

# THE Russian Revolution

What is required on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the October revolution is an all-round assessment of its causes and subsequent development, of its international repercussions, and of the development of the Communist movement in Europe under its influence. We are at present in no position to produce such an assessment. No such assessment has yet been produced in the British anti-revisionist movement. The following article deals only with a couple of aspects of the Russian revolution which we feel are very relevant to the anti-revisionist movement in Britain today and which have been too much neglected.

## KAUTSKY

The October Revolution drew a very definite dividing line between opportunists and revolutionaries in the working class movement all over the world. The theoretical leader of pseudo-Marxist opposition to the October Revolution was Karl Kautsky. At no

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stage did he support it. He was its most consistent and thorough revisionist critic. The theoretical positions of later revisionists have only been variants of the position developed by Kautsky in 1918. Trotskyism and Titoism are variants of Kautskyism in "left" disguise. Bukharinism and modern revisionism are "rightist" continuers of Kautsky-ism. And all varieties of European revisionism are today repeating, in one way or

another, Kautsky's declaration that:

"Only for astronomers, but not for Socialists, is the saying valid that light comes from the East... We Socialists of the West are called upon to bring redeeming light to the world."  
(Georgia. 1923. p10)

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The October Revolution, he wrote, was a bourgeois revolution. Because of the difficulties of the situation in which they found themselves the Russian bourgeoisie were unable to establish the bourgeois democracy, which was the form of state required by the situation. The Bolsheviks, led astray by the crude, Utopian unscientific Marxism of Lenin availed of the difficulties of the bourgeoisie to set up what they imagined was a Socialist state. But the Russian Revolution "could only assume a socialist character if it coincided with socialist revolutions in Western Europe". (Dictatorship of Proletariat. 1918 P 97)

Whatever their illusions, the Bolsheviks were leading a bourgeois revolution. Their Utopian attempt to build socialism only led them to establish a more cruel form of bourgeois rule than would be required if they had cooperated with the Mensheviks and other parties to establish a bourgeois democracy. Bolshevism was leading to military-bureaucratic dictatorship, and to Bonapartism.

"The absolutism of the old bureaucracy has come again to life in a new but...by no means improved form. It is only the ancient feudal landestate which is no more. For its abolition conditions in Russia were ripe. But they were not ripe for the abolition of capitalism. This latter system is now undergoing resuscitation, nevertheless in forms which, for the proletariat, are more oppressing and more harmful than those of yore."  
(Terrorism & Communism. 1920 P. 201)

By 1930 many left Mensheviks, including Trotsky, who had supported the revolution in its early stages on an idealistic basis, had retreated into the bourgeois camp. To these Kautsky could with justic say, "I told you so"; which he did.

"There are no many Mensheviks who point out that Bolshevism is threatening to degenerate into a new Bonapartism... Has not Bolshevism been Bonapartism ever since the coup d'etat of 1917? Do people think that this will come about only when Stalin gets himself crowned Tsar... Not even Mussolini thinks it worthwhile to found a new dynasty... Fascism is only the counterpart of Bolshevism, Mussolini merely apeing Lenin... The degeneration into Bonapartism...is not a danger which threatens to arise..., but is what has been actually happening in Russia for about a decade." (Bolshevism at a deadlock. 1930 P.129)

With relation to the Chinese revolution, and Mao tse-tung, Palme Dutt is Kautsky today.

Having thoroughly rejected revolutionary socialism, Kautsky set about developing a theory of reformist socialism to oppose to

Leninism. His essential conclusion was that socialist organisation of industry must justify itself to capitalist society. For example:

"The workers councils will become effective and make themselves a definite power in the process of production, when they succeed, in the same way as labour protection and trade unions have succeeded, in raising the productivity of labour". ( P 62 Georgia)

"Where the employer is superfluous, industry should be socialised. Where he is still necessary, he cannot be compelled by force to manage his business in a reasonable and conscientious manner... Not compulsion, but interest in the result, secures the best quality work, on the part of employers as on the part of wage workers. This may not sound very revolutionary, but Marx would not have devoted the best years of his life to the writing of Capital, ...if the mere possession of power had sufficed for the emancipation of the working class..." (ibid P. 63/4)

Trotsky's mechanical "productive forces" theory of socialism was only a variant of this. Modern revisionist theory is another variant. They all boil down to a view of socialism as a development of economic organisation which becomes necessary at a certain stage in the development of capitalism, and which justifies itself economically by capitalist standards: of socialism as a modification of capitalism. At a certain stage the capitalist interest requires the abolition of private capitalist ownership of the bigger industries and its replacement by a form of public capitalist ownership. This is essentially the "socialism" of Kautsky and the modern revisionists. It has nothing in common with the socialism of the October Revolution.

# TROTSKY

"Trotskyism" has for many anti-revisionist groups become a mere phrase: an abstraction. It has become a term of abuse to be hurled about meaninglessly in factional disputes. The concrete history of trotskyism and the concrete expressions of trotskyism in the British working class movement are not investigated and exposed. And because "trotskyism" has become an abstraction, a situation develops in which the groups that hurl the fiercest phrases about trotskyism are those which come closest to trotskyism in their own behaviour and ideas, (the A.C.M.L.U. in particular should be mentioned in this respect).

The growth of trotskyism in Britain in the past 10 years cannot be denied. It is now far stronger than it has ever been in Bri-

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tain. And it cannot be denied, by anybody who is familiar with the concrete situation, that the revolutionary spirit of the British working class has in many instances tried to express itself in a trotskyist form.

It is possible for the revolutionary spirit of the working class to try to express itself in non-Marxist forms. Where the Marxist movement does not meet the needs of the situation this will almost certainly happen. In "What is to be Done" Lenin showed that it was happening in Russia. And there can be no doubt that it is happening in Britain today. And the more anti-revisionist groups engage in phrase-mongering, and the less they engage in concrete and scientific work to expose opportunism, the more will the revolutionary spirit of the working class be diverted into non-Marxist forms, which will distort it, and in many cases turn it into a counter-revolutionary force.

In the past couple of years it is only the Irish Communist Organisation which has attempted a concrete exposure of trotskyism, or has to any significant extent limited the growth of trotskyism. The ultimate in absurdity was reached when the ACMLU (whose contribution to the exposure of trotskyism has been, at a modest estimate, nil) hurled the accusation of "trotskyist" at the ICO. The same accusation will, of course, now be hurled at THE COMMUNIST. But as Lenin said, what is, is. And if any serious attempt is to be made to expose trotskyism in the British situation, those who are making it will have to bear with being denounced as trotskyists by the paper Marxists of the ACMLU (or, as it now calls itself, The Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain.)

In the following pages we attempt to outline Trotsky's position with relation to the Russian revolution.

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Between 1903 and 1917 Trotsky attacked Leninism as a bureaucratic distortion of Marxism which developed by exploiting the backwardness of the Russian situation, and called for its destruction. On his return to Russia in 1917 Trotsky was faced with the choice of joining the Bolsheviks, being a mere observer of the developing socialist revolution, or joining the counter-revolution. Later, he and his followers tried to spread the myth that it was Lenin who was wrong between 1903 and 1917, and that he abandoned his mistakes in April 1917 in "April Theses", thus allowing Trotsky to join him (a reading of Lenin's "Two Tactics", 1905, and the "April Theses" will dispel this myth.)

Trotsky did not return to Russia until after the Bolshevik party had accepted the analysis made in the April Theses, and were preparing for the socialist revolution. Nevertheless Trotsky did not join the Bolsheviks on his return to Russia. Instead, he got together a centrist hodge-podge of individuals like himself, and for a couple of months opposed Bolshevism, and tried to "reconcile" it with the Menshevism which Lenin had been opposing since 1903. In these months Lenin warned the Bolsheviks against any compromise with Trotskyism.

The Bolsheviks were the only real party which stood for socialist revolution. (Trotsky's Mezhdrayontsi --inter-region group-- was only a bunch of intellectuals who had isolated themselves from the working class movement.) The mensheviks were solidly opposed to socialist revolution. Why, then, did Trotsky not join the Bolsheviks on his return to Russia? Angelica Balabanoff -- who later became secretary of the Comintern, through not a Bolshevik -- put this question to Lenin.

"I noticed that Trotsky seemed to fear that he would not appear revolutionary enough. Lenin seemed somewhat irritated by his behaviour, and I, moved by the constant desire for gaining psychological insights, asked him when we were alone: 'Can you explain to me, Vladimir Ilyich, why Trotsky does not join your party? What is it that separates him from you? Why does he publish his own paper? He seems more Bolshevik than the Bolsheviks...'

"Lenin replied angrily: 'Don't you know? Ambition, ambition, and more ambition.' And in his voice was all his aversion toward any manifestation of vanity". (Impressions of Lenin. P. 126/7)

Trotsky and his group eventually joined the Bolsheviks a couple of months before the October Revolution. There was no question of an alliance between Bolshevism and trotskyism. That was made perfectly clear by Lenin on Trotsky's return to Russia. Trotsky abandoned trotskyism and joined the Bolshevik Party which he had spent 14 years trying to smash.

Trotsky made a significant contribution to the October revolution as a revolutionary orator and agitator; "His brilliant and ambitious personality at once gave him a place only second to Lenin's in the Bolshevik camp... His brilliant, fiery, demagogic speeches... kindled revolutionary enthusiasm and hatred. Their effect was as great as Lenin's. But behind Lenin's there was what was absent in Trotsky's --a clear logic and a cold certainty of what was being done and what should be done. Lenin, while he brought out the revolutionary passion of his audiences, made them think.

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Even on the eve of the great revolutionary assault, Lenin was as much a propogandist as an agitator..."

"Nothing could be more opposed to Lenin's manner --within the limits of genuine revolutionary oratory-- than that of Trotsky. " (Mirsky: Lenin. P.98/9)

From July 1917 until about 1920 Trotsky made a definite positive contribution to the revolution, chiefly in administration and agitation. In the period of the Civil War his administrative ability more than compensated for his bureaucratic approach. On the basic political questions of the revolution he remained as unsound as ever, as is shown by his opposition to Lenin on the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in 1918, and on the Trade Union question in 1920-21.

His main administrative achievement was the organising of Tsarist officers to fight for the Soviet Republic. He also made some notorious strategic blunders. And his sole contribution to military theory was to ridicule the class concept of military strategy developed in the course of actual military struggle by the Red Army group led by Stalin and Voroshilov at Tsaritsyn. The "Stalinist" idea of a "proletarian military doctrine", he later declared, was "in its essence an attempt to extend the guerilla methods of the first period of the civil war into a permanent and universal system" (See Revolution Betrayed. P.204). "Proletarian military doctrine", he declared, should be rejected along with that other "Stalinist" monstrosity, "proletarian culture". However, the germ of proletarian military strategy which began to develop at Tsaritsyn (with the support of Lenin who, during the Civil War communicated directly with Stalin at the front instead of via the Royal Train of Trotsky) has since flourished into the storm of people's war that freed China from imperialism and that is now consuming the imperialist forces in Vietnam.

Despite his bureaucratic approach and his continuous political vacillation and mistakes Trotsky made a positive contribution in this period. Gorky describes a conversation with Lenin:

"I was very surprised at his high appreciation of L. D. Trotsky's organising abilities. V. Ilyitch noticed my surprise: 'Yes, I know there are lying rumours about my attitude to him. But what is, is, and what isn't, isn't --that I know also. He was able, at any rate, to organise the military experts'. After he added in a lower tone, and rather sadly, 'And yet he isn't one of us. With us, but not of us. He is ambitious. There is something of Lassalle\* in him, something which isn't good.'" (Days with Lenin. 1934) (\*Lassalle was a brilliant ambitious

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ambitious personality who "sympathised" with the workers, and organised the first German workers mass movement in the 1860s. He was a brilliant orator and organiser, but was also an authoritarian and bureaucrat. And of course in his view it was Marx who was authoritarian. His relation to Marx had much in common with Trotsky's relation to Lenin.)

A statement made by Lenin in his last major controversy with Trotsky (in 1921 on the Trade Union question) sums up Trotsky in this period:

"I am astonished at the number of theoretical errors...that are concentrated in it" (the pamphlet with which Trotsky provoked the controversy)... "Cde. Trotsky, I am convinced, committed a number of errors that are connected with the very essence of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat" .... Trotsky's views suffer from "bureaucratic project-hatching"... "Thus, from the point of view of principle, of theory and practice, all we can say about Trotsky's theses and Bukharin's position is --Relieve me of this affliction!" ... Trotsky's behaviour was "bureaucratic, non-Soviet, non-Socialist, incorrect and politically harmful". .... As to the "broad discussion" initiated by Trotsky "As far as I am concerned, I am bored to death with it... Cde. Trotsky's 'theses' are politically harmful. Taken as a whole his policy is one of bureaucratically nagging the trade unions"...

"Cde Trotsky's fundamental mistake lies precisely in that he approached (or, more correctly, rushed at) the very questions he himself raised...as an administrator, whereas he could and should have approached these questions exclusively as a propagandist. Indeed, what is good about Trotsky? Not his theses, but... his speeches, particularly when he forgets about his unfortunate polemics..." (From speeches "On The Mistakes Of Trotsky" Dec. 1920 & Jan 1921. Sel Wks. Vol 9)

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Lenin suffered from a series of strokes which made him incapable of work after January 1923. He died a year later. In 1923 Trotsky launched another series of "his unfortunate polemics" when he published the "Lessons of October". This was an attack on Zinoviev and Kamenev, whom Trotsky considered his most serious rivals for the leadership of the Party. From then until 1928 one section of the party intellectuals after another (including Zinoviev and Kamenev) followed Trotsky into the Opposition. From 1917 to 1923, when he held important positions in the leadership of the revolution, Trotsky's behaviour was ultra-bureaucratic. In

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1923 he became, in words, ultra-democratic for the purpose of attacking the Party leadership. The Opposition was refuted theoretically and defeated organisationally by the Party under Stalin's leadership, and its complete lack of principle was exposed. In 1928/9 Trotsky was expelled from the Party and from the Soviet Union. He continued his opposition from abroad.

There are those in the anti-revisionist movement in Britain who deny that Trotsky became an agent of imperialism: or at least that he became a paid agent. That, it is suggested, is one of the distortions of the truth into which Stalin was led by the theoretical errors which, we are told, he made in the mid-1930s, (and which allegedly were the source of the revisionist triumph of the 1950s).

A reading of Trotsky's writings of the 1930s shows that he was the first "Kremlinologist". He taught a generation of bourgeois intellectuals a more subtle method of attacking Communism than the openly imperialist one. As for the question of pay:

"Trotsky's Own Story...: Dramatic Revelations By Banished Revolutionary... Bitter Attacks on Stalin, His Chief Enemy: the Use Of "Force Over A Rebellious People".

"The Daily Express publishes today the first instalment of Leon Trotsky's own story of his banishment from Bolshevist Russia which he did much to create... He blames bitterly his arch-enemy Stalin, the Dictator of Russia..., predicts Stalin's downfall, criticises the Soviets present regime...full of vivid human interest". (From the main front-page headline of the Daily Express, Feb. 27th, 1929.)

Memoirs of an (ex) Bolshevik Werewolf!

Trotsky told his Daily Express readers: "Before I undertook to write the articles I demanded entire freedom of expression. I will say what I think --or say nothing". Beaverbrook not only allowed him to say what he thought, but payed him handsomely for it. For three days Trotsky was given the front page of the Daily Express to say what he thought in. We wonder why?

Ten years later:

"At the end of 1939 one of Life's editors...commissioned him to write a character sketch of Stalin... Trotsky had just concluded the chapter on Stalin in which he suggested that Stalin had poisoned Lenin, and he was to present this version to Life". Life refused on the ground that he provided insufficient evi-



dence. It "demanded from him 'less conjecture and more unquestionable facts'. He sued Life for breach of contract; and... submitted the article to the Saturday Evening Post and Colliers, where again came refusals, until Liberty published it ... In the end Life paid him the fee and rejected the article." (I. Deutscher. Trotsky. Vol. 3. P 446/7)

And a short while later Trotsky sold his "Archives" to that well known centre of Marxist scholarship, Harvard University.

These facts alone demonstrate that Trotsky was a paid agent.

# BUREAUCRACY

"At the beginning of 1918 we expected a period in which peaceful construction would be possible... But we were mistaken, because in 1918 real war damage overtook us... Partly owing to the war problems that overwhelmed us, and partly owing to the desperate position in which the Republic found itself when the imperialist war ended --owing to these circumstances, and a number of others, we made the mistake of deciding to go over directly to communist production and distribution. We thought that under the surplus food appropriation system the peasants would provide us with the required quantity of grain, which we could distribute among the factories and thus achieve communist production and distribution.

"I cannot say that we pictured this plan as definitely and clearly as that; but we acted approximately on those lines. That, unfortunately is a fact. I say unfortunately because brief experience convinced us that that line was wrong, that ran counter to what we had previously written about the transition from capitalism to socialism, namely that it would be impossible to by-pass the period of socialist accounting and control in approaching even the lower stage of communism...

"The surplus-food appropriation system in the rural districts --this direct communist approach to the problem of urban development-- hindered the growth of the productive forces and proved to be the main cause of the profound economic and political crises that we experienced in the spring of 1921". (Lenin. The N.E.P. and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments Oct. 17, 1921)

One of the chief political manifestations of the crises was the revolt in Kronstadt in March 1921. This revolt took place under a banner of struggle against bureaucracy, and against the suppression of Soviet democracy by the Bolsheviks. It was supported

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by the whole of world reaction. It was the first of many struggles against bureaucracy in a socialist state that world imperialism supported.

Now bureaucracy, limitations of democracy, and great material privation for the working class, did exist. Yet the Kronstadt revolt was ruthlessly suppressed by the Bolsheviks. Not to have suppressed it would have been to succumb to the imperialist counter revolution. And on the side of the imperialist counter-revolution there were some who imagined that they were the only true defenders of the revolution. So it is clear that struggle against bureaucracy under the proletarian dictatorship is not a very simple matter.

Lenin described the situation with regard to bureaucracy thus:

"And here we must clearly put the question: Wherein lies our strength and what do we lack? We have quite enough political power. I hardly think there is anyone here who will assert that on such-and-such a practical question, in such-and-such a business institution, the Communists, the Communist Party lack sufficient political power...

"The economic power in the hands of the proletarian state of Russia is quite adequate to ensure the transition to communism. What then is lacking? That is clear; what is lacking is culture among the stratum of the Communists who perform the functions of administration. If we take Moscow with its 4,700 Communists in responsible positions, and if we take that huge bureaucratic machine, that gigantic heap, we must ask: who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can truthfully be said that the Communists are directing that heap. To tell the truth, they are not directing, they are being directed."(Lenin. Political Report of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B) March 27 1922. )

In a later period Trotsky uttered many fine phrases about sweeping aside the bureaucracy. Lenin's approach was very different:

"We can throw out the tsar, throw out the landowners, throw out the capitalists. We have done this. But we cannot 'throw out' bureaucracy in a peasant country, we cannot 'wipe it off the face of the earth'. We can only reduce it by slow and stubborn effort.

"To 'throw off' an ulcer of this kind is impossible. It can only be healed. Surgery in this case is an absurdity, an impossibility: only a slow cure --all the rest is charlatany or naivete...

"It's naive to wave aside the healing process by referring to the fact that you have 2-3 times tried to fight the bureaucrats and failed. First of all, I reply to this... you have to try not 2-3 times, but 20-30 times --repeat your attempts, start over again.

"Secondly, where is the evidence that you fought correctly, skilfully? Bureaucrats are smart fellows, many scoundrels among them are extremely cunning. You won't catch them with your bare hands. Did you fight correctly? Did you encircle the 'enemy' according to all the rules of the art of war?..." (Letter to M. F. Sokolov. May 1921. C.W. Vol 35, P 492)

Lenin's strategy for the struggle against the bureaucracy was for a protracted struggle. The bureaucracy could not be dispensed with at once. It would have to be curbed lest it should develop into a conscious political force and constitute a danger to the proletarian state. And while the bureaucracy was being used in the building of socialism, the force which could destroy the bureaucracy would have to be developed. There is only one force which can 'throw out' the bureaucracy, and that is the politically conscious workemasses who have freed themselves from the shackles of bourgeois ideology.

It fell to Stalin to lead this protracted struggle against the bureaucratic forces, the strategy of which was conceived by Lenin. The trotskyists, and later the Khrushchevite revisionists, have expended much energy in attempts to distort the history of this period so as to make it appear that Lenin's struggle against the bureaucracy was directed first and foremost against Stalin as the chief agent of bureaucracy in the Bolshevik leadership.

However, Lenin's clear assessment of the bureaucratic nature of trotskyism in 1921 has already been quoted. (It is significant that these 1921 speeches Lenin makes his first reference to trotskyism since Trotsky's admission to the Bolshevik Party in July 1917). And this was emphasised in his "Testament" in 1923. And Lenin had this to say in 1922 about Preobrazhensky, Trotsky's lieutenant in the "struggle against the bureaucracy"

"Cde. Preobrazhensky's theses are ultra-super-academic; they smack of the intelligentsia, the study circle and the litterateur, and not practical state and economic activity" .....

"Instructions in the form of decrees' is what the author proposes. It is radically wrong. Bureaucracy is throttling us precisely because we are still playing with 'instructions in the form of decrees'. The author could not have invented anything worse or more pernicious than this".....

"This whole section is bad. Commonplaces. Phrases. Pious wishes that everybody is sick of. It is typical of the contemporary 'communist bureaucracy' ... We must not delude ourselves with lies. That is harmful. It is the main source of our bureaucracy." (Lenin: To Cde Molotov ... Re Cde Preobrazhensky's Theses. March 16 1922. C.W. VOL 33 P 238-40)

Stalin, on the other hand, was characterised by his direct, un-bureaucratic approach to problems, and he saw clearly that the only force which could successfully oppose bureaucracy was the actual working class, (not the abstract working class of Trotsky's bureaucratic conception, which was seen as a mass of chess pieces to be manoeuvred by the 'brilliant' leaders). Against Trotsky, he stood for the right of actual workers to learn by experience how to do things in a workers state.

In the civil war, for example, Stalin's approach led to some initial mistakes being made while workers were learning by experience how to conduct a war: mistakes which perhaps would not be made by bourgeois experts. But the workers learned quickly, and in the long run achieved results which could never have been achieved in a war conducted by Trotsky and his experts. (Which is not to say that the organising of the bourgeois 'experts' done by Trotsky was not made necessary by the situation. The point is that both Lenin and Stalin saw the danger of organising bourgeois officers to conduct the war, and postponed acceptance of it for as long as possible, while Trotsky, because of his bureaucratic approach and his rejection of the class view of the situation, thought that the organising of the bourgeois officers was the only way to conduct the war, that the only path open to the workers was to learn the bourgeois military method from the bourgeois officers.)

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Stalin's view of the question of bureaucracy was stated in his Report to the 13th Party Conference on Jan 9th 1924. It can be seen to be identical with Lenins:

"The second obstacle to the implementation of democracy in the Party is the pressure of the bureaucratic state apparatus on the Party apparatus, on our Party workers. The pressure of this unwieldy bureaucratic state apparatus on our Party workers is not always noticeable, not always does it strike the eye, but it never relaxes for an instant. The ultimate effect of this pressure of the unwieldy bureaucratic state apparatus is that a number of our functionaries, both at the centre and in the localities, often involuntarily and

quite unconsciously, deviate from inner-Party democracy, from the line which they believe to be correct, but which they are often unable to carry out completely. You can well visualise it: the bureaucratic state apparatus with not less than a million employees, largely elements alien to the Party, and our Party apparatus with not more than 20,000-30,000 people, who are called upon to bring the state apparatus under the Party's sway and make it a socialist apparatus. What would our state apparatus be worth without the support of the Party? Without the assistance and support of our Party apparatus, it would not be worth much, unfortunately. And every time our Party apparatus extends its feelers into the various branches of the state administration, it is quite often obliged to adapt Party activities there to those of the state apparatus. Concretely: the Party has to carry on work for the political education of the working class, to heighten the latter's political understanding, but at the same time there is the tax in kind to be collected, some campaign or other that has to be carried out; for without these campaigns, without the assistance of the Party, the state apparatus cannot cope with its duties. And here our Party functionaries find themselves between two fires --they must rectify the line of the state apparatus, which still works according to the old patterns, and at the same time they must retain contact with the workers. And often enough they themselves become bureaucratized."

In order to overcome bureaucracy and develop proletarian democracy

"It is necessary, firstly, that industry should develop, that there should be no deterioration in the material conditions of the working class, that the working class increase numerically, that its cultural standards advance, and that it advance qualitatively as well. It is necessary that the Party, as the vanguard of the working class, should likewise advance, above all qualitatively: and above all through recruitment among the country's proletarian elements. These conditions of an internal nature are absolutely essential if we are to pose the question of a genuine, and not merely paper, implementation of inner-Party democracy...

"That is why I believe that democracy must be regarded as dependent on conditions, that there must be no fetishism in questions of inner-Party democracy, for its implementation, as you see, depends on the specific conditions of time and place at each given moment". (Vol 6 P'8)

Trotsky's sloganising in the Opposition for some kind of metaph-

ysical democracy unrelated to time or place (or even to class, except as an abstraction) was only an unprincipled manoeuvre to serve a factional purpose. Was it not well known that this new champion of democracy had until recently been the most ardent champion of bureaucracy. Were they to believe that "Trotsky, this patriarch of the bureaucrats, could not live without democracy". (Vol 6 P29).

Trotsky's call for the rank and file to throw out the Party leadership, for the youth to oppose the old, etc., could in the actual circumstances only have one meaning

"I am afraid that this error of Trotsky's may expose our entire Party apparatus --the apparatus without which the Party is inconceivable-- to attack by the inexperienced members of the Party". (Vol 6 P 17)

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"...the opposition voices the sentiments and aspirations of the non-proletarian elements in the Party and outside it. Without being conscious of it, the opposition is unleashing the petty-bourgeois elemental forces". (Vol 6 P 45)

Subsequent developments in the Opposition brought about a new situation in which the question of their consciousness of expressing the interests of non-proletarian elements could only be a question of their ability to deceive themselves. Maybe Trotsky could be given freedom of expression on the front page of the Daily Express, along with a handsome fee, and subsidise his "Fourth International" by writing books and articles for the imperialist propoganda machine, and still remain unconscious of what he was doing. That is a question of the capacity of the petty-bourgeois psychology for self-deception.

The following statement of Lenin's is very relevant to the question of the struggle against the Opposition, the Party purges etc. of 1924 - 28:

"as a trend, the Mensheviks have displayed in 1918-21 the two qualities that characterise them: first, the ability skilfully to adapt, to 'attach' themselves to the prevailing trend among the workers; and second, the ability, even more skilfully to serve the Whiteguards heart and soul, to serve them in action while dissociating themselves from them in words. Both these qualities are a logical outcome of the whole history of Menshevism... The Mensheviks attach themselves to the Russian C.P. not only and not even so much because they are Machiavellian

(although ever since 1903 they have shown that they are past masters in the art of bourgeois diplomacy) but because they are so 'adaptable'.

"Every opportunist is distinguished for his adaptability (but not all adaptability is opportunism); and Mensheviks, as opportunists, adapt themselves 'on principle', so to speak, to the prevailing trend among the workers and assume a protective coloring, just as a hare's coat turns white in winter. This characteristic must be kept in mind and taken into account. And taking it into account means purging the Party of approximately 99 out of every 100 Mensheviks who joined the R.C.P. after 1918, i.e. when the victory of the Bolsheviks became probable, then certain". (Purging the Party. September 1921. C.W. Vol 33. P 41)

"...the whiteguards strive, and are able, to disguise themselves as Communists, and even as the most Left Communists, solely for the purpose of weakening and destroying the bulwark of the proletarian revolution in Russia". (Resolution on Party Unity at 10th Party Congress. March 1921)

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The fact then, is that Stalin continued Lenin's struggle against bureaucracy, and conducted it in a Leninist manner, while oppositional trotskyism became a "left" cover for the bureaucracy. Stalin led the revolutionary forces in the Soviet Union until his death. After the defeat of trotskyism the main expression of the bureaucracy (which contains the seeds of a bourgeoisie) became Bukharinism, with which trotskyism went into alliance. It was as a variety of Bukharinism (but using much trotskyist phraseology) that revisionism seized control of the Party and State in the mid fifties. We cannot deal with the later stages of the struggle here.

Sections of the trotskyist movement in Britain, and also the modern revisionists, try to represent the proletarian cultural revolution in China as a continuation of trotskyism. One need only look at the reflection of the cultural revolution in the imperialist press and compare that with the imperialist support for the trotskyist opposition in the Soviet Union, and for the Khrushchevite counter-revolution, to see the absurdity, and the dishonesty, of this view. One of the effects of the cultural revolution is the increasing collaboration of the Khrushchevite and trotskyist forces.

The "struggles against bureaucracy" which imperialism supported

were attempts to exploit contradictions existing under the dictatorship of the proletariat for counter-revolutionary purposes. (The Daily Express, which opened its front page to Trotsky thirty Years ago recently published a very 'moving' editorial on Khrushchev, and emphasised the great debt which "humanity" owed him.) The cultural revolution brings the revolutionary proletarian forces into active struggle against one of the most subtle elements of the bourgeois system which remains in the early stages of socialism. It is the forces of the cultural revolution, led by Mao Tse-tung, which carry forward today the great revolutionary struggle against all manifestations of the bourgeois system which was launched by the October revolution 50 years ago.

If you wish to make any comments on the above pamphlet, please write to: D. Golden,  
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Reprinted from THE COMMUNIST of October 1967.

November, 1968

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