with the patronage of Stalin and under the benevolent eye of the governments in London and Paris, had just severely attacked the extreme left, and was in the process of creating the conditions for defeat in the war against Franco. Some militants belonging to the "Socialist Appeal Association" and who formed the Joerger - Salemme Group, opposed any "political or material support for the loyalist bourgeois government. See Broue, "La Revolution Espagnole", p. 431
- (20) *Ibid.*
- (21) "Leon Trotsky on China", Pathfinder Press, p. 547
- (22) *Ibid.* p. 556
- (23) *Ibid.* p.567
- (24) "The Case of Leon Trotsky", p. 290
- (25) G. Vereecken, "The GPU in the Trotskyist Movement", published by the WRP. The reference is p. 267 in the French edition.
- (26) "Documents of the Fourth International: (1933 - 1940)", Pathfinder Press, p. 349

HOW TROTSKY AND THE TROTSKYISTS

CONFRONTED WORLD WAR TWO

by Pierre Broue

Little-known Documents

Some years ago Daniel Guerin published some texts which Trotsky wrote on the subject of world war II (1). His preface brought down on him some heavy fire from different groups which were claiming to be Trotskyist at the time. He was accused, in particular, of having distorted Trotsky's thinking by arbitrarily mutilating what he had written, of having mis-represented Trotsky's ideas, if not in the direction of social-patriotism, at any rate in that of anti-fascism, and of taking the liberty of presenting Trotsky as a "Soviet patriot", for whom the necessity to "defend the USSR" took precedence over every other consideration in the war (2).

The preparation of Volumes 20 to 24 of the "Oeuvres", which are due to appear at the end of 1986, led me to work on the complete texts of the documents which Guerin reproduced. Moreover, the opening of the "papers in exile" at Harvard has given us access to many documents which, taken as a whole, enable us today to present an interpretation of Trotsky's thought, which agrees neither with Guerin's version nor with that of the militants who have defended against him an "orthodoxy" based on the attitude of the Bolsheviks in World War I - one war behind and far behind the thinking of Trotsky as it leapt forward after Hitler's great successes in 1940 (3).

Of course, Trotsky understood perfectly what the war and the destruction which accompanied it meant for human civilisation. But in the spring of 1940, as the proverb says, "the wine was drawn and it had to be drunk". Trotsky was no longer concerned to struggle for humanity to be spared the war by making the revolution. The war had begun. Henceforth nothing could save humanity from it. Trotsky discerned in the war the gigantic crucible in which, amid unspeakable suffering, the revolutionary wave was to gather itself together and within it the new phases of the world revolution would take shape. Trotsky expressed this very clearly, in a fragment of an article which was interrupted on August 20, 1940. Guerin knew of this article, but he ignored it, no doubt because he did not understand its drift:

"The present war, as we have stated more than once, is a continuation of the last war. But a continuation does not imply a repetition. As a general rule, a continuation implies a development, a deepening, a sharpening. Our policy, the policy of the revolutionary proletariat toward the second imperialist world war, is a continuation of the policy elaborated during the last imperialist war, primarily under the leadership of Lenin. But a continuation does not imply a

repetition. In this case, too, a continuation means a development, a deepening and a sharpening."(4)

He then developed what he regarded as constituting the difference - a difference of development, quantitative and qualitative, between the policies of revolutionaries in one war and in the other. He wrote:

"During the last war, not only the proletariat as a whole, but also its vanguard and, in a certain sense, the vanguard of the vanguard, were caught unawares. The elaboration of the principles of revolutionary policy toward the war began at a time when the war was already in full blaze and when the military machine exercised un-limited rule."(5)

During world war I the perspective of revolution seemed remote even to Lenin. He wrote of foreseeing it... for future generations. Trotsky recalled:

"Prior to the February Revolution and even afterwards the revolutionary elements felt themselves to be not so much contenders for power as the extreme left opposition."(6)

Therefore, the struggle for the independence of the proletariat, the rejection of "civil peace", the necessity for the class-struggle of the proletariat, were the first task in 1914 - 18, as defensive measures:

"The attention of the revolutionary wing was centred on the question of the defence of the fatherland. The revolutionaries naturally replied in the negative to this question. This was entirely correct. This purely negative reply served as the basis for propaganda and for training the cadres. But it could not win the masses, who did not want a foreign conqueror."(7)

Trotsky recalled that the Bolsheviks succeeded in Russia in winning the proletariat and the majority of the people, in the space of eight months, and that this success was not in response to negative refusal, but to the aspirations of the masses, to which the Bolsheviks had known how to give positive answers:

"The decisive role in this conquest was played, not by the refusal to defend the bourgeois fatherland, but by the slogan, 'All Power to the Soviets'. And only by this revolutionary slogan! The criticism of imperialism ^{and of} its militarism, like the renunciation of defence of bourgeois democracy and so on, could never have won the overwhelming majority of the people to the side of the Bolsheviks."(8)

The difference between the first and the second world war was to be found, in Trotsky's opinion, at one and the same time, in the objective situation, the deepening impasse of imperialism, and in the world-wide experience which the working class had accumulated. Through the suffering and impoverishment due to the war, these forces called imperiously for the seizure of power. Trotsky was categorical:

"This perspective must be made the basis of our agitation. It is not merely a question of a position on capitalist militarism and of renouncing the defence of the bourgeois state, but of directly preparing for the conquest of power and the defence of the proletarian fatherland."(9)

In reality, when Trotsky was struck down on August 20, 1940, the essential elements of the second phase of world war II had only just emerged after the collapse of the French army. He wrote that this was "not just an episode, but an integral part of 'the catastrophe of Europe'". The materials which enable us to grasp the outlines of the conception which Trotsky was forming of the war, which he began to form at the same time as he outlined the direction of the revolutionary forces which could not fail to emerge from it, are to be found in the notes on the war and on the USSR which he drafted in the spring of 1940. These will be published in Volume 23 of the "Oeuvres", and the articles and interviews, especially the fragments of "Bonapartism, Fascism and War", will be found in Volume 24.

Daniel Guerin has emphasised, vigorously, that Trotsky had formed a remarkably exact and precise idea of the coming war in 1940. When men who had been close to him seemed resigned to decades of "brown" Europe, under Nazi rule, Trotsky simply and confidently forecast the war between Germany and USA "for world hegemony" and, in addition, the ephemeral character of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the coming alliance of the USSR with the "democracies", the orientation of Japanese expansion towards avoiding collision with the USSR, and many other features, such as eminent strategists and commentators still failed to observe.

Guerin did not fail to notice all that. However, he made it impossible for himself to penetrate what was the heart of Trotsky's thinking. Guerin reduced the analyses, which had only been sketched, and especially Trotsky's expectation of the revolutionary movement during the war, to what he calls "Trotsky's ardent subjective conviction that the war would end with the victory of the world revolution". Guerin wrote that this was "an error", about which "the extra-lucid Trotsky was mistaken".(10)

In this way, the insights which Guerin provided led to the disappearance of Trotsky's revolutionary perspective. No doubt this was not what Guerin intended, but certain of his citations had the effect of clothing Trotsky in the mantle of a prophet, even in military matters: This is a distorted image of Trotsky. Indeed, Guerin himself reproduced many of Trotsky's forecasts about the coming of the revolution! But we must be fair. Trotsky did no more than glimpse the future and point his finger in these matters. He neither explained nor developed. The defenders of the "archaic" conception, conceived as an orthodoxy, have generally ignored these indications. As some of the reactions to Guerin's analyses show, they continue to ignore them when they look back at the solid mass of history which the war now appears to them to be.

For these reasons I wish to try in this article to show what were the main lines in Trotsky's vision of world war II. I emphasise that his vision includes not merely

essential aspects of the conflict, but also certain aspects of the period immediately following the war. Some questions we shall ignore here, for example, his analyses of the changes effected in Poland by the bureaucracy, and which it dreamed of making in Finland, in 1939. These were the foundations of a theory of the formation of satellite bureaucratic states within the sphere of interest of the USSR, which later came to be called the "glacis" countries. This is found in the documents of the internal discussion in the Socialist Workers' Party in 1939 - 40 on "the nature of the USSR".

Trotsky saw that "Brown Europe", under the Nazi jack-boot, would not last for a thousand years. He confidently gave it ten years at most. He especially pointed out what the formidable conquests of the German army under Nazi leadership would mean for the working masses of Europe:

"... the working masses bear a sentimental hatred against Hitler, with very confused class sentiments."(11)

According to Trotsky, we have there the positive aspect on which the work of revolutionary preparation in USA must rely. This was the starting-point from which he developed (before his somewhat disconcerted comrades of the SWP) the idea that they must demand worker-officers in the army and the military training of every worker under trade union control, in anticipation of new forms of political work in a "militarised society". These demands for militarisation and control - political independence by means of arms - went alongside the agitational slogan, "We want to fight against fascism, but not in the way that Petain did!". The "orthodox" interpreters of Trotsky's thought have often seen this as nothing more than a tactical device, a ruse, a trick intended to make the bourgeoisie unmask itself, to show that it really fears the working class more than the fascists at home or abroad. This argument cannot stand up to serious examination. How is it possible to reconcile, even at the most abstract level, the formula "not in the way Petain did", with a certain vulgar conception of "defeatism" which never was that of Trotsky?

That is not all. In Trotsky's discussions with his SWP comrades, he did not hesitate to pose the question of "militarising" the party, of its distancing itself unequivocally from pacifist attitudes. These attitudes he forcefully condemned. He went on to proclaim that his comrades, and every revolutionary, must become "militarists" - the expression which he used was "proletarian revolutionary socialist militarists".

(12) They had to make themselves into "militarists", because the prospects for humanity are of militarised society and armed struggle. The proletarian revolutionary socialists must become militarists, because the fate of humanity would be decided arms in hand. Humanity had entered the second world war. They must prepare themselves soon to fight arms in hand against the class enemy for power.

They could prepare themselves to do so only by being where the masses were. Such was Trotsky's conviction.

This conviction rested on a concrete forecast about the movement of the masses, especially in Europe. In an article dated June 30, 1940, Trotsky outlined a perspective of European development, which he expected to pass through the mass uprising against foreign occupation. He wrote:

"In the defeated countries the position of the masses will immediately become worsened in the extreme. Added to social oppression is national oppression, ^{the} main burden of which, likewise, is borne by the workers. Of all forms of dictatorship, the totalitarian dictatorship of a foreign conqueror is the most intolerable."(13)

Can we doubt that Trotsky located the revolutionaries on the same side as those who were socially and nationally oppressed, who felt the "totalitarian dictatorship" of a "foreign conqueror" to be "intolerable"?

He knew that the Nazis would try to exploit the industries and natural resources of the countries which they conquered and occupied. He knew that this super-exploitation would reduce them to pauperism. He foresaw a workers' and peasants' resistance:

"It is impossible to attach a soldier with a rifle to every Polish, Norwegian, Danish, Dutch, Belgian or French worker and peasant."(14)

He believed that the Hitlerian domination of Europe would provoke the general uprising of the peoples:

"One can expect with assurance that all the conquered countries will be transformed into powder magazines. The danger is rather that the explosions may occur too soon, without sufficient preparation, and led to isolated defeats. It is, in general, ^{however,} impossible to speak of the European and world revolution without ^{taking} partial defeats into account."(15)

The threat which hung over Hitler was that of "the proletarian revolution in every part of Europe". He forecast "the impoverishment and despair of the working masses ... their efforts to resist and to protest, at first concealed and then more and more open and bold", against which the armies of occupation would have to act "pacifiers" and as oppressors. This would demoralise them and lead, ultimately, to their decomposition.(16) Addressing the Dewey Commission, Trotsky had distinguished the attitude to adopt in an imperialist country at war with the USSR from that towards an imperialist country which would be its ally.(17) In the former case, the immediate aim is to disorganise the whole machine, and the military machine in the first place. In the latter case, the immediate aim is political opposition to the bourgeoisie and preparation for proletarian revolution. It was clear, likewise, when the Wehrmacht attacked the USSR, that throughout all occupied Europe the necessity to disorganise and to strike at the German military machine would be added to that of armed resistance, and this implies armed struggle.

called "orthodox", we may recall that Vereecken and some of his political friends had accused Trotsky of denying his principles by abandoning "defeatism" in a country allied to the USSR, in the event of war, on the pretext of "the defence of the USSR". We find a little of the same manner of thinking in the criticism of the policy which Cannon and the SWP followed in their defence at the time of the Minneapolis trial; this was voiced by the Spaniard, Grandizo Munis. The political history of the Fourth International during world war II will certainly reveal how strong was the current which, under the flag of "orthodoxy", often confined itself to pacifist positions, considering armed struggle to be participation in the war and in the "sacred union", and an acceptance of the war, for the simple reason that it was armed struggle. This current was at one and the same time sectarian and conservative.

Of course, the belief that the policy which Trotsky advocated betrays the influence of his "Soviet patriotism" is completely out of the question. He explained himself about the "defence of the USSR" often enough for such an explanation to be taken seriously by no one. Nor is there the slightest concession of social-patriotism or to national defence in an imperialist country in his analysis or slogans. Simply, as he forcefully declared, "Any confusion with pacifists is a hundred times more dangerous than temporary confusion with bourgeois militarism."

The "Manifesto" of the International Conference of May 1940 (as Guerin has emphasised) is "this striking document, which forcefully and convincingly explains the fundamentals of proletarian internationalism".(18) His conclusion, which follows the call for workers to "learn the military arts", leaves no doubt on the matter:

"At the same time, we do not forget for a moment that this war is not our war... The Fourth International builds its policy, not on the military fortunes of the capitalist states, but on the transformation of the imperialist war into a war of the workers against the capitalists, on the overthrow of the ruling classes of all countries, on the world socialist revolution."(19)

The question for Trotsky, therefore, was indeed that of the revolution, of the form which the revolutionary movement was to take on, as it was developed by the war and the crisis of the capitalist world, which it expresses and, at the same time, makes worse, and which creates the conditions for the workers to struggle for power. This struggle during the war and within the framework of the militarisation of society, could not be imagined if it had not a practical link with political struggle in a form which in large measure would not be armed class struggle or a class war. Only incorrigible dreamers or sectarians could imagine anything else. The new arena, in which it would be necessary to crush the militarists, demanded that workers and revolutionaries be militarised.

There are certain observations which must be made by anyone who wishes to test the validity during the war of the perspective which Trotsky sketched out in 1940. In

the first place, the different Communist Parties have often succeeded in imposing the illusion that they had the monopoly of armed struggle, with which they identify their politics after the events. This is thanks to the line of "defence of the USSR", which from 1941 onwards transformed them into "Resistance activists". However, on the basis of a certain development of armed struggle, what actually the defence of the USSR meant, as it was conceived in Moscow, no longer consisted of sabotage or partisan operations against the German military machine. It became a direct and indirect political struggle, and, where necessary, a police-type repression, aimed at the mass movement itself, whenever, as nearly always happened, the latter threatened to compromise the agreements between the USSR and its allies, to call into question the share-out of spheres of influence or, still more serious, to unleash a revolution, which Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill wanted no more than Hitler did and which they were, in any case, determined to wipe out, if Hitler did not do so before them.

The whole of Europe in fact underwent German occupation and, in different degrees, not merely the national oppression which every country undergoes when it is occupied by a foreign army, but also the systematic looting which plunged several of these countries into famine and all into poverty. In this way the conditions for a revolutionary upsurge were created. This revealed itself first and with the greatest force in the weakest link of the imperialist chain in Europe. In the face of this danger, the safety-valves provided by the Stalinist apparatus no longer had the same effectiveness, in relations to the former relations between the parties and the masses and even to historical circumstances of an accidental kind. None the less, the movement did advance through its contradictions.

We shall try here to see what general verification of Trotsky's perspectives can be found in the case in which the revolution came, with its own movement, which broke out of the influence of the Communist parties as far as it could by its own efforts, and lacking an alternative leadership to the one which handed them over to repression when German imperialism fell. From this viewpoint the Greek example seems to us to be one of the most useful.

The Greek Resistance

We shall try to test Trotsky's conceptions about the Second World War by studying two aspects of it; the less well-known, which is the revolt of the soldiers and sailors of the Greek armed forces in the Middle East; the other is the armed resistance on Greek territory, which was crushed by the British army in December 1944 on the personal orders of Winston Churchill, who denounced the armed resistance as "naked, triumphant Trotskyism".

One of the peculiar features of Greece, which we find also in its neighbouring countries Italy and Yugoslavia, is that it had been subjected before the war to the "Regime of August 4", that is, to the bloody military-fascist dictatorship of General Metaxas and King George II. This had repressed the workers' movement very severely, imprisoning or interning in dungeons on the islands the leaders and cadres of the workers' movement.

This drove the Communist Party into precarious clandestinity, which made its communications with Moscow "centre" intermittent and fragile. Like their comrades in neighbouring Yugoslavia, the Greek Communists failed to "understand" about their own movement that, after the death of Metaxas, his successors and executioners would become democratic allies and the restoration of the king would become an element working towards the liberation of humanity! Immediately after the German attack, the Greek Communist was to issue the slogan of a "Constituent Assembly". This automatically opened the "royal question". The king was in exile, under the protection of Winston Churchill. This demand placed an enormous obstacle between the internal resistance and the exiled monarch. This was an obstacle on the road of the policy which the Communist International was to dictate to the Greek Communist Party. From 1942 onwards, communications became difficult, not only between Moscow and the national leaders, but also between the national leaders and the chiefs of the fighters. The Greek Communist Party tried to engage in controlling and centralising the activity of the partisans, which was developing, arms in hand, in the mountains, but also in the workers' quarters in the cities. The fighters were led by the "andartes", the "Kapetanios", who had given, on the ground, the first examples of acceding to the pressure of the poor peasants and of meeting their demands, which made them "like fish in water".

The Greek resistance, like that of the proletariat, of the petty bourgeoisie and of the peasantry, did not come out of any organisational decision. Likewise, on the night of May 30 - 31, 1941, it was outside any organisational framework that two students scaled the Acropolis and tore down the swastika from it. Andre Kedros writes of this as "a madly daring and splendidly gratuitous action": for him it became "the symbol of Greek refusal to submit" (20). At about the same time, the army officers often organised or provoked the disbandment of the army after its defeat. The first "guerrilla bands" appeared in the countryside, armed with rifles and ammunition, which they collected almost without opposition on the battlefields and along the roads where the army had been defeated. In Greece there was a tradition of agrarian struggle. The "bandit" had long been the liberator and defender, beloved of the poor. Andre Kedros tells how the villagers "bred armed bands as an antidote to poverty and oppression", caused and intensified by the occupation. We know that tiny groups were formed more or less everywhere. They had a variety of names, ranging from "mixed companies" to "assault groups" - around men who extemporised and became recognised as leaders. Some were young men of militant temper; others had won their spurs by escaping from Metaxas' concentration camps during the retreat of the army.

However, at first the Greek Communist Party did not apply itself to organising, centralising and developing these groups. It remained obedient to the orders of Moscow. It set itself the formation of a "national front" against the occupation as its first aim. That meant, for a time, a bloc with the other political formations in Greece. However, it did not succeed, particularly because it could not correct its aim in respect of the restoration of the monarchy, despite its own intentions. This was a very sensitive point with its own supporters. It was also a very sensitive point with the political forces linked to the bourgeoisie and the landlords; they neither wished nor could break with

the monarchy and their British "protector".

The EAM ("National Liberation Front") was founded in September 1941, but it was no more than one organisation which bore this name. It was not the hoped-for national front. Alongside the Greek Communist Party there were only the very small Socialist formations, two "democratic" organisations no larger, and the trade unions. However, EAM rejected any basis other than a "national" one. It refused to consider "social" liberation. It addressed the "nation" irrespective of classes. It concentrated on attracting support from the upper layers of society and maintained silence on the demands of the workers.

This desire to maintain the nation "united" against the invader - when it was not united - and to ignore in silence the class-sources of popular opposition to the occupiers and to those among the Greek bourgeoisie who collaborated with them, did not, however, succeed in preventing the workers and the poorest layers of the people from laying hold of the framework of organisation which the Communist offered. Instinct led them to use it to satisfy their demands. The influx of fighters gave a class-character to the EAM, which was doing so much to reject it. The workers demonstrated in thousands on the first anniversary of the Italian aggression, October 18, 1941. In December 1941 the students took up the fight in their turn. On January 26, 1942 and then on March 17 the war-wounded, a particularly wretched category of the poor, demonstrated on the streets, supported by the militants of the clandestine EAM dressed in the uniforms of hospital nurses. The organisation spread and was perfected. On March 15, 1942 there were demonstrations in support of economic demands in several cities, including Athens. These were followed by strikes, for example, the strikes of the 40,000 civil servants, in the leadership of whom were the Trotskyist militants. Then there was the strike of the workers in the fertiliser plant at Piraeus in August 1942. Meanwhile the peasants in the Peloponesus had successfully mounted a series of demonstrations. The Greek Communist Party decided to send a handful of its militants to organise the partisans, the andartes, within the framework of the national People's Liberation Army, the military units of ELAS, the armed wing of EAM.

A report by the German Abwehr in November 1942 mentions that there existed inside Greece whole districts which were "in the hands of the guerrillas", who executed traitors, distributed the corn which they collected by forced levies, who called upon the villagers to elect their representative leaders freely and to discuss all their problems democratically. The struggle of the andartes became an element in the class war in the countryside, perhaps more social than national, by the force of things and outwith the desire of their political leaders, even when the partisan group led by the celebrated Aris Velouchiotis took part in spectacular acts of sabotage of communications and transport, which disorganised the German military machine. We cannot detail here the history of the mass movements in Greece. On December 22, 1942, there were 40,000 on strike. The demonstrations and strikes which followed the announcement of compulsory labour service in Germany and which developed from February 24 to March 5 won the result - unique in Europe - that the occupying power withdrew the proposal for compulsory labour service. In 1943 the armed struggle was no longer the work of small groups, but that of real military units. When

they arrived in a region with a view to extending the "liberated zones", there was an immediate mass uprising of the "armed people". A. Kedros declares: "the entire population is involved in the armed resistance". In the cities the mass movements proved to be irrepressible. There was a general strike in Athens on June 25, 1943, against the execution of hostages by the occupying power. The strike of tram-drivers, which had begun on June 12, had led to fifty tramway employees being sentenced to death. The general strike saved them. By 1944 there were not only wide rural areas liberated, but the German forces were invested under siege in the cities, which they could leave only in convoys under guard. Round Athens, in the "Red Belt", the workers' quarters were nothing less than the fortresses of the armed people.

During this time, the leaders of the Greek Communist Party, who controlled EAM and ELAS, continued to insist that they were waging a purely "national" struggle, denying that it had any class character. This was by no means the opinion of the Greek Government in exile, under the protection of Winston Churchill. In 1942 there were elements in the officer corps - that "ultimate rampart of the state", as Churchill said at the time of Franco - grouped in the "Khi" organisation of Grivas, the "Pan" organisation, the military hierarchy, the Zervas-es and Dentiris-es, who were attached to the secret services of Metaxas, organised the counter-attack. They tried to form "national guerrillas", intended more to fight the "Communist guerrillas" than the occupying invaders. Here we have exactly the Greek equivalent of Mikhailovitch in Yugoslavia, the Serbian colonel who led the Chetniks, was a minister in the king's government in exile and fought arms in hand against Tito's partisans. There was no shortage of money, nor of equipment either. They wanted to create new formations, but they also hoped to undermine the ELAS militants, who were deprived of supplies now that their operation seemed certain to succeed. One of the leaders of the British Special Operations Executive, Eddie Myers, supplies a document on this subject in his memoirs. It corroborates Trotsky's analysis and demonstrates how lucid was that champion of the existing order, Winston Churchill, the strategist of the class war seen from the opposite trenches. Myers' superiors told him in April 1943: "The Cairo authorities consider that, after the liberation of Greece, civil war is almost inevitable".(22)

The mass movement swelled the ranks of EAM and ELAS. The struggle which flowed through the rivulets and then the canals of the classes swept these initiatives aside, and never ceased to assert its mastery. Colonel Saraphis, the democratic offer chosen to be the "Mikhailovitch" of Greece, decided to join ELAS, because he so highly appreciated how efficient and representative it was! The Italian capitulation placed more weapons in the hands of the andartes and their civilian allies than all the Allies combined could parachute to them.

In this connection 1943 was the crucial year. The politician, Ioannis Rallis, whom even the Germans knew to be in contact with British secret agents, became Prime Minister in occupied Greece.(23) The ruling classes actively and consciously prepared to transform the national war into a civil war. In Athens there were the Security battalions, a

militia of sinister reputation. In Cairo there was the Mountain Brigade. Both were intended to crush the popular movement. The Greek Communist Party announced that more than ever it sought collaboration with the "national guerrillas" and wanted "toleration", which meant renouncing class methods, while at the same time it prepared to face attacks from the Left. In March 1943, Aris Velouchiotis was summoned to Athens from his mountain, despite the dangers of such an expedition, and received a severe ticking-off. In May, when the Communist International was dissolved, the Greek Communist Party declared a line from which it could not thereafter deviate:

"The Greek Communist Party supports by all possible means the struggle for national liberation and will do all in its power for the patriotic forces to be gathered into one unbreakable national front, which will unite the whole people to shake off the foreign yoke and to win national liberation at the side of our great Allies."(24)

At the same time it developed its own political police, the OPLA, recruited from reliable killers, and used them more against the "Trotskyists" and the "Lefts" in its own ranks than against "collaborators":

The policies of all these tendencies underwent their first test when the Greek army in Egypt mutinied. This history is still not well known, and seems to this writer to be a fruitful contribution to the discussion about the "military policy". The affair happened in what, by analogy with France, we might call "Free Greece"; this consisted, after the defeat of the Greek armies in April 1941, of the remnants of the Greek army and of the fleet, with senior civil servants and ministers in the "government in exile" of George II. These great personages, and particularly the military chiefs, were evidently persons of consequence in the fascist dictatorial regime of Metaxas. The people believed that this was the reason for their "treachery" in the face of the Nazi invasion. None the less, as Dominic Eudes attests: "the embryo of a new Greek army was formed in Egypt, by the side of the circle of officers and politicians of the royal camarilla".(25) This was made up of people who had got away from military units by sea and of volunteers who had endured numerous difficulties in order to get individually to Egypt, the crews of merchant ships and even of ships of war. They had chosen to join Alexandria. They were obviously people who wanted to "fight fascism", for "freedom and democracy", as the new "liberal" head of government put it. Therefore a collision was inevitable between most of the 20,000 men who had come to fight and the monarchist camarilla, which, like Churchill, was concerned above all to "save Greece from Communism".

In October 1941 there was created, within the Greek army of the Middle East, the secret organisation A.S.O. (Anti-fascist Military Organisation). Its aims were simple - even over-simple. They were to send Greek units to the front, to fight in Greece alongside the Resistance, and to oppose the penetration of the Army of Cairo by the political influence of the Metaxist officers, who wanted to restore their regime in Greece at the end of the war. The Metaxist cadres were organised to press for cadres sympathetic to the ASO to be removed by large-scale discharges from the army. The officers to be dismissed

from the Second Brigade were arrested and replaced. The mutineers stood firm in the face of threats. The First Brigade supported them. The government gave way and accepted that the Metaxist officers should be isolated, in order to avoid their difficulties becoming too great at an important moment, and, especially, to prepare a fresh attack. In the following months military directives enabled the units to be dispersed, the rebels to be "punished" by disciplinary training and, finally, the subversive elements to be weeded out and the officers who had just been isolated brought back into key positions.

The second meeting was more serious, though not less significant. The demands of the officers for whom A.S.O. was the source of inspiration were evidently more political than they had been in 1943. Under the pressure of the men, the Committee for Armed Co-ordination presented a petition, signed by the majority of the Greek soldiers, as soon as the real provisional government of the Greek Resistance, the P.E.E.A. was formed in Greece. This petition demanded that a real government of "national unity" be formed on the basis of the proposals of P.E.E.A. The initiative came neither from EAM-ELAS nor from Greece, but quite simply from the idea which the soldiers formed of the situation in their country and the conditions in which they could really "fight" against fascism.

On the same day, March 31, 1944, the delegates of the soldiers and of the mixed committee demanded to be received at the embassy of the USSR with their petition. The ambassador closed his doors to them. They were to find no echo or promise of support except from the Labour Left in Britain. In Egypt, on the contrary, they enjoyed the sympathy of the Egyptian population, which was always close to the Greek workers. There was a series of meetings and demonstrations in Alexandria and Cairo. On April 4, the Egyptian police intervened on the side of the Greek government in exile and of the British; they arrested some fifty militant workers and trade union leaders and, in particular, the leaders of the Greek dockers. The British High Command, for its part, disarmed two regiments and sent two hundred and eighty "ringleaders" to concentration camps. Then on April 5, it disarmed the unit attached to the High Command of the Greek Army and interned the "mutineers". Now the mutineers had their backs to the wall. The First Brigade arrested its Metaxist officers, re-organised its command and refused to hand over its arms as a prelude to internment. The movement spread to the navy, to the destroyer Pindos and then to the cruiser Averoff, the Ajax and several more. The crews elected a "mixed committee of officers and soldiers" to take command. The British Ambassador to the Greek Government in Cairo telegraphed to Churchill: "What is happening here among the Greeks is neither more nor less than a revolution..."(26)

Churchill directly and personally took control of the repression. The arrival in Cairo of King George II was a symbol as well as a provocation. The support by Egyptian youth for the mutineers was a promise. On April 13 Admiral Cunningham announced that he had decided to "put down the rebellion by force", and, if necessary, to sink the Greek ships in the very roadstead of Alexandria. The mutinous land formations were surrounded, deprived of water and starved out. On April 22 a successful raid on the Ajax was organised by the leading Metaxist, Admiral Voulgaris. The other ships lay under British guns

and surrendered. General Paget launched his tanks against the First Brigade, and it surrendered in its turn. Within a few days, some 20,000 Greek volunteers of the Army of the Middle East found themselves in concentration camps in Libya and in Eritrea (27). The Greek Army of the Middle East no longer existed. But its place was now free for the formation of specially prepared shock troops, technically equipped and politically trained for the civil war following the "liberation".

We must take note of how the British censorship suppressed reports about all this in the press. The episode was not a small one even in the work of the Greek Resistance. It is also an informative episode, which no doubt explains how it ended. In fact, it exposed the lie about national defence and national unity. The 20,000 volunteers wanted "defence" and "unity", but their leaders did not, and crushed them. The Greek leaders in exile and the British Government preferred to destroy valuable, tested troops, rather than let them express their opinion about the war, "defence" and "unity". The incident also un-masked the lie about the "war against fascism" and "for freedom and democracy". The Greeks saw in Metaxas a detested fascist dictator. The Allies were proposing to place his accomplices back in power. Churchill's policy aimed at restoring the rule of the forces on which Metaxas had been based.

Trotsky's remarks in 1940 about the war were made real here. The Greek soldiers in the Middle East wanted to fight, arms in hand, against fascism. For this purpose they demanded officers whom they could trust, allied themselves with the Labour movement and formed their own Soviet-type organisations. This is precisely on the line which Trotsky developed: "Fight, but not by the method of Petain or under the leadership of Petain." The mass movement born out of the war expressed itself along this line, and did so, as Trotsky had forecast, in the army, that important sector of "militarised society", no less important than the factories.

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The talks in Moscow and the bargaining which followed them led to the agreement with Stalin that Churchill would have a free hand in Greece (28). The Communist Party of Greece and, through it, the EAM, were ultimately to put the noose round the neck of the extraordinary mass movement in Greece itself, after contributing politically to the repression of the mutineers.

After the April 1944 crisis, the Government in exile at Cairo was entrusted to George Papandreou, who worked to develop the "anti-communist" movement. Under his pressure, the leaders of EAM - ELAS signed, on May 30, 1944, the "Lebanon Charter", which denounced ELAS terrorism, the indiscipline of the mutineers (many of whom served sentences for it), left the question of the monarchy open, and agreed to a single command of the Greek armed forces and to the re-establishment of order "alongside the Allied troops" at the Liberation. The EAM - ELAS looked sullen for some weeks and for several weeks bargained and demanded ministerial posts and a change of Prime Minister. However, a Soviet mission, led

by Colonel Popov, arrived and put an end to these ill-tempered triflings. The Communists and the EAM unconditionally entered the Government. When the German forces left Athens on October 12, 1944, the Greek Communist Party called on the Greeks to "ensure public order". It also ensured that Papandreou came to power. He had arrived with the British forces, at a time when ELAS had real power everywhere. Winston Churchill was to provoke the Resistance, when he ordered General Scobie, the commander of the armed forces, to keep intact the military formations of the "collaborators", as "security battalions" and not to allow them to be purged, and to ensure that on December 2, the Papandreou government decided to disarm the ELAS forces. We know that the fusillade in Constitution Square in Athens, in the course of the largest demonstration in Greek history on December 3, left dozens dead and hundreds wounded, when the police opened fire on a peaceful crowd. They were demonstrating against the decision to disarm ELAS. Thirty-three days' armed fighting followed in Athens, between the forces of order grouped round Scobie and those of the local Resistance.

At last Churchill carried through his plan to crush the Greek revolution. He announced that he was intervening to prevent a "hideous massacre", and to stop what he called the victory of "naked and triumphant Trotskyism" - with a grin of complicity in the direction of Stalin(29). From December 3 onwards those ELAS units whose leaders had decided not to give up their arms were paralysed by the order "not to fire on the British forces in Greece", who were there "with the goodwill of President Roosevelt and Marshall Stalin", as Churchill volunteers in his memoirs. The andartes in Macedonia, the shock troops and the forces in the mountains were ordered not to move and to let the fighters in Athens be exterminated. The heroism with which they fought could not prevail against the policies of leaders who had made up their minds to lead these fighters into the surrender which was demanded in Moscow.

We know that the Varitsa agreement of February 15, 1945, provided for all these forces to be disarmed. In Athens ELAS had not given in. The forces in the country had not moved to support them. Aris Velouchiotis this time understood the depth of the betrayal by the Greek Communist Party. The Communist Party's journal, "Rizospastis" attacked him on June 12. On June 16 he was assassinated and his head was publicly exhibited in the villages on June 18. How many other fighters in the national and popular resistance fell at the same time under the fire of the British and of the counter-revolutionary formations which the Germans had created in Athens and by the British at Cairo? None the less, more years of Stalinist treachery were still needed to exhaust the fighting potential of the Greek revolution.

The Trotskyists in the War

We cannot undertake here a wide-ranging study of the policies of the Trotskyists during the war, or compare them with the policies which Trotsky outlined on the eve of his death and of which his comrades were generally un-aware at the time. This will be the aim of larger works. My ignorance of the Greek language prevents me from making use of the solid researches into the activities of the Trotskyists during the war which exist in

Greek. Let us hope that this gap will be closed. But meanwhile, we must be careful not to make over-hasty judgements. From August 4, 1936 onwards the Trotskyists were subjected to ferocious repressions. The great majority of Trotskyist militants were arrested and thrown into jails from which many did not emerge. Several leading comrades, including Partelis Pouliopoulos, the former general secretary of the Greek Communist Party, were killed during the Occupation. The conditions of illegality appear to have been particularly hard for them, because they could not take part even in the re-unification of the three organisations on which the leaders decided in 1938. At best, any known Trotskyist militants who could join ELAS units at all were closely watched and carefully isolated there. Any who were able to win responsible positions in the Front or in the People's Army were got rid of by the Stalinists in one way or another. Furthermore, between October and December 1944, the OPLA, who were really agents of a Greek GPU, mounted a campaign of extermination and assassination against the Trotskyists. Throughout the country they abducted, tortured and murdered such militants as Stavros Veroukhis, the secretary of the Association of the War Wounded, Thanassis Ikonou, former secretary of the Communist Youth at Ghizi, workers, dockers, metal-workers and teachers. "We killed more than six hundred Trotskyists" was the boast in 1947 of Barziotas, a member of the Political Bureau of the Greek Communist Party. We do not have the means here to find out the truth about the policies of the Greek Trotskyists and how they could have escaped the dreadful fate which awaited them. Rene Dazy quotes a document of 1943 from the organ of the Greek Trotskyists:

"The Anglo-Americans will come to restore state power to the Greek bourgeoisie. The exploited will only have changed one yoke for another".(30)

If that really were the case, then it is clear that the Greek Trotskyists sentenced themselves to death, by confining themselves to negative perspectives and not taking their place in the mass movement. Michel Raptis, who at the time was the European secretary of the Fourth International, wrote under the pseudonym of M. Spiro just after the events of December 1944 recalling what Trotsky had written about the era of armed struggle; he paid tribute to the activity of the Greek masses when "a wind of revolution blew through the workers' districts and suburbs of Athens", declaring that their activity "will remain among the finest examples of the proletarian movement". But he did not breathe a word about what the Greek Trotskyists were doing. He also stated that "despite the official ideology of its Popular Front-ist democratic and petty bourgeois leadership", the EAM "retained considerable class independence in action".(31) There is nothing more, and often much less, to be found in the documents of the International.

Andre Kedros, the historian of the Greek Resistance, whose ideas about Stalinism are far from clear, stresses the international impact and effect of the "Athens coup", as a "re-buke" to "all the resistance movements heavily influenced by Communist Parties" (32). Does this mean, as he declares, that the British repression in Greece "weighed heavily on the decisions and tactics of Thorez, Togliatti and other such leaders"? That view cannot be accepted. These decisions and tactics were determined by the same factors as had de-

terminated the tactics of the Greek Communist Party in Moscow. But it is highly probable that the Greek defeat strengthened the Stalinist policy of capitulation and of restoring capitalist order in the West, and that it weighed heavily and negatively on the morale and the combattivity of those who throughout Europe had identified the "national struggle" with the "social struggle" and had believed that they had found the road to revolution when they joined the Resistance. We need to do what we cannot do here: to analyse concretely the development in each of the countries of Europe.

However, an examination of the documents which Rudolf Prager has assembled in his "Congresses of the Fourth International" provides what is essential for study of the history of the Fourth International during the war. He has omitted little but the initial positions of the former PCI and its sister-tendency led by Vereecken in Belgium. In the introduction to his second volume, Prager writes:

"The war sharply corrected those who had been able to doubt the timeliness of founding the Fourth International in a period of downturn and with weak forces. The Fourth International bravely confronted the violence and persecution of "democratic" and fascist regimes combined with the Stalinist thugs who attacked our organisations. It remained faithful to its revolutionary convictions. Despite heavy losses to be mourned, and despite some inevitable individual collapses, it is remarkable that it not only maintained its forces, but notably strengthened and rejuvenated them in USA, Britain and other countries. Even though it could not break through into the masses as it hoped, because of the limits of revolutionary situations and of the rise of Stalinism, none the less it saw new sections come into existence."(33)

This was no doubt a remarkable result, but it is a result which strikingly contrasts with what Trotsky wrote at the beginning of the war, for example about USA:

"The American working class is still without a mass Labour Party even today. But the objective situation and the experience accumulated by the American workers can pose the question of the seizure of power on the order of the day within a very brief period. This perspective must be made the basis of our agitation. It is not merely a question of a position on capitalist militarism and of renouncing the defence of the bourgeois state, but of directly preparing for the conquest of power and the defence of the proletarian fatherland."(34)

Or again, in the un-finished document of August 20, 1940:

"A favourable perspective lies before us, fully justifying revolutionary militancy. We must use all the opportunities which present themselves, and construct the revolutionary party."(35)

The historian cannot restrict himself to mentioning "the limits of revolutionary situations" or "the rise of Stalinism, or to suggesting that we have here elements which Trotsky could not foresee, in the face of these absolutely clear statements. We must, at least, recognise the contradiction, even if no one has to explain it, even to say whether it was

Trotsky or the Trotskyists who was wrong. Moreover, Prager indicates that "the military policy of the proletariat" - which the SWP adopted at Trotsky's suggestion - aroused much opposition in wide sections of the Fourth International. On this point, he quotes the fact that the Belgian section excised Trotsky's paragraph on this question from its underground edition of the Manifesto on May 1940. He also mentions the "reservations" of the French Section and of the European Secretariat (36).

In 1940 the French Trotskyists were divided into two tendencies on perspectives which were ultimately as far away from each other as they both were from that of Trotsky. Beginning from the conception that the defeat of French imperialism and the occupation of French territory were leading, not only to national oppression, but to the re-birth of a genuine "national question" of interest to all classes, as in a colonial country, the majority of the elements from the P.O.I., organised round the "committees" which published "La Verite", outlined a strategy according to which the bourgeoisie of an occupied country becomes the natural ally of the workers' movement, and the latter completely devotes itself to a "national resistance". Conversely, the "Only Road" group, which had emerged from the PCI and was the future CCI, disputed whether an imperialist nation can ever become an "oppressed nation", following a military defeat. In its opinion, national demands were "the importation of bourgeois ideology into the proletariat in order to demoralise it".

These two positions, remote from each other, were in a way the result of isolation. They were to be abandoned, step by step, under the pressure of the European Secretariat, which was led at first by Marcel Hic and then, after his arrest, by Michel Raptis. This European Secretariat was formed in February 1942 in the village of St. Hubert in the Belgian Ardennes. This was a political and technical feat in itself, in Europe as it then was. But the meeting also signified a return to an organisation which planned and functioned on an international scale. In 1944 the two viewpoints had already come much closer together, while the CCI continued to assert that the elementary duty of revolutionaries at the time was to denounce the "sacred union" ferociously and, in the second place, to explain to the workers that they must prepare for a new June 1936 on a world scale, at the same time "making an intense agitation for fraternisation with the German workers". Rudolf Prager summarises well enough the "consensus" on the question of armed struggle:

"Relations with the official Resistance could take on no forms other than independence, without agreeing to the "Front of Frenchmen". But this structure should not be confused with the mass movements and include the latter in the same condemnation. Nor did it exclude individual participation in these movements in order to influence certain of its members... This work no doubt did not develop sufficiently, for lack of forces and because the Trotskyists gave priority to the struggle in the factories. It certainly did not noticeably change the relations of forces or the course of events. The lack of success of the Trotskyists was not essentially the result of tactical or other faults, but to their situation, swimming against the stream, and to the grip of Stalinism on the masses..."(37)

All the evidence shows that Trotsky's appeal for the line of armed struggle and his proposal that "proletarian revolutionary socialists" should become "militarists" in order to play their role in a militarised world, are missing in this conception, or rather reduced to a secondary, "partisan" level, entirely subordinated to "the struggle in the factories". The discovery that "the armed struggle" exerted an attractive force on the masses must have presented many problems, in the absence of the dimension which Trotsky contributed on "militarisation". Thus the resolution of the Provisional European Secretariat in 1943 on the "partisan movement" - which was adopted in full by the 1944 European Conference - recognised the "partly spontaneous character" of the partisan movement, and declared that Bolshevik-Leninists were now "obliged to take this form of struggle into account"... The resolution stated that "the guerilla movements" were "military organisations in the wake of Anglo-Saxon imperialism", but it noted that "the participation of the masses in the Balkans and in the West since the large-scale deportations of workers to Germany, though they have not changed the character of these movements, obliged revolutionaries to advance a programme for them, in order to "make them understand that they must play the part of armed detachments in the service of the proletarian revolution".(38) No doubt the resolution had left it rather late.

One could suppose that there was a wide gap between the positions of the Europeans, as R. Prager has summarised them, and those of the Americans, who systematically applied "the military policy", as advocated by Trotsky, in their 1940 meetings and statements. Indeed a completely exceptional kinship revealed itself on this level as well as on that of general principles. James P. Cannon was under attack from Munis for the "opportunistic" way in which he presented the attitude of the SWP towards the war at the trial of its Minneapolis leaders from October 27, 1941 onwards. Cannon replied in May 1942:

"The masses today, as the result of all kinds of pressures and dis-appointments, as well as of the perfidious role of the workers' bureaucracy and of the renegade socialists and Stalinists, accept the war and support it. They act with the bourgeoisie and not with us. The problem for our party is first to understand this elementary fact. Secondly, it is to take up a position of political opposition and then, on that basis, to try to contact the patriotic, honest workers and try to make them come over from the camp of the bourgeoisie to ours by means of propaganda. That is the only action which is open to us, as a small minority, at this moment".(39)

If we leave aside two documents which were published at the period under the pseudonym of Marc Loris by Jan van Heijenoort (40), who was then secretary of the Fourth International, we could conclude that, apart from him, who had been in contact with Trotsky's un-dogmatic thinking for years, no one in or on the fringe of the International had understood "the line of militarisation". Each in his own way, Rous with his "National Revolutionary Movement" (41) and Marcel Hic with his theses on "the national question" in the Committees for the Fourth International" (42) would thus have missed their mark. Meanwhile the other tendencies enclosed themselves in a paralysing orthodoxy and were running the risks

against which Trotsky warned so vigorously arising from "pacifist" tendencies.' Apart from the veteran of the Russian Left Opposition, Tarov (A.A. Davtian), who individually joined the FTP/MOI and was executed with the other members of the Manouchian group, under the false identity of Manouchian, we meet only one contrary example. This is Chen Duxiu (Chen Duxiu), whose foresight, soon after he came out of jail, led him to organise his work as a militant by intervening in the political department of a division of the army, the head of which understood how military effectiveness depends on political clarity (43). This enterprise was crushed in the egg. The Kuomintang police understood the danger better than Chen's own comrades did. In the same order of ideas, the hesitance with which Trotskyists looked at armed resistance suggests that it would be interesting to study how the revolution was conceived in the Fourth International during the war. It seems sometimes to have been conceived as something apocalyptic, which would happen independently of what was going on and not as a result of being worked for. Had their almost exclusively "propagandist" education, involving the use of the weapons of "denunciation" and "explanation" - which clearly were the essential activities of an organisation the leaders of which felt themselves to be "swimming against the stream" - prepared the cadres for such a belief? Did not the extraordinary weakness of the SWP resolution of November 1943 result in part from this same "propagandist" isolation (44)? How could people, who declared that the Kremlin was unable to play a counter-revolutionary role on a large scale, that American imperialism would play in Europe in the immediate future the same role as plunderers as German imperialism, that the only alternatives in Europe were the workers' government or the brutal dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, without any prospect of a parliamentary regime, and which rejected democratic demands declaring that the European working class had no "democratic illusions" - how could they place themselves in the stream of development after the objective turn in the situation? We can go even further and say that, if the Trotskyists, after years on such a line, had found themselves placed, if not at the head of such a revolutionary movement, but actually within it, they would have had to revise the ABC of the teachings of Marxism and Bolshevism. They would have had to admit the correctness of a point of view which sectarians always defend, according to which the role of revolutionaries consists in confining themselves to propaganda in periods of reaction, while they wait for the return swing of the pendulum to bring back the masses to them.

What lay beneath this discussion - or, rather, this absence of discussion - on the most vital issues is not merely the question of the role of Stalinism, but that of the orientation towards the construction of the revolutionary party, as Trotsky defended it in 1940. Our feeling, after reading the documents of the war period, is that often there were references more like incantations than reflections on what had been gained and on working out a method by which to construct parties. It seems to me - and there is no ill-will here, because I was one of them - that during this period the Trotskyists at least learned how you cannot construct a revolutionary party. Serge Lambert has shown, in a recent and unfortunately still unpublished work, "Revolutionary Tradition and a 'New Party' in Italy in 1912 - 45", that, contrary to a certain legend, the Italian revolution was not decisively

ly defeated at the moment when the short-lived dual power was set up in 1945 between the Allied administration and the "Committees" or the "Republican partisans", but at the moment when the apparatus of Togliatti's "new party", which the men of Moscow set up, broke the resistance of the scattered Communist oppositional groups from 1943 onwards. When every change of establishing a revolutionary party had been destroyed, the game was played out in which the leaders of the Italian Communist Party could without risk give the signal for what they called "the insurrection against the revolution"(45). Serge Lambert very well shows, moreover, that the decisive political weakness of many of these groups - some of which here and there developed more considerable armed forces than those of the Italian Communist Party - lay in the illusion which they held that the USSR possessed some kind of "objectively revolutionary" character. They thought that the revolution was spreading with every advance of the Red Army. We meet this conception, not only in "La Verite" in the well-known article in February 1944, but throughout the world press of the Fourth International (46).

The question which we have tried to raise here is not an academic one. During World War II, were the Trotskyist organisations, leaders and members alike, victims of an objective situation which was beyond them? Could they do no more than they did, that is, to survive by drawing in more members and saving the honour of the internationalists, by maintaining against wind and tide the militant work of fraternising with German workers in uniform? If that is the case, it would be a good thing to recognise that Trotsky, with his analysis of the militarisation which had to be carried out and his perspective that the revolutionary party could be constructed and the struggle for power begun in a short time, was completely cut off in 1940, not only from what politically was really happening in the world, but also from the political reality of his own organisation. He therefore would entertain illusions and perceive possibilities of breaks-through, when the Fourth International was doomed to impotence in fact and for a long time to swim "against the current" and confronted with "the grip of the Stalinists on the masses". But we may suppose, on the contrary, that the Trotskyist organisations, their members and their leaders are involved, and that they have at least some responsibility for their own set-backs. In that case, we may think, if we start from the premises of Trotsky's 1940 analysis, that World War II did develop a mass movement based on a national and social resistance, which the Stalinists did their utmost to divert and which they led to destruction, as in the example of Greece - a resistance which the Trotskyists could neither support nor utilise, because they did not know how to locate themselves in it and even, perhaps, because they could not understand the concrete character of the moment in history in which they were living.

We believe that this question deserves to be asked.

A S H O R T L I S T O F I N I T I A L S

- A. S. O. Military Organisation for Liberation
(APELEPHTHEROTIKI STRATIOTIKI ORGANOSIS)
- E. A. M. National Liberation Front
(ETHNIKO APELEPHTHEROTIKO METOPO)
- E.D.E.S. National Republican League of Greece
(ETHNIKOS DEMOKRATIKOS ELLINIKOS SYNDESMOS)
- E. K. K. A. National and Social Liberation
(ETHNIKIKAI KOINONIKI APELEPHTHEROSIS)
- E. L. A. S. People's National Liberation Army
(ETHNIKO LAIKOS APELEPHTHEROTIKOS STRATOS)
- K. K. E. Communist Party of Greece
(KOMMOUNISTIKO KOMMA ELLADOS)
- O. P. L. A. People's Political Security Organisation
(ORGANOSIS POLITIKIS LAIKIS AMYNAS)

N O T E S

- (1) These documents are in L. Trotsky, "Sur La Deuxieme Guerre Mondiale", which was originally published by La Taupe in Belgium, and was re-issued by Seuil in Paris, from the original, in 1974. The articles and interviews by Trotsky were sometimes mutilated by the removal of passages which do not bear directly on world war II, but were generally about the war in Spain and the Fourth International. These texts are being restored in the successive volumes of the "Oeuvres" in French.
- (2) Here the Seuil edition of 1974 has been utilised, with the preface on pages 7 - 17 and a post-script in that edition on pages 212 - 217.
- In 1945 some of these documents were published in the Internal Bulletin of the European Secretariat, No. 5. Some members reacted strongly against Trotsky. One of them (Arn.), French or Belgian, sent to the International Secretariat an article entitled: "On the subject of the military policy of the Proletariat: Did the Old Man Kill Trotskyism?".
- This article characterised Trotsky's position as "pure and simple chauvinism". It spoke of "the importance of his errors", attributing to him "willingness to defend the fatherland without first overthrowing the bourgeoisie, while at the same time using in agitation the danger from its imperialist opponent".
- He went so far as to ask: "We must openly and frankly pose the question whether we can continue to bear the name of "Trotskyists", when the leader of the Fourth International has dragged it into the mire of social-chauvinism". This is in the Archive of the International Secretariat, in the possession of the Institut Leon Trotsky.

"Fascism, Bonapartism and War", the article to which Broue refers, will be published in full in Vol. 24 of the "Oeuvres" in French. There exist already in English other versions of what appears to be the same text, under the title, "Bonapartism, Fascism and War". One version is in "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939.- 1940)", Pathfinder ed. p. 410, where it has been slightly edited. A note to that publication states that it was first published in "Fourth International", October 1940, in the incomplete state in which Trotsky left it on his death. There is another arrangement, with editorial interpolations, in "The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany", Pathfinder ed. p. 444.

- (4) "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939 - 40), p. 411
- (5) Ibid.
- (6) Ibid.
- (7) Ibid. The annotation to that edition states: "The English translator here added the following note: "Several citations from Lenin during that period fit Trotsky's description. We quote two. 'It is possible, however, that five, ten or even more years will pass before the beginning of the socialist revolution' (from Collected Works, Engl. ed. Vol 22, p. 153, in 'The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination'). There is also: 'We older men will perhaps not live long enough to see the decisive battles of the impending revolution', (from Collected Works, Engl. ed. Vol 23, p. 253, in "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution").
- (8) Ibid. p. 412
- (9) Ibid. p. 414
- (10) D. Guerin: "L. Trotsky; Sur la Deuxieme Guerre Mondiale; Textes rassembles et presentes" (Ed. du Seuil, 1974)
- (11) "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939 - 40), p. 253, in "Discussions with Trotsky".
- (12) Ibid. p. 257
- (13) Ibid. p. 297
- (14) Ibid. p. 298
- (15) Ibid.
- (16) Ibid. p. 299
- (17) "Not Guilty", (the record of the sessions of the Dewey Commission at Coyoacan, Engl. ed. publ. by Secker and Warburg), p. 290
- (18) D. Guerin, op. cit. p. 16
- (19) R. Prager, "Les Congres de la Quatrieme Internationale", Vol. 1, Editions La Breche, Paris 1981, p. 378. This volume is sub-titled, "Naissance de la IVme Internationale". Vol. 2 is sub-titled, "L'Internationale dans la Guerre". See also "Documents of the Fourth International (1933 - 40)", Pathfinder ed. p. 350.
- (20) A. Kedros, "La Resistance Greque 1940 - 44", p. 174
- (21) Ibid. p. 122
- (22) E. Myers, "The Great Entanglement", p. 189

- (23) Kedros, op. cit. p. 199, mentions a report by the German police when Ioannis Rallis came to power: "He passes for the confidential adviser of Pangalos, who is on the side of the English". The same historian refers to the semi-fascist "Military Hierarchy", General Papagos and Rallis as follows: "All these men and formations were to be headed in a certain direction by a secret adviser of the King, who was also a prince of the Church, the Metropolitan of Athens, Chrisanthios". Op. cit. p. 179
- (24) Quoted in Kedros, op. cit. p. 409, from the collection by the Yugoslav Communist and partisan leaders, Svetozar Voukhmanovich-Tempo, "Ueber die Volksrevolution in Griechenland", 1950, p. 38
- (25) D. Eudes, "Les Kapetanios", p. 111
- (26) Quoted in Winston Churchill,
- (27) The official sources of the government in exile placed the figure at 10,000
- (28) The story of this partition on pieces of paper is in Churchill, op. cit.
- (29) Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons on December 19, 1944, defended his use of the word, "Trotskyism".
- (30) Quoted in R. Dazy, "Fusillez les Chiens Enrages" ("Shoot the Mad Dogs"), p. 266
- (31) M. Spero, "The Greek Revolution", in "Quatrieme Internationale", No. 14-15, January-February 1945, p. 24. On the same subject, there exists a special International Internal Bulletin, dated January 1945, which does not even mention the existence of Trotskyist organisations in Greece. "Fourth International", February 1945, carried a documented article entitled "Civil War in Greece", pp. 36 - 49. The paragraph headed "Trotskyism in Greece" confines itself to generalities: "ELAS is Trotskyist only in one sense - the revolutionary instincts of its indomitable fighters, their capacity to fight and sacrifice. But its program and leadership have nothing in common with Trotskyism" and so on. Further on, it says, "The Trotskyists will learn how to link themselves with the masses and their struggles". Under the reign of terror unleashed by the Stalinists against the Trotskyists, it is necessary to wait longer. In "Quatrieme Internationale", No. 22-23-24, for September-October-November 1945, p. 41, there is a note headed "Greece" to inform the public opinion of the workers of the world about the murders of revolutionary militants by the Stalinists in Greece. A preliminary list of names follows. "Fourth International", the organ of the SWP of USA, reported in October 1945, p. 319, in its section "In the Fourth International", "The journals of the P.C.I. (Fourth International), the only revolutionary party in Greece, are illegal. The members of this Party are persecuted and hunted down and often murdered both by the government and by the Stalinists". In fact, there were serious divergences between the International Secretariat and the Greek Trotskyists. On November 25, 1946, Michel Raptis (Pablo) wrote as follows to the Greek section, over the signature "Pilar": "It is not a matter of conforming to the letter of every political resolution of the International. But it is not a matter, either, of taking a diametrically opposite line on such important questions as your attitude to the movement of EAM and ELAS and to the events of December 1944".
- "Fourth International" for October-November 1946 reported a Unification Con-

gress in July 1946. This produced the P.C.I. "Fourth International" published the "Manifesto" of the Conference (pp. 40 - 43):

"Despite itself, despite its nationalist pronouncements, despite its policy of conciliation and class-collaboration, the Greek Communist Party grouped round itself the forces which History set in motion and which, in the last analysis were the forces of the proletarian revolution".

R. Prager (op. cit. p. 348) writes that the Greek Trotskyists had "an attitude of total opposition to the national movement and of totally distancing themselves from the life of the movement... a neutralist position... towards the civil war" which aroused "the anxiety of the European Secretariat. He comments:

"The principal mistake was to have failed to notice, beyond the bourgeois and Stalinist leaders the stringly anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist character of this mass movement, and its revolutionary dynamic; in December 1944 the Greek Trotskyists reduced the struggle to 'a confrontation between British imperialism on one side and the Soviet bureaucracy and its supporters on the other.'" (op. cit. p. 349)

The question is not an easy one; we have found in the archives of the International Secretariat a letter from G. Vitzoris in which he protests against the omission from the Manifesto of the Greek Unification Congress of the slogan, "Withdraw the British Troops", but declares at the same time that he regards as "unacceptable" the fact that the same manifesto does not include a word about the murders of the Trotskyists by the Stalinists.

- (32) Kedros, op. cit. p. 512
- (33) Prager, op. cit. Vol. 2, p. 2
- (34) "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939 - 40), p. 414
- (35) Ibid. p. 413
- (36) Prager, op. cit., p. 13 - 14
- (37) Ibid., p. 12
- (38) Ibid., p. 221 - 223
- (39) "An Answer", in "Defence Policy in the Minneapolis Trial", By James P. Cannon, p. 54
- (40) The interested reader will find in "Cahiers Leon Trotsky", No. 23, September 1985, in the "documents" section, a French-language text of an article by Marc Loris (Jan van Heijenhoort), who was then Secretary of the Fourth International. This article appeared in English in "Fourth International", in September and November 1942. The editors stated, in the October issue, that it was "a discussion article".

Loris stated in an earlier article, entitled "Where Is Europe Going?" that the working class would lead the struggle against the Hitler-ite occupation. He then emphasised the dialectical link between "national" and "social" liberation, in fact "proletarian revolution", while he criticised the illusion which can arise from the "national liberation movement".

This earlier article was dated June 1941, and there is a French-language text of it in the reprint by E.D.I. of the issues of "La Verite" during the war, in the October 1942 issue.

In 1941 Loris wrote:

"It is not the task of Marxists to impose this or that form of struggle which they may prefer. The task is really to deepen, widen and make more systematic all the manifestations of resistance, to bring to them the spirit of organisation and to open a broad perspective before them."

The article seems to criticise the European "revisionists" on the national question.

The 1942 article seems rather to be a polemic against the position of the SWP. One of the documents which Loris wrote in 1944 stresses as "one of teachings of Bolshevism", its contempt for simple propaganda trying to shed light on the virtues of Socialism, its "capacity to sense the aspirations of the masses and to take advantage of their progressive side", and in knowing "how to conduct activities which can win the masses away from their conservative parties and leaders".

The reader who goes back to the original documents in the discussion will find that a great deal of space was given to the "Three Theses" of the IKD, and to their position on the national question. We have not touched upon this question here, which involves open revisionism concealing other divergencies. It is these latter questions which interest us here. In any case the essential documents are in Prager's second volume.

- (41) Compare "La Revolution Francaise", No. 1, 1940, and the different comments of J. Rabaut in "Tout est Possible", pp. 343 - 344, and J.-P. Joubert in "Revolutionnaires de la SFIO", pp. 224 - 226.
- (42) Prager, op. cit. pp. 92 - 101, and M. Dreyfus, "Les Trotskyists pendant la Deuxieme Guerre Mondiale", in "Le Mouvement Sociale", pp. 20 - 22.
- (43) P. Broue, "Chen Duxiu and the Fourth International, 1938 - 1942", in "Cahiers Leon Trotsky", No. 15, p. 35
- (44) The text of the resolution of the National Committee of the SWP in November 1943 was published in "Quatrieme Internationale", No. 11 - 12 - 13, in the September - November 1944 issue, under the title "Perspectives and Tasks of the European Revolution". It was accompanied by an introduction which emphasised "the remarkable agreement between the general line of this document and that of the resolution of the European Conference of February 1944".
- (45) Serge Lambert, "Tradition Revolutionnaire et 'Nouveau Parti' Communiste en Italie, 1942 - 1945", a thesis in political science, Grenoble II, 1985
- (46) The clandestine issue of "La Verite", February 10, 1944 carried a front-page headline: "The Banners of the Red Army will join with Our Red Banners". Felix Morrow (in an article in the Internal Bulletin of the SWP, Vol. VIII, No. 8) quotes this article and mentions also analogous positions taken by the BLP in India, "La Voix de Lenin" in Belgium, "El Militante" in Chile, etc. Of course, the fact that they all reacted in the same way is not necessarily a sign that they agreed on principle. It may also express conservative responses or over-riding pressures upon them.