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FEB.-MAR. 1948

T H E **BULLETIN**

OF THE WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE
COMMUNIST MANIFESTO
A CRITICISM OF MARX'S POLICIES

A STATEMENT ON OUR LINE

BRITAIN CHANGES THE COLONIAL TACTIC

SHACHTMAN'S POLITICAL CHLOROFORM

**THE POLITICAL BASIS OF TROTSKYITE
TRADE UNIONISM**

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION
A DISTORTION OF FACTS ON THE BOLSHEVIK PEACE TREATY

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WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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* A STATEMENT ON OUR LINE *

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE EMERGED

Our group is composed of workers of varying political backgrounds. Some of our people have been in the movement for more than a quarter of a century, having joined the American Socialist Party in 1912, splitting with the Left Wing in 1919 which formed the American Communist Party, moved from the C.P. to the Trotsky organization, from Trotsky to the Left-Trotskyite Revolutionary Workers League (Ochlerites) and then to political independence to form the nucleus for our group. Others skipped a few stages and came directly from the Trotskyites or from the R.W.L., etc. into our group. Our experiences were varied but gradually from one angle or another we all came to the conclusion that the leaders of the current organizations within the working class were liars and deceivers. Our paths merged around this understanding. Sometimes it was a personal experience which first led to this path, sometimes it was a difference with these opportunist leaders over a sharp political point; the experience varied with the individual. Our basic development, however, was marked by a definite political and organizational pattern and can be traced by certain landmarks.

When the Stalin international turned over the German workers to Hitler in 1933, a group of workers in the American Communist Party left that organization and undertook a conscientious study of the history of the Comintern. That study was the original basis for the foundation of what is now the WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY.

Having definitely established that Stalin's organization was dedicated to preventing any genuine revolutionary movement by the proletariat, our workers then fell into the trap of believing that the Trotsky organization was the revolutionary opposition to Stalinism. The verbal and physical attacks of the Stalin international against the Trotskyites was a strong emotional factor in this belief. But a few months after these workers affiliated with the Trotsky organization in the United States (then called "Communist League of America") Trotsky came out with a total reevaluation of the reactionary Second International ("The French Turn") and gave a theoretical motivation for what later developed into a world wide entry into the parties of the Second International. While the true underlying meaning of this move was not then understood by us, the opportunist nature of Trotsky's proposition was quite obvious. In the ensuing split in the Trotsky organization, our people sided with the Ochler-Stamm-Basky faction which opposed the French Turn. The Ochler led faction was organized into the Revolutionary Workers League in 1935 and stood on the ground that Trotsky was a revolutionist until his reevaluation of the Second International in 1934.

Once separated from Trotsky organizationally, the basic Trotskyist political line of Ochler-Stamm clearly came to view. The Trotsky characterization of Stalinism as "bureaucratic centrism" was taken over by the R.W.L. leaders and later was modified in the formula that Stalinism represented a new historic form of reformism. In every day propaganda, the R.W.L. leaders presented the Stalinist leaders as making "errors" and not as conscious criminals. The R.W.L. leaders explicitly rejected a line of orientation toward the vanguard workers as the basis for building a revolutionary party. The workers who eventually crystallized our tendency advocated the vanguard orientation and evaluated Stalinism as a consciously criminal force. These workers hold that in the exposure of opportunism, primarily Stalinism, lay the path for the building of a revolutionary party. As a result of the ensuing split, the Leninist League was formed in 1937.

Evaluating the political lessons from the time of withdrawal from the Stalin organization through the separation with the R.W.L. we published a book entitled "Stalin, Trotsky or Lenin" by George Marlen. We also began the publication of a periodical entitled "In Defense of Bolshevism" as well as a number of pamphlets dealing with various theoretical problems confronting the advanced workers. In October 1939 the name of our publication was changed to THE BULLETIN and in 1946 we added a supplementary magazine called POLITICAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Meanwhile, our investigation was developing and we unearthed the startling fact that Trotsky was a collaborator of Stalin and played a key role in the bureaucratic development in Russia. We finally came to the understanding that Trotskyism was but an offshoot of Stalinism. This not only moved us further from the Trotsky system but sharpened our understanding of the role of the Oehlerites and other Left-Trotsky groups who stood on the ground that Trotsky was a revolutionist until the "French Turn", or until 1928, as the now defunct Stamm group held when it split from the R.W.L. in 1939.

Once begun on the task of unearthing the roots of the Stalin development, the course of our investigation invariably led back to the very origins of the Russian bureaucratic Workers State. We have discovered a wealth of material showing that the seed of bureaucratism and nationalism which led to the Stalin development was originally planted by the Bolshevnik leaders themselves. All the top Bolshevnik leaders definitely manifested Russian nationalism in their ideology and built their organization on bureaucratic lines. These twin diseases, bureaucratism and nationalism, were carried over by the Bolshevnik leaders into the new state formation ushered in by the October Revolution of 1917. A study of the relationship of bureaucratism and nationalism to the Marxist movement from its very foundation is currently occupying the attention of various workers in our group. As this material is collected in a form suitable for publication, it will be presented to the working class.

WHAT WE DO

The WLRP aims to crystallize the programmatic foundation for a revolutionary party in the United States and a revolutionary international. In pursuance of this aim the WLRP presents a system of ideas for the fight against capitalism, exposing the policy of imperialism and the policies of all opportunist organizations within the working class. Inasmuch as the advanced workers are the key in the struggle against imperialism, the immediate aim of the WLRP is to enlighten these workers on the nature of the pseudo-revolutionary organizations now misleading them. These workers must form the nucleus for a revolutionary party which will really struggle to liberate the toiling masses from every form of oppression. The ideas presented in the organs of the WLRP come into direct conflict with Stalinism, Trotskyism, Left-Trotskyism, Social Democracy, Anarchism, and all the other opportunist currents operating in the working class.

The WLRP exposes the Stalinist bureaucracy as the chief betrayer within the ranks of the proletariat. The potency of this counter-revolutionary force is due to its identification with the October Revolution specifically and the idea of proletarian revolution generally.

Acting as the chief prop of Stalinism is the Trotsky tendency which is the main force operating among the revolutionary anti-Stalin minded workers. This is due to the falsified tradition that Trotsky fought to remove the Stalinist bureaucracy. The WLRP therefore combats the Trotskyists as a necessary

preliminary for the destruction of the Stalinist hold on the advanced sections of the proletariat.

The opportunist leaders have organized a sentiment of hero worship around the names of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. These men have been deified and their works palmed off as the bible of the proletariat. In this opportunist system of politics it is enough to prove that Marx or Engels supported a certain line for it to be accepted as correct and in the best interests of the proletariat. The doctrine of papal infallibility has been introduced into the Marxist system. The purpose is to deaden the mind of the proletariat and to win blind obedience to the current misleaders who present themselves as Marxist leaders. The WLRP unequivocally repudiates this ideology of hero worship as contrary to the interests of the proletariat. Myths of the past are used to paralyze the brain of the living. Thus, as part of our fight to clear the path toward genuine revolutionary policy, we lay bare the truth of the past as well as of the present. In line with breaking with the established custom of hero worship we abandoned the name Leninist League.

In the course of our theoretical struggle we have agreed on the following principles which as a whole differentiate us from all other organizations and tendencies.

WHERE WE STAND

1- We are for the building of a revolutionary proletarian party as the indispensable weapon for the overthrow of capitalism. This party must remain politically and organizationally independent at all times.

We reject as opportunist the building or support to any non-revolutionary party- Labor Parties, Farmer-Labor Parties. Support to such parties is the position of Social Democracy, of the Stalinist bureaucracy at one time or another, and of the Trotskyites.

2- We are for the line of proletarian-led revolution in colonial and semi-colonial areas. Only the international rule of the proletariat can solve the tasks of the colonial masses and free them from the imperialist yoke.

We are opposed to any support to the colonial bourgeoisie or any concession to the false idea that the colonial bourgeoisie can seriously fight imperialism. The colonial capitalists are supported by imperialism, Social Democracy, Stalinism, and Trotskyism, the latter in the form of "critical support." From 1937 to 1945, for example, the Trotskyites applied a line of "critical support" to Chiang Kai-shek. The Left-Trotskyite line (R.W.L.) favored the policy of "marching separately and striking together" with Chiang Kai-shek, implying that colonial puppets of imperialism strike against imperialism in some form or other.

3- We are for the abolition of all national and racial repression and persecution. This can only be accomplished by the revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

We reject as a harmful utopia any attempted solution of the National and Minority questions within the context of imperialist class relations. (National Home for the Jews in Palestine, self determination for oppressed nationalities under capitalism, etc.)

4- We are for the exposure of opportunists and destruction of their influence. We call for an uncompromising fight against opportunism in all

forms at all times with no moratoriums during election or any other periods. The only government we will ever support is a government democratically controlled by the workers with a policy of building international socialism.

We are against any support to opportunist organizations or opportunist-minded individuals in elections. The opportunists support governments led by labor opportunists or capitalists. (Trotskyism, depending upon country of operation, calls for electoral support to Social Democracy, Stalinism, trade union fakers. In England, virtually all opportunist forces lined up behind the Labor Party in the General Election in 1945.)

5- We are for the exposure and unmasking of all labor fakers misleading the unions and other workers' organizations; for replacing the capitalist military machine by a workers' militia. This latter perspective is possible only under the democratic revolutionary rule of the working class.

Such schemes as the Trotskyite proposal for "Trade Union Control of Military Training" is a reactionary snare and delusion.

6- We are for the slogan of Workers Control of Production but this is possible only under democratic proletarian State rule.

We expose the slogan of Workers Control of Production under capitalism as pure demagogy. This was originally introduced by Social Democracy; it is supported at one period or another by the Stalinist bureaucracy and by the Trotskyites.

7- We are for: Workers Revolutionary Councils as the organs of democratic proletarian political power.

We are against the slogan of Constituent Assembly at any and all times since this institution is an organ of bourgeois rule. The position for a Constituent Assembly is supported by the bourgeoisie, Social Democracy, Stalinism and Trotskyism. The Left Trotskyites are for support to this slogan under certain "conditions."

8- We are for a Workers Government on the basis of proletarian rule guided politically by the proletarian revolutionary party and based on free and democratic rule by the workers with all officials elected and subject to recall from below.

We are against "Workers Governments" or "Workers and Farmers Governments" when they mean governments composed by a coalition of opportunist parties on the basis of a capitalist state. This was the type of government set up by the Stalinists and Social Democrats in Germany in 1923 which betrayed the revolution. At present the Workers Government fraud is supported by Social Democracy, Stalinism and Trotskyism.

9- We define the class nature of a state by the form of property prevailing in the economy. In Russia the economy is proletarian in form due to the predominance of nationalized property. However, the Russian proletariat does not rule due to the political domination of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy. The bureaucratic and nationalistic Stalin regime consciously operates to prevent proletarian revolution abroad in order to preserve its stolen power in Russia. The revolutionary proletarian line in Russia is to remove and destroy the Stalin bureaucracy and to introduce democratic proletarian rule and a revolutionary internationalist line. The Russian nationalist Workers

State is an obstacle to Socialism and therefore must be removed by the revolutionary proletariat. At one or another point our line on the Russian question conflicts basically with all other currents within the working class as follows:

The Stalinist line is to palm off Russia as a Socialist paradise and to hold up the Stalin regime as proletarian rule. The Cannon Trotskyites advocate unconditional defense of this Stalinist bureaucracy when the latter is in military conflict with the imperialists. The Oehlerite Left-Trotskyites call for marching separately and striking together with the Stalinist bureaucracy, thereby renouncing the idea that the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy by the proletariat is a precondition to a real struggle against imperialism. The Shachtman Trotskyites, like the Social Democracy on one hand and some ultra-lefts on the other, define the class nature of the Soviet Union by the form of political rule and not by the form of property prevailing.

10- We are for the following principles as guiding lines for proletarian state rule as safeguards against bureaucratism:

- a) The state administrative apparatus to be composed exclusively of elected officials for reasonable specified terms.
- b) Absolute guarantee of recall at any time by the worker electors of officials from the lowest to the highest offices in the government.
- c) The function of the Revolutionary Party is political guidance not technical administration. Political leaders must be elected but such leaders are not to take over state administrative functions, unless specially qualified.
- d) Elimination of bureaucracy, police and standing army which is separated from the workers.
 - a) The arming of the masses and the formation of a toilers' militia.
 - f) A safeguard against the establishment of a privileged officialdom through levelling pay of all functionaries to that of a competent workers' wage.
 - g) Workers' Control over Production.

The above-stated principles have been arrived at on the basis of the study of the Russian Revolution. The organization of power in Russia proceeded along the line of establishing the system of appointments for office, and since no specified terms were stipulated, some of the officials remained in office for life, as Stalin in the post of General Secretary. The Bolshevik leaders instituted a system of individual dictators in factories, of bribing bourgeois specialists, of high pay to State functionaries and exercised recall only from above. The entire policy, domestic and foreign, was geared to the interests of the Russian national bureaucracy and for the preservation of its State powers.

11- At this moment of history both the imperialist and Stalinist led forces are equally guilty of driving towards war. The WLRP stands on revolutionary internationalism and therefore rejects any support to the imperialist or Stalinist bureaucracy. In the present division of the world between the Stalinist camp on the one hand and the American-British camp on the other, we expose both forces and advocate their overthrow. Along these lines, we conflict with all other tendencies directly or indirectly supporting one of these camps as follows:

The official Trotskyites who advocate unconditional defense of the Soviet Union; the Left-Trotskyites who call for marching separately and striking together with the Stalinist-led forces; the Social Democracy and all variations of this current openly lining up behind imperialism and the Shachtman Trotskyites who advocate critical support to imperialist agents (Kokolajczyk, etc.). The WLRP unequivocally combats the influence of such tendencies as part of its struggle against imperialism and Stalinism.

WORKERS LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
JANUARY 1, 1948.

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* ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO *

A SERIES OF FALSE POSITIONS IN THE MANIFESTO

Few documents in the history of political literature have made such a tremendous and lasting impression as the Manifesto of the Communist Party by Marx and Engels. It is apropos at the centennial of this work to review in brief its theoretical and tactical aspects and determine whether the ideas it contains have stood the test of time.

It is a much obscured fact that many of the critical ideas in the Manifesto did not originate with Marx and Engels but were taken by them from the Utopian Socialist literature of their day. A brief description of the value in that literature appears in the Manifesto. "But these socialist and communist publications contain also a critical element. They attack every principle of existing society. Hence they are full of the most valuable materials for the emancipation of the working class."

By 1847 politico-economic analysis had reached a fairly high level. The next phase was the assembling and perfecting the correct criticism and conclusions scattered in the works of the great Utopians and their gifted disciples. In a sense the precursor of the Communist Manifesto was the Manifeste de la democratie written by Victor Considerant in 1843 which contains some of the ideas which Marx and Engels incorporated into their work.

The Manifesto however, is a distinct advance over all the Utopian works in that it furnishes a clear view of the development of the class struggle to its resolution which is the passing of society to a higher stage with classes vanishing together with all political power.

Profound as the work is in many respects, it contains a series of false tactical positions which, if allowed to stand, constitute a great danger to the proletariat. In Section 2 of the Manifesto its authors declare:

"The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: Formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."

Obviously inapplicable in the present epoch, this proposition in the Manifesto was also inapplicable at the time it was written, because in 1847, except for the Communist League for which the Manifesto was written, no organization within the working class set out to achieve the "conquest of political power by the proletariat." In the above citation, Marx slurred over the basic division between the Communist League and all the other political organizations.

Another false thesis in the Manifesto is the declaration that "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties."

On the contrary, all historical experience, both in the days of Marx and after, points to the need for the proletariat to build a separate and distinct organization and to combat all the non-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary "workers parties." It is important to note that the opportunists take advantage of Marx and Engels error in identifying the revolutionary and non-revolutionary parties. The Stalinist bureaucrats as well as other opportunists are frequently engaged in setting up labor parties. This ties the workers to the bourgeoisie for whom the labor party operates in the midst of the proletariat.

To establish the political independence of the proletariat, no other course is possible but the rejection of this false thesis in the Communist Manifesto.

There are a number of other incorrect conclusions in the Manifesto. Marx and Engels held that the German bourgeoisie would act in a revolutionary fashion. This notion was shattered by the concrete experience in the Revolution of 1848.

Among the theoretical omissions in the Manifesto the most important ones are those dealing with the international phases of the class struggle. Thus, the Manifesto completely omits any mention of the struggle for the liberation of the colonies. The Manifesto does not clearly formulate the aim of the revolutionary proletariat, the creation of the International Workers State, but instead says: "united action of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." The thesis is false because it does not take into account the possibility of the revolution starting and unfolding in relatively backward countries, such as Russia, Spain, China, and igniting the leading industrial countries.

The Manifesto does not take cognizance of the fact that national antagonisms are utilized by the bourgeoisie as a political weapon which the ruling classes wield as a matter of conscious policy. The Manifesto erroneously asserts:

"National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto."

An analysis of the mechanics of the class struggle will show that precisely in the period of extreme decay of capitalism, antagonisms among nations and races are artificially fanned to white heat by the exploiters in order to divert the attention of the toilers from the revolutionary solution of the national issues.

While the Manifesto gives a correct dialectical materialist interpretation of historical development and gives an accurate outline of the eventual demise of the capitalist mode of production, it fails to present a class definition of democracy, and abstract. The workers, the Manifesto states, must "win the battle of democracy." This vagueness permitted Kautsky and other leaders of Social Democracy to fight quite effectively against a clear and precise distinction between bourgeois and proletarian democracy. Any worker checking with Marx could find no clarification on this problem.

The supporters and apologists of socialism in one country or revolution in one country can draw their inspiration from certain false theoretical formulations in the Manifesto. The document does not picture the world working class as a single unit assuming the position of an international director of the entire globe, but separates the proletariat into national segments, each of them constituting itself as the nation:

"Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word."

The revolutionary proletariat, no matter of what nation, is never national either in the bourgeois or "proletarian" sense of the word, and never constitutes itself "the nation." Its politics as well as economics are international. That section of the proletariat which constitutes itself as the nation after it overthrows the national bourgeoisie is a section attached to the policy of the

National Workers State, a negation of and an obstacle to the formation of the International Workers State. Among the first steps which the Bolshevik leadership took along the reactionary road was to set up a Russian National Workers State, and did not create an international regime accessible to the workers of all countries. Because of a lack of historical experience the revolutionary workers accepted the national policies of the Russian leadership as proper, but the national imprint on the October Revolution could not but facilitate the ideology of socialism in one country.

Nor does the Manifesto introduce the thesis of the International Workers State even in speaking of the stage of the disappearance of classes and the withering away of the state. Even for that highly advanced historical development it employs national terminology:

"When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character."

It is quite obvious that public power will cease being a political force not when production is concentrated in the hands of the whole nation but in the hands of the entire toiling population of the globe. The public power can never lose its political character within the walls of one nation.

TROTSKY AND THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

It is no accident that the leaders of all the Internationals systematically avoid discussing the false tactical and theoretical features in the Manifesto. They will acknowledge, of course, that the prognosis of proletarian revolution in Germany in 1848 was erroneous and that the Manifesto failed to envisage the hegemony of monopoly capital, and that the prediction of the disappearance of the intermediary classes was a mistake. But they will never dissect or even mention the basic false positions in the document.

To the Stalinist bureaucracy these incorrect positions are priceless. During the Rightist zigzags it concludes alliances with Social Democracy, with bourgeois liberals, even with disguised Fascists. Its publishing houses have been reprinting the Manifesto by the millions of copies and distributing them liberally among the workers. The Stalinists have nothing to fear from the Manifesto and they manipulate the weighty inaccuracies of the Manifesto for their own ends. It is no wonder that the Stalinist bureaucracy maintains a religious atmosphere about the Communist Manifesto and its authors.

The leaders of the Second International who fetishize Marx and Engels, too, also utilize the false tactics contained in the Manifesto. These opportunists cooperate with various out-and-out agents of imperialism, with imperialists like Winston Churchill and de Gaulle, and secretly even with the Fascists.

The Trotsky leaders form united fronts with Social Democracy, give direct support to various labor agencies of imperialism and to the Stalinist bureaucracy. They stand to the left of the Second International and the Comintern. What, then, is the Trotsky evaluation of the Manifesto. A few years before his assassination Trotsky made a brief review of the document and pointed out the errors in prognosis but maintained significant silence regarding the theoretical shortcomings and the Rightist tactical line evident in the Manifesto. But Trotsky went a step further and supplemented this line with the ultra-Rightist position of "Workers Government," a label concealing a bourgeois government formed by Social Democrats and Stalinists. This position was concocted by Stalin's partner in the Trio, Zinoviev, and officially sanctioned at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. Yet, Trotsky draws the conclusion that:

"The Manifesto must therefore be amplified with the most important documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International." (The New International, Jan. 1938 p. 22)

Trotsky knew full well that the Theses of the Fourth Congress instructed the workers to give support to the Social Democratic regimes fraudulently described as "Workers Governments." He stands on that criminal policy of Zinoviev's first because he aided in shaping it, and most important, because in the revolutionary situation in Germany in 1923 he aided the Stalin clique to spring the trap. The records in the Comintern press of those days establishing Trotsky's guilt can never be erased.

The "Workers Government" trap officially promulgated by Zinoviev at the Fourth Congress and applauded and endorsed by all the Lovestones and Brandlers of the Comintern, was but the cornerstone of the "People's Front Government" trap advanced by Stalin's flunkie Dimitrov at the Seventh Congress and enthusiastically backed by all the Cachins and Browders. What Trotsky actually proposed was that the Communist Manifesto be brought into fuller harmony with the political Rightist line of the Stalinist bureaucrats.

The centennial of the Manifesto bears a special significance to the Trotsky movement, for Trotsky predicted that:

"When the centennial of the Manifesto is celebrated, the Fourth International will have become the decisive revolutionary force on our planet." (Ibid.)

This proud boast was in actuality a shot in the arm for the Trotsky organization, which always requires artificial stimulation to keep its membership in a hopeful state of mind. The statement is rich in deception. To begin with, it is utterly unscientific to attempt an exact prediction of any development in society to be reached at a certain specific date. Far more important is the fraud that the Trotsky Fourth International is a revolutionary force. A close investigation of the origin and rise of the present Trotsky tendency establishes it to be an integral part of the Stalinist political system. It was born as a movement for peace and collaboration with the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev Trio in reply to their factional break with Trotsky in the late Summer of 1923. Of the fact that Trotsky's line was peace and collaboration, we have published a wealth of documentary evidence from Trotsky's own pen.

Uninformed people who accepted Trotsky's prediction that by 1948 his organization would become a decisive revolutionary force probably understood it to mean that numerically the Comintern and the Second International would recede into the background, leaving the Trotsky movement in the leading position. Little is known of the fact that in 1923 the workers and many leaders of the Comintern virtually worshipped Trotsky while in Russia his supporters had a majority in the Moscow Party organization and nearly half of the membership of the entire Russian Communist Party. What is of utmost importance is the fact that Trotsky was backed by the most militant and advanced section of the Russian proletariat. Unfortunately the workers who were swept into the Left Opposition did not know that Trotsky's opposition to Stalin was a sham like the opposition of the British Labor Party to British imperialism. The truth about Stalin's bureaucratic intrigue against Trotsky, about Lenin's Testament in which Lenin expressly stated that Stalin must be removed was hidden from them not only by Stalin but also by Trotsky. Had the Trotsky group been revolutionary it would have cleaned up the Stalin clique. Not only in 1923 but in 1927 also, the Stalin gang went through a serious crisis. Stalin's policy in China brought the Revolution of 1925-27 to collapse and there was a wave of tremendous discontent throughout the Russian Party and the Comintern. The opposition workers rushed

to Trotsky insisting that the hour for the removal of the Stalin gang had struck. But Trotsky, according to his own testimony, poured cold water on the spirit of his aroused followers and told them that Stalin must stay in power, on the flimsy pretext that they could not take control on the basis of the defeat of the Chinese Revolution.

After Trotsky was exiled from the Soviet Union he organized large anti-Stalin forces throughout the world. At times in some countries the numerical strength of his groups exceeded that of the Stalin parties. This was especially striking in Spain before the revolution. While the Stalin party counted hardly a hundred members throughout Spain, with only fourteen in Madrid, the Trotsky adherents numbered in the thousands comprising the best section of the Spanish proletariat. Had the Trotsky movement been really revolutionary it would have exerted its influence upon the Spanish masses along the line of exposure of the Stalinist Social-Democratic and Anarchist betrayers. Historical evidence shows that the Trotsky line was to rebuild the moribund Stalinist party, to give it vitality and recruit workers into that deadly trap. The combined Stalin-Trotsky efforts to create a powerful Comintern section in Spain bore rich fruit and paved the way for the formation of the Stalin-sponsored Azana regime which, as could have been expected, sabotaged the workers' efforts to defeat Franco.

During the Civil War Trotsky's "revolutionary" force, (the American and some other sections in the parties of the social democracy) gave "critical" support to Azana and thus in the historical sense aided the Franco cause.

Though Trotsky's prophesy about his Fourth International becoming "the decisive revolutionary force" by 1948 was an optimistic drug, it cannot be denied that his tendency constitutes the decisive force in the rise and consolidation of Stalin's power. Ever since Trotsky concealed the inner circle intrigues in the Bolshevnik leadership, brazenly and publicly denied the existence of the Testament and established himself as the loyal oppositionist, he was sustaining the bloody Kremlin Dictator. And that is the true reason why Stalin has been able to disrupt every revolutionary situation and why at the centennial of the manifesto there is no revolutionary party to guide the workers out of the present catastrophic situation. The world proletariat is spiritually numbed and politically paralyzed by the Stalinist, Social-Democratic and Trotskyite opportunists and various labor fakars. And only a political child or conscienceless swindler can assert that the masses can achieve their emancipation while these reactionary forces retain their grip on the proletariat.

That at a certain turn in the historical path the proletariat will shake off the betrayers there can be no doubt but when this turn will occur is impossible to predict. One hundred years ago the Communist Manifesto declared that: "Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society." Are these words true? We think they are. Although in the technical field there has been a tremendous development under this very bourgeoisie yet in the social life the bourgeoisie has dragged humanity through a horrible experience of military devastation and intense suffering. These excruciating tortures caused numerous revolts against the bourgeoisie.

One of these revolts appeared to be the successful beginning of the elimination of the capitalist society. In 1917 the Russian bourgeoisie, a section of the world bourgeoisie, was overthrown. But the Russian revolution, as experience has shown, was not the beginning of the world revolution and the development of the International Workers State. The Bolshevnik leadership, bureaucratic and Russian-Internationalist, set up the national bureaucratic Workers State, a direct antithesis of the policy of a democratic International workers State.

The bureaucracy of the Russian State, disguising itself as a true internationalist proletarian tendency, traps the workers and continuously betrays them to the bourgeoisie.

It is impossible to smash the Stalinist machine of counter-revolution without liberating politically and organizationally the key section of the proletariat, the Trotsky workers who are misled into "fighting" Stalin by supporting him.

At the centennial of the Manifesto the imperialist and Stalinist rulers are preparing to plunge the world into a new bloody catastrophe. Is this catastrophe unavoidable? If things are left to continue within the working class camp as today, the tragedy cannot be prevented. The only path towards saving the toiling masses from the "inevitable" holocaust is the exposure of the deadly Trotskyite sentinels of Stalin, the assembling of the subjectively anti-Stalinist revolutionary vanguard into an authentically revolutionary international, and the destruction of the Stalinist obstacle to the overthrow of the capitalist system. Difficult as this path is, there is no other from the terrible blind alley into which the opportunists have led humanity.

JANUARY 1948

* SHACHTMAN'S POLITICAL CHLOROPORM *

At the Trotsky Memorial meeting held by the Workers Party on September 5, 1947, Max Shachtman went through the yearly routine pursued by all the leaders of the multi-lateral Trotsky movement of wafting "revolutionary optimism" from the speakers' platform:

"We do not believe that the masses will stand by impassively while the yoke is fastened firmly over their necks, while the wheels grind remorselessly to the war that threatens the extinction of civilization." (Labor Action, Sept. 15, 1947)

Shachtman does not believe! War is an extremely serious matter, and the workers will be committing themselves to a terrible fate if they allow this dangerous "optimism" to numb their senses, as was the case preceding the war of 1914 and during the rise of the Hitler regime. For decades prior to

the war of 1914 the leaders of Social Democracy saw the tangible signs of the impending conflict among the imperialist powers but did nothing real to prepare the masses to act in the contingency. Many of those leaders pretended to "believe" that the masses would answer the drumbeats of mobilization with resistance to the imperialists. And when the workers, drugged with this reassuring opinion, marched off to the battlefields, the Social Democratic leaders fed their victims with the poison of chauvinism.

On what does Shachtman base his "we do not believe"? What is there to prevent the mobilization of the workers of all countries for another wholesale slaughter? Shachtman's own estimate is that the Stalinist bureaucracy brings to the masses "not peace but war." Yet is it not a fact that the Stalinist force has secured a stranglehold on the entire eastern half of the European continent and is making ready for a test of strength with the American-British imperialists? And, is it not a fact that the imperialist war propaganda against Stalin has been of late enjoying a new invigoration? Shachtman knows as well as we do that only a powerful revolutionary force in the capitalist world and in Russia can divert the present course of history from the chasm of war toward the Socialist path. But where is this force? Shachtman knows full well that there is no such force in existence.

And this brings us to the examination of another capsule of Shachtman's "optimistic drug." He says: "We see already the rising antagonism to American imperialism all over Europe, the preparation of the rebellion against it." (Ibid.)

Shachtman avoids stating the fact that it is the Stalinists who are siphoning off the discontent of the European masses into the channel of Stalin's bureaucratic interests. And the Stalinist bureaucracy in Shachtman's own words, "brings not freedom but tyranny." So without a revolutionary leadership what can a rebellion of the workers under the Stalinist or Socialist leadership produce, except either a Stalinist or imperialist tyranny! Let us recall the costly lessons of history proving this point. The masses of Spain rebelled against their capitalists and landlords. But no sooner did the struggle break out than the Stalinist bureaucracy took the lead together with other opportunist forces and betrayed the Spanish masses to Franco. We remember the Stalinist betrayal of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 with the result that the masses of China were saddled with the regime of the butcher Chiang Kai-shek. In Europe the workers of France and Italy fought the Nazis, but instead of liberation from capitalism they find themselves with the capitalist yoke fastened on their necks, because they were and are led by the Stalinists and Socialists. The workers of Yugoslavia fought Hitler; they are now military slaves of Stalin's puppet, Tito.

Shachtman knows all these facts. Yet he is pouring out chloroform to deaden the vigilance of the proletariat!

What is the situation in the Stalin-dominated territories? In this case, too, Shachtman paints a glowing picture of the rising movement of struggle against the Stalin dictatorship:

"We see already the rising antagonism to Stalinist imperialism all over Russian-occupied Europe-- in Poland, in Rumania, now in Hungary-- and the preparation of the rebellion against it." (Ibid.)

The opposition to Stalin in Hungary, Poland, Austria, Germany, Rumania, Manchuria and Korea is directed not by a proletarian-revolutionary party but

by agents of capitalism, just as the workers' antagonism against the capitalists in France and Italy is under the treacherous misguidance of Social Democracy and the agents of Stalin!

In his speech Shachtman boldly assured his audience that his party stood completely apart from the capitalist and Stalinist political mazes:

"We are the party-- not of Washington and not of Moscow-- but of socialist independence." (Ibid.)

Never judge a man by what he says of himself. Shachtman's party of "socialist independence" aided Attlee and Bevin, the labor agents of capitalism, to the seat of power in the British general elections of 1945. It has given support to various puppets of imperialism such as Mickolajczyk in Poland, has advocated the formation of a Social-Democratic-Stalinist government in France. It is this sort of "socialist independence" that ties the workers who follow Shachtman to the capitalist and to the Stalinist bureaucracy, sometimes simultaneously to both, more often only to the political stooges of Washington. And with such a line Shachtman promises to make "efforts for restoring the independence of the working class"!

To secure freedom for the toiling masses of both Russia and the capitalist world, it is necessary to banish from the proletarian camp all the irresponsible, fatalistic, hollow, "optimism" and recognize the bitter truth that no independent, proletarian-revolutionary party stands today in opposition to the forces of reaction. Quite the contrary, every party, despite the spectacular phrases its spokesman may employ, is, by the political record of its activity, lined up at one time or another with either Stalin or the capitalists. And only when the advanced workers in those treacherous party-traps become aware of this deplorable condition and launch a truly independent proletarian revolutionary party, will there be a basis for spreading the atmosphere of authentic revolutionary optimism. For with such a revolutionary party leading the masses, no power on earth will be able to resist the proletarian struggle for the overthrow of its oppressors.

November 1947

* BRITAIN CHANGES THE COLONIAL TACTIC *

1. The Illusion On The Dissolution Of The Empire

Among the numerous illusions spread today is the notion that the British Empire is dissolving, that the English capitalists can no longer hold all of its sections together. Supposedly the British imperialists have relinquished their hold on Palestine. India and Burma presumably have been granted independence. Thus, in appearance, the British imperialists quite peacefully have been loosening their grip on the most vital territories of their far-flung Empire.

A closer view of the situation, however, reveals that the British imperialists have simply changed their tactics in keeping their Empire together. In Burma a financial accord guarantees protection for the commercial interests of British citizens and the British-Burmese Treaty provides for a British military mission to stay on in that country. The Burma government is bound by the terms of the treaty to facilitate and assist the transport of British military forces when the latter decide that a war emergency exists. Naturally this provision was inserted to give the British a pretext to reoccupy the

country if this is deemed necessary at some future time.

The heterogeneity of the populations of India and Palestine enables the British to set one section of the inhabitants against the other, meanwhile retaining actual control. In India the division of the country along religious lines serves as a natural stimulant for religious and racial warfare. The expected is taking place and bloody clashes in India are a common occurrence. While these two sections of the population are embroiled in conflict, the British manipulate the incitement and supervise this so-called "independence" of India.

Insofar as Palestine is concerned, the deceit is even more obvious. The plan adopted by the United Nations to divide Palestine is tailored to fit the British policy of separating the population of a country into mutually hostile national and religious camps. Both the Arab and the Jewish nationalist leaders are attached to the British imperialists. At one moment the British policy is to support its Arab puppets and to use the Jews in the traditional scape-goat manner. At another moment the British policy will be effected in such a manner as to encourage the Jewish Zionists to slaughter the Arabs.

The present fighting in Palestine is imperialist-concocted. The Fascist Mufti, officially on the war-criminal list of the imperialists, was permitted to escape and place himself at the head of the Anti-Jewish movement. The Arabs are supplied with war materials and the Arab leaders are free to organize armed forces for a bloody British-incited Arab-Jewish strife.

2. The Special Position Of British Imperialism

There is one feature in the situation of British imperialism which does not obtain in the case of American or French imperialism, and this is the particular outlook of the British working class regarding the Empire.

It is obviously true that the French proletariat is not imperialistic. Subjectively it is revolutionary, long aiming to replace the capitalist system with Socialism. Nor is the American worker consciously imperialistic. He is not concerned with the problem of a colonial empire because of the prevalent idea that the vast territory of the United States is self sufficient. The American worker supports imperialism and its wars abroad only because he accepts the story that this is a long-arm policy calculated to safeguard the continental United States against foreign aggression.

The matter is totally different with the British workers. The British proletariat was "educated" to believe that its welfare was bound up with the building and the preservation of the Empire. This ideology still persists. The feeling lingers on that not all the colonial advantages have been used, that hope for the improvement of conditions at home rests in the maintenance of the overseas possessions.

3. The Reasons For The Change In British Imperialist Tactics

Disturbances in the Empire always caused an uneasy atmosphere at home in England, and not among the ruling classes alone. With the steady decline of capitalist stability throughout the world and the growth of the colonial proletariat, the maintenance of the Empire has become increasingly difficult. Staggering under oppression the colonial masses press with ever greater insistence for the abolition of the British rule. As one result, the British imperialists have been compelled to resort to the demagogic tactic of "independence."

But there is yet another and very significant reason for granting sham independence to India and the "creation" of the Jewish state. The British imperialists are approaching a war situation. The present "cold war" between Stalin and the imperialists is developing in intensity. Charges of aggression, of robbery and suppression of opponents are made by both sides, not without some substantiating facts. The problem that both Stalin and the imperialists are facing is to impress the masses with the Stalinist or imperialist "righteousness" and the criminality of the opponent.

The imperialist propagandists are raising a hue and cry over Stalin's brutal rule in Poland and the Balkans, his marauding in Manchuria, the political and military maneuvers in Korea, etc. Yet it is impossible to erase the significant fact that it was Roosevelt and Churchill who agreed to Stalin's occupation of these territories in the course of their secret diplomacy during 1943 to 1945. The imperialists, quite aware of Stalin's robber policies and the line of bureaucratic aggrandizement deliberately agreed to Stalin's occupation in order later to raise a hypocritical outcry and thus lay down a justifiable ground for war.

Nor was Stalin in the dark as to why the imperialists were so amicable in his occupation of the Balkans, Poland, eastern Germany, Manchuria and northern Korea. As early as the end of 1943 and beginning of 1944 (Foster letter) he laid down the basis for changing the line of his Comintern and no sooner was the war situation wound up than Stalin and the imperialists assumed an aggressive attitude toward each other. The Stalinists charge that the imperialists are oppressors and robbers. While the charge is true it is utterly hypocritical because it is the Soviet bureaucracy which by betraying the world revolution has rescued the imperialists and saved their system of enslavement of the colonial masses and the international proletariat.

One of Stalin's most potent propaganda weapons is the fact that British imperialism has imprisoned within its Empire almost half of the human race. Be it remembered that this repeats the defensive pattern of argumentation which was used by the Soviet bureaucracy when Stalin occupied Georgia in 1921 and the imperialist propagandists exploded with indignation and protests. At that time they were hard pressed by the Comintern stooges of the Soviet bureaucracy and could find very little to say in reply. But this time the British imperialists will counter the charge with the sham independence of India, Burma and Palestine.

4. No Self-Determination of Nationalities Under Imperialism or Stalin

In the early days of capitalism when the feudal ties were in dissolution and bourgeois national states were rising out of the struggle between crumbling absolutism and the democratically-inspired masses, a number of small nations and colonies won their independence. This was true almost exclusively for the Americas and endured only in the case of the United States which grew into an enormous capitalist power. All the Latin American "republics" without exception, became dependencies of the big imperialist powers. Today with imperialism standing supreme in the decaying capitalist world and with the bureaucratic machine gripping the Stalinist world, the idea of establishing independence for colonies and for the small countries in this context, is either an empty dream or a deliberate trap. This petty bourgeois delusion has always resulted in futile bloodshed and continuous oppression. In the present setting the small nations are dependent either on imperialism or on Stalin. And that is why we must brand the following notion spread by the Workers Party headed by Shachtman as a delusion and a snare:

"To liberate Palestine, to make it an independent democratic republic, nothing more was needed than the exercise by the Jewish and Arab peoples

who inhabit it of the elementary right of self-determination. It was and still is primarily the task of the most cultured of these two peoples to take the leadership in the fight to proclaim the independence of Palestine and to defend this independence against all imperialist encroachment." (Labor Action, Dec. 15, 1947)

The Trotskyites always cover their reactionary concrete policies with revolutionary abstractions. No abolition of national and racial oppression is possible without the socialist transformation of society--and no such transformation can be achieved in one country, whether the country is as large as Russia or as minute as Palestine. It is obvious, therefore, that Shachtman is peddling fairy tales, especially in view of the proposal that "the most cultured of these two peoples" are to assume leadership in the struggle against imperialism. Who are these "most cultured" Arabs and Jews? Shachtman is cautious not to state plainly that under the supposedly classless label "the most cultured of these two peoples" are concealed the liberal bourgeois confusers of the Arab and Jewish masses. The plain truth is that in this period of history "the most cultured" of all the peoples, while rejecting the socialist solution, are working for imperialism, consciously or unconsciously.

Most revealing in Shachtman's thesis on Palestine is the assertion that under the guidance of these "most cultured" leaders all the inhabitants of Palestine, that is the wage slaves and their capitalist exploiters, the toiling peasants and the landlords, would win "fully and equally all the basic democratic rights!" The distinction between bourgeois democracy which is a sham democracy insofar as the interest of the toilers is concerned, and proletarian democracy which is established on the basis of the overthrow of all oppression and exploitation, is consciously glossed over by Shachtman. Here are the phrases by means of which this political sleight of hand is accomplished:

"It was and still is primarily the task of the most cultured of these two peoples to take the leadership in the fight to proclaim the independence of Palestine and to defend this independence against all imperialist encroachment. And it is only by acting in this manner, by demonstrating in deeds as well as words that all the inhabitants of Palestine will enjoy fully and equally all the basic democratic rights, that an unshatterable unity of the two peoples could be established with the utmost consideration and protection of the rights and special interests of the minority." (Ibid.)

Shachtman, who knows that every people, including the Jews and Arabs, have class divisions, avoids making this separation in Palestine. He develops a purely bourgeois point of view which is utopian from beginning to end. What he really proposes is unity of the Jewish and Arab propertied classes against the Arab and Jewish toilers under the benevolent eye of imperialism. The British policy is to keep the Jewish and the Arab bourgeoisie divided, and the same policy is designed for the Jewish and Arab masses.

Contributing his share to the general confusion prevalent among the workers, Shachtman diverts the mind from the British policy and attempts to create the impression that peace in Palestine hinges on reconciliation "between the two camps:"

"In the present situation, fraught with the most grisly consequences, we militant socialists do not hesitate to call for 'cease fire!' for immediate reconciliation and appeasement between the two camps." (Ibid.)

We might add, even if "reconciliation" were achieved, the masses in

Palestine would remain exploited and oppressed. The policy of Shachtman's Workers Party as well as the policies of Social Democracy and the Comintern diverts the masses of the whole world from the only path which leads to freedom. It is clear that the first step toward this path is the political extrication of the advanced workers from the ideological network of class collaboration.

The Trotsky leaders trail the Stalinist and Socialist betrayers in the field of watering down the proletarian ideology of the workers. Ten years ago The New International under Shachtman's editorship presented an altogether different understanding of the Jewish problem:

"The Jewish masses must recognize that their plight is the obverse side of the plight of capitalism and nationalism in general. The Jews have reached an impasse because the capitalist system as a whole has reached an impasse." (April, 1938 p. 112)

Manifestly, the present fakery that "the most cultured" of the Jews and Arabs could fight for the independence of Palestine and defend that independence against imperialism, does not stem from a misunderstanding.

The workers grouped around the Trotsky leaders represent the key to the problem of wresting the proletariat from the clutches of the Stalinist and social-democratic betrayers of the masses. The first step in the solution of this problem is the separation of these workers from their own misleaders and the formation of an authentic proletarian-revolutionary party.

JANUARY 1948

S E N D F O R T H E S E P A M P H L E T S

PAGES FROM TROTSKY'S POLITICAL HISTORY

CANNON'S "STRUGGLE" FOR A PROLETARIAN PARTY

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

PART I (17 ARTICLES)

PART II (16 ARTICLES)

AFTER SIXTEEN YEARS OF SILENCE

(ON TROTSKY'S ARTICLE-"DID STALIN POISON LENIN?")

MARK ON A SHAM WAR

** DEADLY MIRAGES **

There is one view which is espoused by all political tendencies which present a program allegedly for the reorganization of society on a classless basis. The Stalinist Comintern, Social Democracy, the Trotsky organizations and the Anarchists- all state that the capitalist system has outlived its usefulness and must be replaced by a new form of economy and way of life. However, history has established that the Socialist ideal can be espoused theoretically in order to cover up a reactionary policy in practice.

Years before the war crisis of 1914 the foremost theorists in the proletarian camp had already proved that the objective prerequisites for Socialism had matured within the womb of capitalist society, and that only the subjective, class-conscious proletarian factor was lacking. This deficiency, however, which persists to this day, has not been accidental. It can be traced directly to the fact that the proletariat has been misguided by its dishonest leadership.

The basic method of betrayal employed by the treacherous misleaders of the working class has been to paint alluring mirages in the background of a catastrophic reality in which the working class periodically finds itself. This induces the proletariat to chase these mirages and leaves the capitalist system safe from overthrow.

One of these fatal illusions presented by the Stalinist and Socialist bureaucrats is the treacherous notion that the bourgeois government is able to smash the powerful financial-economic combines which control it and that it can defend the interests of the toilers. By means of adroit phrasology the bourgeois government is pictured as suddenly changing its class nature and falling under the control of the workers. With this mutation, hunger and exploitation will be wiped out and Socialism will be just "around the corner".

By means of these mirages, the old misleaders maintained their grip on the masses and pushed them in 1914 into a fratricidal slaughter in the interests of international finance-capital.

The Soviet leaders have induced the Russian workers to chase the mirage of "Socialism in one country" and support on their shoulders a monstrous, oppressive, privileged bureaucracy. The lies of the Stalin-Socialist leaders are believed by the majority of the class conscious workers.

In addition, there are other political forces misleading the proletariat with deadly mirages, as for example the Trotsky leaders. In presenting their program to the workers, the Trotskyites first lay down a realistic picture of some phases of capitalistic society:

"Today a handful of monopolists control the country's food supplies, gamble with the health and lives of the people, fix prices and curtail production in the interest of private profit.

"Such private monopolies are an intolerable menace that must be smashed. Production must be organized for the needs of the people. The profiteers must be kicked out, their control utterly destroyed."
(Editorial, The Militant, September 22, 1947)

It is indisputable that the working people must get rid of the capitalist control of economy. Every enlightened worker knows that. He also knows that the task can be achieved only by a genuine proletarian government, not by the very same government which safeguards the interests of the monopolies and which, as the Trotsky leaders know, is controlled by finance capital. On this vital issue, however, the Trotsky leadership paints a delusive picture:

"The profiteers must be kicked out, their control utterly destroyed.

"The food and other vital industries must be taken over by the government and operated under the control of the working people. A real fight against monopoly means, above all, expropriation of the trusts." (Ibid)

A beautiful mirage! "The government" takes over the food trusts "and other vital industries," in fine, the whole basic industrial fabric of the country, the workers are put in control of the economy and are well on the way to Socialism! Presto Change, and the Trotskyist artists transform a capitalist government into a workers government.

Of course, these "proletarian" leaders recognize in their solemnly adopted platforms that a capitalist government can never be transformed into its very opposite. They show here and there that even a government headed by Social Democrats or Laborites, or a coalition of Left Republicans, Stalinists and Socialists is still a capitalist government serving the needs of the bourgeoisie. The Trotsky leaders often declare that only a revolutionary party can lead the masses to the expropriation of the trusts and the formation of the proletarian government. But all these correct statements are mere abstract proclamations and professions of faith. Concretely, however, the Trotsky leaders present not only the illusion of the bourgeois government breaking the trusts and monopolies and turning control over to the workers but they supplement it with the assurance that the political instrument which can accomplish this is not a revolutionary party, it is not their Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, which they call "the party of revolutionary Marxism." The party, they say, that can accomplish this is a Labor Party! After decades of concrete experience with a host of Labor Parties of various colors, in and out of power, all serving capitalism, the Trotsky misleaders implant the illusion that a Labor Party can actually be a force to break the power of the monopolies and place the workers in control!

"The final and definitive answer to Wall Street's inflation-hunger program is political action. The political rule of the monopolies must be broken by the independent political action of the workers. Labor and its allies among the lower-middle class and poor farmers must fight for governmental power through their own Labor Party." (Ibid)

A Labor Party, no matter how "Socialist" sounding its demagogy, serves the bourgeoisie by channeling off the militant spirit and energy of the workers into support to the capitalist system. Only a true proletarian, i.e., revolutionary, party can achieve the task of expropriating the monopolies.

It must be noted that the Social Democrats, like the Trotskyites, also peddle the Labor Party delusion with its "workers control" and other similar optimistic frauds. The "Labor Party" advocates seek to make the American workers follow in the tragic footsteps of the proletarians of England, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and other countries. The chasing of "Socialist" "Communist" and "Labor Party" mirages has cost the European masses innumerable lives. Today new tragedies are in the making, and no other force can lead the masses towards breaking the power of capitalism, can guide them towards the establishment of the International Workers State than a revolutionary proletarian movement. This movement can rise only with the exposure of the Stalinist, Trotskyist and Social Democrat organizations which, through conscious treachery, are betraying the world toilers to the class enemy.

* THE WORK OF CANNON AND SHACHTMAN *
* IN THE TRADE UNIONS *

THE POLITICAL BASIS OF TROTSKYITE TRADE UNIONISM

CONCLUSION

The trade union policies of an organization are but a reflection of its political line. Learn the political line of an organization and you will automatically know the character of its policies in the unions. This is an invariable political law.

Let us trace the Trotsky political line and its form of expression in the unions. As we have shown in the first section of this series, "The Period of Dual Unionism," the Cannon-Shachtman leadership in 1928-1932 were whooping it up for the Stalin-created dual unions and urging the workers to support these Stalinist traps. This was but a union translation of the Trotsky political policy. For example, the Trotsky leaders were unashamedly speaking of the Stalinist engine of counter-revolution in the United States as our party, and boldly used the possessive when referring to Stalin's American party:

"Our total vote in 1928 in all the 34 states where we were on the ballot was 45,710 an increase over 1924 not at all commensurate with the fact that in this election, we were on the ballot in 20 additional states...." (The Militant, February 15, 1929. p.4)

In those years, Cannon and Shachtman never bothered to disguise their attachment to the Stalin party and never ceased assuring the workers that the C.P. represented the immediate and final aims of the proletariat:

"The principle issue of the day is unemployment, and the wage cuts, evictions, and starvation that accompany it. The Communist Party has properly focused the attention of the working class on this point. This party is the only one in the field that represents not only the immediate but also the final interests of the proletariat." (The Militant, September 1, 1930, p.1)

Obviously, the Trotsky leaders were determined to continue tying the workers to the Stalinist machine.

The Trotskyites were repaid for their pro-Stalinist policy in the unions and in the direct political field by abuse and beatings. When the leaders persisted in making public demonstrations of allegiance to Stalinism, the Stalinist "ingrates" showed their appreciation in the customary manner, as for example:

"The meeting on Wilkins and Intervale, which was broken up last Saturday by party members and sympathizers, was called to discuss the problems of the workers and urge them to support the party in the coming elections as well as in the day to day struggle."
(The Militant, July 2, 1932, p.2)

Such receptions did not at all swerve Cannon-Shachtman from their predetermined policy of support to Stalinism. In article after article, the Trotsky press argued for their policy and rallied the Trotskyite workers in the direct interests of the Stalin bureaucrats. At a Stalinist-led "United Front" May Day Conference in 1931, the Trotskyites clandestinely made their appearance and one of them succeeded in gaining the floor for five minutes. The Stalinist chairman apologized to the assemblage for committing the blunder of allowing a Trotskyite to take the floor. Undismayed by this reception, the Trotskyites at the conference sent in a cash contribution and submitted a pledge to "aid" in the "work" controlled by the Stalin-gang. This touching profession of loyalty went unanswered, the Stalin leaders returning the cash contribution and rejecting the Trotskyite pledge. (Report in The Militant, April 15, 1931, p6)

It must always be borne in mind that this Trotsky policy was applied in the period following the Stalin betrayal of the German revolution of 1923, the British General Strike of 1926, and the tremendous Chinese revolution of 1925-27, to mention the most outstanding samples of Stalinist-wrought havoc. And during the 1928-32 period, when the Trotsky leaders were spreading the poisonous deception about the revolutionary aims, policies and intentions of Stalin's party here, the Stalinist leaders were preparing to turn over the German workers to the Hitler hangmen. The lying assurances of the Trotsky leaders helped to conceal the true aims of the Stalinist criminals and screened their preparations for betrayal.

So far did the Trotsky leaders go in this role as footmen for the Stalinist party that when an old I.W.W. worker jumped from the syndicalist frying pan into the Stalinist fire, The Militant shouted:

"It is a correct step for Scarlett to join the Communist Party."
(October 10, 1931. p.4)

When elements in the Trotsky controlled mine union fraction stirred restively against the openly pro-Stalin policy, they were lectured as follows by Cannon-Shachtman:

"We know how essential the Communist party is, and that it is the only workers political party." (The Militant, September 17, 1932)

Such was the openly Stalinist line foisted upon the workers by the Trotsky leaders. Cannon and Shachtman never repudiated this policy; on the contrary, they unequivocally paint their past policies in revolutionary colors. They stand on their past and defend it as their "revolutionary heritage." The Trotsky workers following this flag do not realize that their tradition is rooted in a pro-Stalin policy which is hidden by a mountain of fraud.

THE STALIN RIGHTIST SWING

The ultra-leftist zigzag of the Stalinern in 1928-32, the notorious "Third Period" line, culminated in the victory of Fascism in Germany in 1933. This left zigzag was originally set in motion to cover up a number of betrayals which had been engineered through a previous rightist policy. (The

English General Strike of 1926, the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27) When the workers become disillusioned with the effects of one policy, the Stalin leaders cover up their tracks by switching to an opposite line. With the victory of Hitler in Germany, the Stalin leaders had to conceal their treachery and ward off the resentment of the workers by a "new" line. Thus the ultra-left Third Period policy gradually gave way to another ultra-right swing.

In the trade union field the Stalin gang dropped their dual unions and wound up as cheer leaders for John L. Lewis in 1935. In the same year Browder returned from a visit to Moscow and announced a new perspective: An American Labor Party. The American Stalinist Party then moved at an accelerated pace to the right. They became the loudest American "patriots," and sang Roosevelt's praises to the skies. In the spring of 1939, after the betrayal of the Spanish Revolution, the Stalin leaders halted the ultra-right swing and took a few steps to the left. They began to curse Wall Street again, they denounced the "imperialist war" begun in September, 1939, and Roosevelt's foreign policy. But with the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union in June, 1941, the Comintern policy was hitched to Stalin's diplomatic needs and an extreme right swing was begun again, and this time went further than any previous rightist line.

In this early epoch of the Stalin right swing (1935), the Trotsky leaders followed a policy based upon this Stalinist right turn, but their line was modified by the more advanced ideology of the Trotskyite workers. Cannon-Shachtman pursued the new Comintern orientation toward Social Democracy, for example, in their own fashion. In December 1934, the Trotsky leaders fused their group with the Musteites, a left Social Democratic grouping in the United States. In June, 1936, Cannon-Shachtman led their followers directly into the S.P. and roosted there until the end of 1937. This period coincided with the most critical period of the Spanish Revolution. The Socialists were in united front with the Stalin leadership and the Trotskyites were Socialist Party members.

In 1938, when Cannon and Shachtman resumed their organizational independence under the name "Socialist Workers Party," more and more rightist features were inaugurated. The advocating of a Labor Party was introduced along with a rehash of all sorts of petty bourgeois quack schemes for reforming some of the abuses of capitalism. ("Ham and Eggs plan," "Thirty Dollars every Thursday," etc.) The pacifist Ludlow Referendum idea was also taken up by the Trotsky leaders and advocated as an answer to the military preparations of the American imperialists. In elections, the policy of the Trotsky leadership, still in effect today, varies only in the tactical consideration of which reactionary to support. Sometimes the Trotsky leaders will urge support to people like the Rose-Antoninni clique of the ALP (October 1939). At other times it is a plain Tammany Hall hack like Dean Alfange (October-November 1942). Sometimes it is a putrid labor faker like Richard Frankenstein (The SWP in August 1945), or a Stalin stooge like Eugene Connolly (March 1941), or open C.P. candidates like Ben Davis (The SWP in October, 1945) Within the trade unions this political policy was expressed in support to a Homer Martin, a John L. Lewis or a Walter Reuther on the one hand, or on the other, to Stalinist puppets such as the Dritsas-Kramberg faction in the Food Workers Union in December 1940. The

Trotsky policy during this entire period was moulded by the ultra-right swing of the Stalintern. Sometimes this relationship was obscured when, in a union clique fight, the Trotskyites occasionally supported one labor faker while the Stalin crew supported the other, as was the case with the Lewis-Hillman clique fight in the CIO in 1940-41, the UAW clique fights under the Martin regime, or now with the Reuther-Thomas faction fight in the UAW. Actually, the issue reduces itself to tactical differences on which type of reactionary should be supported. Fundamentally, the Stalin-Trotsky forces are at one in the policy of supporting labor fakers. This unity of political policy is frequently disguised by support to different reactionaries who may be fighting each other. Thus the Trotsky leadership emphasizes at present that the Stalin forces are fighting Reuther; therefore, Trotskyite (WP) support to Reuther is made to appear as part of a fight against the Stalin gang. Similarly, the Fosters din into the ears of the Stalin followers that the Trotskyites are backing Reuther; therefore the idea of fighting Reuther is made to appear part of the fight against "Trotskyism." The advanced political workers must not be taken in by this fraud; they must see that support to either Reuthers or Thomases means a common policy of tying the workers politically to the class enemy.

The record of the Trotskyites in the unions proves a consistent line of propping up a large variety of opportunist forces, from the Stalin gang through the Social Democrats to all sorts of openly pro-capitalist labor fakers. When shorn of their revolutionary sounding anti-Stalin verbiage, the Trotsky leaders are seen to be nothing but a medium for paralyzing the workers politically. The Cannon-Shachtman groups are products of the Stalintern with their roots buried in Trotsky's role in building the bureaucratic structure in the Soviet Union.

The path toward revolutionary trade union work can be paved only by revolutionary politics. In the first instance, this means winning the advanced workers from the Trotsky currents which tie the workers to reaction. The Trotsky workers know of the dastardly role of the old line labor fakers, of the pernicious influence of Social Democracy and of the terrible disruptive activity of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The task of the hour is to make the subjective sentiments of these most advanced political workers harmonize with objective reality. Only then can the road be cleared for a frontal assault on the Stalin forces and upon capitalist slavery.

A.B.
October, 1947

THE TROTSKY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

* A DISTORTION OF FACTS ON *
* THE BOLSHEVIK PEACE POLICY *

Editorial Note:

The point in the following article is not only directed against the Trotsky tradition, but also implicitly carries an indictment of the post-1917 Lenin policy. For statements concerning our reevaluation of this period of history, see the following articles published in our supplementary organ, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENCE:

"ENGLAND: THE ROAD TO A MARXIST POLICY" (Issue # 3)

"EVALUATION OF CILIGA'S 'A TALK WITH LENIN IN STALIN'S PRISON'" (Issue # 4)

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No matter how much energy political liars might expend in destroying the facts of history, the authentic documentary evidence, which no falsifier can eradicate, brings the truth into the light of day. For instance, any person who wishes to take the trouble of ascertaining Lenin's peace program in 1917 can find it recorded black on white in Lenin's speeches and articles and in the official documents of the Bolshevik Party. We have taken this trouble and found Lenin's position on peace as follows:

"Peace negotiations are to be conducted not with the bourgeois governments, but with the proletariat of all the warring countries." (Report on the Tasks of the Russian-Social-Democratic Labor Party in the Russian Revolution, Lenin, Collected Works, Volume XI, Book 1, p. 79)

"The capitalists lie when they circulate rumors that we are for a separate peace with the Germans." (To The Soldiers And Sailors, Ibid. p. 183)

"We do not want a separate peace with Germany,..." (Ibid. p. 184)

"The conference reiterates its protests against the base slander circulated by the capitalists against our party to the effect that we are in favor of a separate peace with Germany." (DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE WAR, Ibid. p. 212)

"The party agitators must protest over and over again against the contemptible slander manufactured by the capitalists to the effect that our party stands for a separate peace with Germany; in our eyes Wilhelm II is a crowned murderer deserving execution no less than Nicholas II, and the German Guchkovs, i.e., the German capitalists, are usurpers, robbers and imperialists no less than the Russian, English and all other capitalists; we are against negotiating with the capitalists, we are for negotiating and fraternizing with the revolutionary workers and soldiers of all the countries; we are convinced that the government of Guchkov-Miliukov is trying to aggravate the situation because it knows full well that the proletarian revolution in Germany is beginning, and that that revolution will be a blow to the capitalists of all countries." (A RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY MAY 4, 1917, Ibid., p.246. Emphasis in Original)

"The internationalist workers of the world stand for the overthrow of all capitalist governments, for a refusal to come to agreements and sign

treaties with any capitalists, for universal peace concluded by the revolutionary workers of all the countries, a peace actually capable of securing the freedom of every people." ('DISGRACE' AS UNDERSTOOD BY THE CAPITALISTS AND THE PROLETARIANS Ibid. p. 263, Original Emphasis)

"A just peace means a peace without annexations, without seizures of territory. Let the German capitalist bandits together with their crowned murderer Wilhelm know that we will enter into no negotiations with them,..." (IS THERE A ROAD TO PEACE, Ibid. Book II, p. 224)

We could, of course, continue giving similar citations from Lenin and the Bolshevik press of 1917, but we believe his line has been sufficiently established through the above citations. Trotsky, we may add, completely identified himself with Lenin in 1917 on the issue of no separate peace with Germany and no negotiations with the German imperialist government.

Let us examine now the Trotskyist version of the Lenin 1917 peace policy. In 1937 the Pioneer Publishers printed a book entitled The Stalin School Of Falsification. The introduction reads: "This is a book about liars and their lies."

That the Stalin bureaucrats are liars, is, of course, common knowledge among the Trotsky workers. What is not known to them is that their own leaders could give the Stalin bureaucrats pointers in the art of misrepresentation, that the book is not only about liars but is by liars. In an explanatory note by the editor of this book, on page 308, we read:

"Lenin, Trotsky and most of the other Bolsheviks, especially after the return to Russia of these two leaders, called for an end to the war, for peace with Germany-- a general peace if possible and a separate peace otherwise." (By Emphasis-G.A.)

The Trotsky leaders know very well that the Lenin position was just the opposite from the one they paint.

Why do the Trotsky leaders, while supposedly exposing the Stalin liars, themselves consciously stoop to contemptible lies? Of what value is it to the Trotsky fakers to obscure the facts about the Lenin peace platform of 1917? The answer is simple. It must be recognized openly that after the seizure of power Lenin and Trotsky abandoned their position on no treaties and no negotiations with the "crowned murderer Wilhelm." They acted exactly opposite to all the statements made by them in 1917 and concluded a separate peace with the Kaiser.

Although the Bolshevik leaders made a definite change in policy on the peace issue after the seizure of power, the falsifiers of history obscure the pre-October programmatic position in order to protect and justify the policy that was actually put into effect. They present a misleading picture of one unbroken line on the peace question. Had the Trotsky leaders been honest they would have admitted the truth. But they must shield their emblematic figure and man-god Trotsky, so they cannot frankly admit that the pre-October program was not carried out by the Bolshevik leadership.

Honest revolutionary workers will not be afraid to look facts in the face and they will not be shackled with a blind religious emotion to any leader. They will expose the Trotsky liars whose "struggle" against falsification of history is nothing but a pretense and conscious fraud.