

DEC 6 1939

76.11.37

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

N
O
V
·
1
9
3
9

The Ukraine Problem

An Answer to Leon Trotsky's Polemic

Britain Needs A War

THE CHEKA AND THE GPU

FRENCH GROUP ENDORSES
14 POINTS

THE NEGRO QUESTION IN U.S.

STACK 3

5 Cents

Theoretical Organ of the
International Contact Commission

VOLUME I

NOVEMBER 1939

NUMBER IV

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Organ of the

Provisional

INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION

CONTENTS

THE UKRAINE QUESTION -- A REPLY TO LEON TROTSKY'S POLEMIC	1
THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES	13
ON THE QUESTION OF THE CHERA AND THE GPU	17
FRENCH GROUP ENDORSES FOURTEEN POINT PROGRAMATIC DECLARATION	23
REPLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION	24
GREAT BRITAIN NEEDS A WAR	26

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO:

INTERNATIONAL NEWS,

1904 Division Street, Chicago, Illinois, USA

THE UKRAINE QUESTION

A REPLY TO TROTSKY'S POLEMIC

Due to the outbreak of the second world imperialist war and the dismemberment of Poland by the Stalin-Hitler agreement, the question of the Ukraine is now posed more sharply than ever as the key to Eastern Europe. The struggle raging around the Ukraine will inevitably become more intense. To a great extent, the solution of this question will determine either Hitler's line of march to the East or the fate of the Soviet Union.

An analysis of our differences with Trotsky on the theoretical problems involved will clearly reveal the differences between nationalistic centrism (Trotsky) and proletarian revolutionary internationalism (the Revolutionary Workers League). In the Socialist Appeal of May 9th, Trotsky first presented his call for separation of the Soviet Ukraine from the USSR. We presented a brief reply to his false line in the Marxist of July. Now Trotsky enters into vicious polemics (Socialist Appeal of September 15th and 18th), wherein he uses strong language and weak arguments. We regret that a man of Trotsky's experience in the revolutionary movement neither quotes our position correctly nor argues against our position. Not only does he use false arguments, but he sets up straw men to argue against.

AGAINST THE SEPARATION OF THE UKRAINE FROM THE SOVIET UNION

First Trotsky points out that we are opposed to his slogan for the separation of the Ukraine from the Soviet Union. And then Trotsky speaks of us and says: "He is for the world revolution and for socialism---'root and branch' ". This leaves the impression on the reader that we counterposed to his false slogan the demand for the world revolution. We are for the world revolution; however, we counterposed to Trotsky's slogan, not the world revolution abstractly, but a CONCRETE LINE of march for the present situation. The following position on this question, from the Marxist of July which Trotsky ignores is as follows:

"Enmeshed in capitalist contradictions in Western Ukraine, confronted with Stalinist degeneration within Soviet Ukraine, with both sections beaten down under the hammer blows of the imperialist struggle for the redivision of the world, the problem of the Ukraine calls for special attention. The policy the revolutionary Marxists present is first and foremost the independent action of the working class. This is possible only on the basis of the political and organizational independence of the revolutionary Marxian organization. In Western Ukraine this independent class action calls for those steps that prepare the class in action for the social revolution. In the time element it makes no difference where the workers are successful first, in the social revolution of Western Ukraine or in the political revolution of Soviet Ukraine. In the Soviet Ukraine this independent class action calls for such a political revolution and the EXTENSION of this workers' victory to the rest of the Soviet Union and for the social revolution internationally. Only on this basis can the working class EXTEND THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION. "

Does this position in any way sound as though we are counterposing the sectarian position of world revolution to a concrete, but false slogan? No, it is a concrete but different line of march.

IF THE WORKERS OVERTHROW STALINISM

Next, Trotsky takes a sentence out of our document which, in part states: "If the workers overthrow Stalinism....." And Trotsky retorts: "But Stalinism must first be overthrown". And, Trotsky says, the slogan of the separation of the Ukraine from the Soviet Union is HOW to accomplish this. He states: "And in order to achieve this (the overthrow of Stalinism--Ed.) one must not shut one's eyes to the growing separatist tendencies in the Ukraine, but rather give them correct political expression".

In the first place, this slogan for the separation of the Ukraine is not the workers road to overthrowing Stalinism. What is important in this quotation of ours that Trotsky uses is the whole argument that precedes it and the reason we used this argument. Let us deal with that aspect. In the Marxist the quotation Trotsky plays with is immediately preceded by an excerpt from Trotsky's original article in which he states (and we reproduce it here):

"In the face of such an internal situation (degeneration under Stalinism) it is naturally impossible to even talk of western Ukraine voluntarily joining the USSR as it is at present constituted. Consequently the unification of the Ukraine presupposes freeing the so-called Soviet Ukraine from the Stalinist boot."

The line of argument used by Trotsky is that a united Ukraine PRESUPPOSES the separation of the Soviet Ukraine. Trotsky in his original quotation, not we in our reply, starts with the premise that after the workers political revolution against Stalinism is completed in the Soviet Ukraine, then we shall separate. Our position, and the quotation Trotsky uses makes this clear, that we present the opposite line of march --- if the political revolution against Stalinism in the Ukraine is successful, we shall drive deeper. The next sentence of our article on the extension of the political revolution, which Trotsky does not quote, is as follows:

"If the workers regain their position in Soviet Ukraine before the proletarian revolution in Western Ukraine they should DRIVE DEEPER INTO THE SOVIET UNION AGAINST STALINISM and the other imperialist agents." (emphasis in the original).

Why then does Trotsky take one sentence from our article and talk about our position "if there is a revolution" when in his preceding quotation, this is HIS position. And the polemic on this question as our first article, quoted above, clearly shows is not over the first aspect but the second aspect of the question. Trotsky says separation if we gain workers rule in the Ukraine, we say use the base of re-established workers Soviets to drive deeper into the whole of the Soviet Union to dislodge Stalinism. We repeat, we will come back later to the first part of the question --- the line of march for a political revolution in Russia.

Again let us quote Trotsky and our comment, not from his polemic against us, but from his first article, from which the following quotation is reproduced from our first article:

"Trotzky says: 'The question of first order is the revolutionary guarantee of the unity and independence of a workers' and peasants' Ukraine in the struggle against imperialism, on the one hand, and against Moscow Bonapartism, on the other.' This is begging the question. This 'first order' of Trotsky is about the tenth order. To have a unified and independent Ukraine, the workers and peasants must succeed with a proletarian revolution in three capitalist countries, and must carry through a political revolution in Soviet Ukraine."

This quotation reveals that in our first article against Trotsky we argue against the position of his FIRST order of unity and point out that before such UNITY there must be a revolution, and a revolution in several places. In his reply he accuses us of what we previously exposed as his position.

HOW TO DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION

In our first article, immediately following the quotation dealing with the question of "presupposing", is the following sentence: "Not turning our backs on the Soviet Union, but its regeneration and re-establishment as a mighty citadel of world revolution --- that is the road of Marxism."

Trotsky quotes this sentence from our document and then claims our position logically leads to this: "With this method, but with far greater logic, one might say, 'Not defending a degenerated Soviet Union is our task, but the victorious world revolution which will transform the whole world into a World Soviet Union.' etc. Such aphorisms come cheap." We don't know where Trotsky got the second cheap quotation but we do know that it fits his position like a glove and has nothing in common with the first quotation of ours.

Our position is not to separate a section of the Soviet Union where the workers carry through a political revolution, not to turn our backs, but instead DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION by extending that partial victory TO THE REST OF THE SOVIET UNION and re-establishing a genuine workers' democracy. The second idea, which belongs to Trotsky, states just the opposite --- "not defending a degenerate Soviet Union."

The separation of the Soviet Ukraine which, according to Trotsky is FIRST necessary before there can be a united Ukraine --- is the position of NO DEFENSE of the Soviet Union. And secondly, this "cheap aphorism" of Trotsky's is the position of the ultra-lefts. It is not our position. Anyone who is half-way familiar with the R.W.L. literature on the Soviet Union knows that we stand for the defense of the Soviet Union.

Twice, in the first column of the article in polemics against us Trotsky tries to make us out as sectarians, ultra-lefts, but both times he DOES NOT PRESENT OUR POSITION. This is a necessary introduction to his article to prepare the ground-work for his readers so he can present his CENTRIST POSITION against our Marxist position and already have his readers convinced that the position he is arguing against is ultra-left, sectarianism.

SEPARATION AN ASSET OR A LIABILITY TO WHOM?

Trotsky says: "Assuredly, the separation of the Ukraine is a liability as compared with a voluntary and equalitarian socialist federation; but it will be an unquestionable asset as compared with the bureaucratic strangulation of the

Ukrainian people."

What Trotsky says is true, but this is not the main axis for the workers or for the Marxists. More important than the fact that separation is an asset to the Ukrainian people, is the effects of separation on the WORKERS and the DEFENSE OF WHAT REMAINS OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION. Again we must say that the workers' victory in the Soviet Ukraine must be used to extend that victory into other parts of Russia against Stalinism --- as well as outward towards Western Ukraine. This is the real defense of the Soviet Union.

ECONOMICS AND THE SLOGAN OF SEPARATION

"The economy of the Soviet Union enters integrally into this plan.", says Trotsky. The planned economy of the Soviet Union may be affected by the separation, he says, but "an economic plan is not the holy of holies". In this argument he ridicules us because we "forgot" the economic aspect of the question. Trotsky should know that there is no solution of the economy of backward Soviet Ukraine on the basis of the slogan of separation.

In either case, a proletarian revolution in Western Ukraine or a political revolution, or both at once, calls for a drive INWARD into the rest of the Soviet Union against Stalinism as well as against the imperialists, in order to solve any of the economic problems confronting the Soviet Ukraine as well as the rest of the Soviet Union. To tell the workers and peasants of the Soviet Ukraine that they must separate to better their economic position because the bureaucrats have wapped the PLAN is false. To tell them to oust the bureaucrats and take power in the Soviet Ukraine and use this as a lever to extend the political revolution to the rest of Russia and to correct the PLAN, not only in relation to the Ukraine but to the whole of the Soviet Union is the correct relation of the plan to the Ukraine.

It is not the PLAN, as Trotsky claims, that is the important economic aspect of the question of the right of self determination. More important than the question of a plan and its break-down under Stalinism with its negative effects upon the national problem, is the question of the PROPERTY RELATIONS. We did deal with the decisive economic aspects, but Trotsky ignored our argument. We stated in the Marxist that: "The right of self determination under capitalism and the right of self determination under the Soviet rule do not have the same axis." What is the different axis? The property relations. Separation of the colonies under capitalist economy from the imperialist mother country further disrupts and accelerates the conditions for revolution. But to use the slogan of the right of self determination under the property relations of the Soviet Union is to negate the whole concept of Marxism on this question as presented by Lenin.

To issue a slogan for separation of national minorities under a capitalist economy and under the different property relations in the Soviet Union are two different things. Trotsky does not see this difference and criticizes us for not considering the economic relations!

WORKERS VS. PETTY BOURGEOIS IN THE UKRAINE

In his polemic Trotsky extends his error in attempting to answer us. What he only implied in his first article he now states clearly in this series of

articles. For example: "only a direct and bold posing of the Ukrainian question in the given concrete circumstances will facilitate the rallying of the petty-bourgeois and peasant masses around the proletariat just as in Russia in 1917."

We agree that the agrarian problem and the national problem have not been solved and especially not under Stalinism, which has aggravated all the contradictions. But that is not the dispute now. The question is: do you ELEVATE an AUXILIARY SLOGAN to win allies above the line of march for the WORKING CLASS? The first quotation we present in this article from the Marxist clearly shows that our line of march is the independence of the working class in action. The national minority and the peasants will be won as allies only on this basis. Trotsky turns this concept upside down and places the interests of the petty-bourgeois in the Ukraine above the interests of the PROLETARIAT, and the defense of the Soviet Union. We counterpose to Trotsky's Ukrainian nationalism, proletarian internationalism.

Let us give some more quotations along this same line from Trotsky: "This means that the proletarian vanguard has let the Ukraine national movement slip out of its hands and that this movement has developed far on the road to separatism." There is a "growing strength of separatist tendencies among the Ukrainian masses". "The great mass of the Ukrainian people are dissatisfied with their national fate and wish to change it drastically."

Trotsky correctly sees the EFFECTS of Stalinism upon the Ukraine section of the Soviet Union, the degeneration and development of nationalist tendencies. But one does not eliminate the CAUSE --- Stalinism as the agent of the imperialists --- by CAPITULATING to the nationalist tendencies. To use the slogan of the right of self determination and the national question to DISRUPT IMPERIALISM, to weaken imperialism, is not the same as to use the national question for Ukraine separation from the Soviet Union.

We have pointed out before that this slogan is a part of our strategy to win allies, that it is not a principled question, and that at certain times under certain circumstances we reject the use of separation because it plays into the hands of the imperialists. The independence of the Ukraine plays into the hands of the different imperialists just as much as did the separation of Sudetenland or Danzig at the moment. On this basis Stalinism would gain too by revealing what the slogan will accomplish. That is the reason we stated that separatism plays into the hands of Stalinism, a statement which Trotsky ridicules.

LENIN ON THE UKRAINE

Clarity can be of tremendous value to us here. Let us briefly review Lenin's line for the Ukraine (i.e., for national minorities in a Workers State). In his speech of March 19, 1919, replying to discussion of the proposed new party program (at the Sixth Congress of the C.P.S.U.), comrade Lenin summarized the Ukrainian national problem in a manner totally alien to Trotsky's approach:

"The Ukraine was separated from Russia by exceptional circumstances, and the national movement did not take deep root there. In so far as it did manifest itself it was knocked out by the Germans. This is a fact, but an exceptional fact. Even with the language there the position is such that it has become uncertain whether the Ukrainian language is the mass language or not."

Going one step further we examine the theses of the Second World Congress of the Communist International on the national question. Sections 7 and 8 clearly present the proletarian view on national federation in a workers' society:

"The federative principle appears to us a transitional form toward the complete unity of the workers of all countries. The federative principle has already practically demonstrated its conformity to the end pursued, just as much in the course of the relations between the Russian Socialist Federated Republics and the other Soviet republics (Hungarian, Finnish, Lithuanian, in the past; Azerbaidjan and Ukrainian at present) as in the heart of the Russian Republic itself, with regard to the nationalities which formerly had neither a state nor an autonomous existence (e.g., the autonomous republics of the Bashkirs and the Tartars, created in Soviet Russia in 1919 and 1920).

"The task of the Communist International is to study and verify the experience (and the further development) of these new federations based on the Soviet form and the Soviet movement. Since we consider the federation a transitional form toward complete unity, it is necessary for us to work toward a closer and closer federative union, bearing in mind: 1) the impossibility of defending (without the closest union among them) the Soviet republics surrounded by imperialist enemies who are infinitely superior in military power; 2) the need for a closer economic union of the Soviet republics, without which the rebuilding of the productive forces destroyed by imperialism, and the security and well-being of the workers cannot be assured; 3) the tendency for the realization of a universal economic plan whose regular application could be controlled by the proletariat of all countries, a tendency which made itself evident under the capitalist regime and which certainly ought to continue its development and reach perfection under the Socialist regime."

Bearing the above in mind we continue with Trotsky's quotations: Have Stalin and his Ukrainian satraps succeeded in convincing the Ukrainian masses of the superiority of Moscow centralism over Ukrainian independence or have they failed? This question is of decisive importance. Yet our author does not even suspect its existence". --- says Trotsky.

To Marxists the axis is not "Moscow centralism" (reformism) vs. "Ukrainian independence" (centrism). To us the question of workers democracy vs. Moscow centralism is the correct axis.

Within the framework of our road to state power and the ousting of Stalinism is the strategical line of SMASHING DEEPER INTO THE SOVIET UNION on the basis of gaining a foothold in any area. This calls for a struggle to re-establish workers democracy and not separation.

But Trotsky places the Ukraine petty-bourgeois interests (separation) ABOVE the interests of the working class (workers democracy). We may state that the struggle for workers democracy is a part of the problem of the road to power, the REAL DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET UNION.

All of these above quotations reveal that the AUXILIARY PROBLEM made the main problem by Trotsky who turns upside down the relation of forces in the line of march to overthrow Stalinism and places the petty-bourgeois line above the working class line.

THE ROAD TO POWER

Trotsky says: "The slogan of independent Ukraine advanced in time by the proletarian vanguard will lead to the unavoidable stratification of the petty-bourgeois and render it easier for its lower tiers to ally themselves with the proletariat." Only thus is it possible to prepare the proletarian revolution." Trotsky speaks of the proletarian revolution. Does this mean that a proletarian revolution is needed in the Soviets, that capitalism exists there? Is so, this is the ultra-left position. Has Trotsky changed his position on Russia? Or does this mean the slogan of the independence of the Soviet Ukraine will help the proletarian revolution in Western Ukraine? But Trotsky says in the original article the following: "Consequently the unification of the Ukraine presupposes freeing the so-called Soviet Ukraine from the Stalinist boot." On Trotsky's basis then, it does mean FIRST a political revolution in the Soviet Union, and then a proletarian revolution.

However, in this article, the second article, Trotsky is shifting his position. He would like to forget the first article where the united Ukraine PRESUPPOSES the separation of the Soviet sector. In the second article he speaks of the proletarian revolution, which can only mean the Western Ukraine. But in re-treating to the position where he states there will be a combined relation, a parallel relation, as he states, he accuses us of what he is guilty of.

If Trotsky rejects his false formulations which he tries to pass off to us through only partial quotations from our article, and instead states that the separation of the Soviet Ukraine in TIME ELEMENT will run parallel to the revolution in Western Ukraine (and that the unity of the Ukraine does not, therefore, PRESUPPOSE freeing the so-called Soviet Ukraine from the Stalinist boot) then Trotsky must state the following though, which is nowhere to be found in his original article or reply: The slogan for an independent Ukraine is necessary to arouse the petty-bourgeois and peasant masses as an ALLY of the proletariat, to placate their present course of extreme nationalism, in the struggle of the workers in WESTERN Ukraine to carry through a proletarian revolution. In carrying through this proletarian revolution in Western Ukraine we must demand of our forces in the Soviet Union that they also advocate, on the basis of a political revolution, the separation of the Soviet Ukraine from the Stalinist boot as a lever to rally the petty-bourgeois masses there TOO. THE INDEPENDENT SOVIET UKRAINE WILL work out its own relations with the Russian, Soviet, the Polish Soviet, etc.

But Trotsky has already declared that the action for the slogan for separation from Russia and the unification of the Ukraine is "the basic fact underlying the whole problem." This means that the national question is placed as point number 1 against the above arguments; because our above arguments use the proletarian interests as point number 1.

In reality it means that Trotsky has presented not variants, but more than one position on the same question, none of which are correct.

First, he presented the position that unification presupposes the separation of the Soviet Ukraine section from Stalin's state. Second, he states a parallel relation between the (political) revolution in Russia and the (social) revolution in Western Ukraine; but he does not define the relation of the social to the political revolution; in fact he ignores this question of the social (Western Ukraine) and the political (Soviet Ukraine) revolutions. He leaves this as an unknown quantity. The second position which states that "only thus is it possible to prepare the proletarian revolution", that ignores the political revolution in Russia.

Third, he elevates the AUXILIARY SLOGAN to win ALLIES for the proletariat as the "basic fact", as the "question of decisive importance".

Fourth and not least, Trotsky presents still a different position. A position that one could agree with and in no way agree with the slogan for separation or his other positions. Trotsky calls this the "ideal variant". Let us quote him in full:

"Let us take an ideal variant most favorable for our critic. The revolution occurs simultaneously in all parts of the Soviet Union. The bureaucratic octopus is strangled and swept aside. The Constituent Congress of the Soviets is on the order of the day. The Ukraine expresses a desire to determine anew her relations with the USSR. Even our critic, let us hope, will be ready to extend her that right. But in order freely to determine her relations with other Soviet republics, in order to possess the right of saying yes or no, the Ukraine must return to herself the complete freedom of action, at least for the duration of this Constituent period. There can be no other name for this than state independence. Now let us further suppose that the revolution embraces simultaneously also Poland, Roumania and Hungary. All sections of the Ukrainian people become free and enter into negotiations to join the Soviet Ukraine. At the same time they express the desire to have their say on the question of the interrelations between unified Ukraine and the Soviet Union, with Soviet Poland, etc. It is self-evident that to decide all these questions it will be necessary to convene the Constituent Congress of Unified Ukraine. But a "Constituent" Congress signifies nothing else but the Congress of an independent state which prepares anew to determine its own domestic regime as well as its international position."

Why should Trotsky bring in this argument in the polemic against us, since it was not in his first article, unless it is a POLEMIC AGAINST US, or at least unless he wants to leave the impression on his readers that this argument adds another nail to our political coffin, and reveals our ignorance of the question? In fact, that is exactly why this argument, this "ideal variant" is brought in. At the same time it is a cover-up for his other false positions. This position speaks of a POLITICAL revolution throughout the Soviet Union and the ousting of Stalinism, and a social revolution in the countries of Eastern Europe., etc.

But the minute this "ideal variant" is co-ordinated with Trotsky's LINE on the question of the separation of the Soviet Ukraine, the ideal variant is negated. Most likely the political revolution against Stalinism in Russia will take an uneven development, in some areas it will be ahead of the others. Let us say in the Ukraine it is more developed, than in other areas where the battle is raging, and we take power. INSTEAD OF USING THIS BASE IN SOVIET UKRAINE TO DRIVE DEEPER INTO THE REST OF RUSSIA AGAINST STALINISM, WE CALL FOR SEPARATION. This would be a body blow against the political revolution to smash the Stalinist enemies of the workers and other counter-revolutionary elements.

It is clear that our LINE of smashing deeper into the Soviet Union fundamentally contradicts the LINE of Trotsky for separation for the ENDS aimed at, ends that are not the DESIRES of the Ukrainian petty-bourgeoisie, but the INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS.

Furthermore, the "ideal variant" is not only brought in to cover up the false line of separation, but in order to leave the impression that this ideal variant is the presentation of Trotsky's position against us. In fact, we endorse

this "ideal variant", and also present other variants in our original article. variants that are most likely but not ideal. We presented this "ideal variant" which in reality is not a VARIANT but instead the END we strive toward through possible variants. In our first article which Trotsky is criticizing, he failed to quote the following:

"It is not too early to envisage the time when the yoke of exploitation will be smashed and the different sections of the Ukraine will be unified into a Soviet Ukraine. The precondition for this is the revolution in one or more advanced capitalist countries in Europe and the establishment of a Soviet system. This will be a beginning toward the consolidation of the United Socialist Soviets of Europe. Under this structure the present relation to the Soviet Union will be supplanted by a new and higher stage in which the Ukraine as an entity in its own right will be affiliated to the Eastern Soviet. Within this framework we can speak of a free independent Soviet Ukraine."

THE TRANSITION DEMANDS OF TROTSKYISM

In claiming we do not understand the Ukraine question, Trotsky says: "But just now there is no victorious revolution, instead there is a victorious reaction. To find the bridge from reaction to revolution --- that is the task." Then he proceeds to tell us about the Transition Demands of the "Fourth International". This means that the slogan to separate the Ukraine from the Soviet Union is part of this Transition Program.

It is well that Trotsky brought out this program so clearly and revealed the proper connection between the Ukraine question and the Transition Demands. The whole axis of the Transition Demands is false and each separate demand (as we have pointed out in the Fourth International, vol. III, #12) merely presents the concrete error in a given field.

We think it is no accident that Trotsky says that we must find the bridge from reaction to revolution. It is an outward manifestation of the false line of the Transition Demands, and not merely a poor formulation. The correct theoretical position is not the bridge from reaction to revolution; but the bridge from Capitalism (whether "reactionary" or "reformist") to the proletarian revolution. In a given concrete situation, for a specific country the application of the line may be the relation from reaction through reform (both of which we oppose) to revolution. But the Transition Demands are the new WORLD PROGRAM OF THE TROTSKYITES. And the positions presented in the Transition Demands are for all countries.

Trotsky leaves out the whole question of reform. The Transition Program therefore brings it in through the back window by centrist formulations which result in REFORMIST DEEDS.

Let us consider the concrete errors of some important questions of the Transition Demands in the light of the "bridge" from Reaction to revolution.

1 -- HOW TO FIGHT CAPITALISM

"Fight Imperialism to Fight Fascism" says Trotsky in a letter published in the October 8, 1938 Socialist Appeal. Fight Capitalism to Fight Fascism is the correct position. In addition to the imperialists there are the small capitalist nations

Under this formulation the Trotskyites can cover up: 1) Support of Cardenas in Mexico against England, but not a word against U.S. IMPERIALISM. 2) Support to the Peoples Front in Spain through MATERIAL AID and political criticism, etc. 3) Support of Chinese nationalists against Japan, etc. 4) Support a Labor Party, a third capitalist party, against the imperialist parties, a shagan of the small capitalists against the big capitalists. 5) "Expropriate the 60 families (United States) and the 200 families (France)".

2 -- SUPPORT OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY AGAINST FASCISM

It is true that the Trotskyites reject the reformist position of outright support of bourgeois democracy, but they have a centrist, tail-endist position. Some of the more outstanding examples of this are the following which our literature has taken up in detail: 1) Trotsky's position on the Chinese situation where he states we may even have to support rotten bourgeois democracy against reaction, in order to defend our working class rights. But life itself proves that the working class can only defend its democratic rights by a STRUGGLE AGAINST bourgeois democracy and ALL of its institutions; likewise, the same applies in the struggle against fascism. 2) For the slogan of the Blum-Cachin government in France before Blum was in power, a slogan not based upon a Blum-Cachin government THROUGH SOVIETS, but within the present capitalist structure. 3) The advocacy of the Caballero-CNT-UGT government in Spain right after the Barcelona uprising. 4) The support of the Mexican government against British imperialism. 5) The support of Labor Party candidates. 6) The support of bourgeois bills in Congress; e.g., the editorial of May 31, 1938 Socialist Appeal in support of the Wage and Hours Bill: "All sections of the labor movement do and must support the Bill".

3 -- THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIAN ORGANIZATION

1) The liquidation into the Socialist parties and centrist parties. 2) The support of the Labor (third capitalist) Party. 3) The establishment of a PAPER Fourth international without even inviting the majority of its own affiliated sections to the conference, a one day conference to establish the new international. 4) The liquidation of the Marxian program of the party, which means the POLITICAL liquidation of the party no matter how long the party continues to exist organizationally.

4 -- THE STATE

1) The support of left bourgeois governments as already stated: Spain, China, Mexico, etc. 2) The advocacy of the support of a "left" labor government in the United States when it takes power. Jannons slogan for a Workers and Farmers Government for the United States. 3) The Transition Program which states that it is correct to support left bourgeois governments on the road to power, before the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is established, as a step toward it, etc.

5 -- REVOLUTIONARY DEFEATISM

A consistently false formulation since the wrong position presented in the thesis War and the Fourth International, a position which reverts back to Trotsky's last war position, which Lenin fought. In short, it is a position that accepts the term revolutionary defeatism but fills it with a false content. Instead of advocating that the working class WORK for the defeat of its own imperialists, the Trot-

skyites advocate that the revolutionary action of the working class will defeat the imperialists. Instead of advocating the defeat of the government and its ARMED FORCES through military defeats, the Trotskyites advocate only the defeat of the government. But the one government can be defeated and the new "left" government such as Kerensky, can advocate the defense of the country.

Instead of stating that we work for the defeat of our own imperialist government and armed forces through revolutionary action, EVEN IF THIS MEANS THE MOMENTARY VICTORY OF THE "ENEMY" IMPERIALISTS, the Trotskyites advocate the "the defeat of our own imperialists as the lesser evil. Instead of pointing out that revolutionary defeatism is the LINE and is HOW the imperialist war will be turned into civil war, the Trotskyites present the position that revolutionary defeatism is synonymous with the slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war. The LINE of defeatism is the HOLE, the slogan is a small part, even though important.

Instead of INDEPENDENT CLASS ACTION against capitalism and the imperialist war the Trotskyites center all their energy on calling for the right to vote (Ludlow Amendment) to see if the country will go to war. This is parliamentary opportunism.

TROTSKY'S CENTRISM VS. MARXISM

We could give many more examples in practically every field of activity where the Trotskyites have a non-Marxian position, have a centrist position. But the above is adequate to explain our point on some of the principled questions.

Notice that every one of the above Trotskyite formulations on concrete work fall into the category of REACTION vs. REVOLUTION, but not into the Marxist line of Capitalism (reaction and REFORM) vs. the Proletarian Revolution. Because their whole Transition Program is merely the summing up of previous years of centrist positions and reformist actions, they have embodied in this Transition Program the CENTRIST position against REACTION, but not the MARXIST position against REFORM. As centrists they are left-reformers. They fight reformism, true enough, but they fight reformism from a centrist rather than from a Marxist position. And in order to drown us out from the left, they deliberately accuse us of being sectarians and ultra-lefts. If in principle we are to the right of the school of ultra-lefts, but to the left, IN PRINCIPLE, of the school of centrists, Trotskyites, etc., then what is our tendency? It is Marxism.

The Trotsky position for the Ukraine, for the petty bourgeois allies, is the counter-part to the new Trotsky position for the Negroes in the United States. They now advocate the right of self-determination in the Black Belt --- if the Negroes want it.

The old Stalinist position on the Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry, which the Left Opposition fought, was later supplemented by its Stalinist counter-part in the United States with self-determination in the Black Belt. Trotsky now has the same centrist line in the Ukraine and in the South of the United States on the Negro Question. The form, however, is different for the national question. But at least Trotsky has a CONSISTENT centrist position for international application.

WHY A REPLY FROM TROTSKY?

For three years Trotsky has been silent on our criticism of his centrist program. Now all of a sudden he explains how sectarian and muddle-headed we are. WHY? And

why the Ukraine question? Why not the many other principled questions we have in dispute?

It must be remembered that on the eve of our expulsion from his movement he sent four letters to the United States sections: one to the Cannon faction, one to the Schachtman faction, one to the Muste faction, and one to the Left Wing. Summed up they made one whole: that the Left Wing of the Workers Party and Ohlser were STRIKEBREAKERS because we accused the leadership of planning to liquidate into the Socialist Party, a liquidation we opposed to say nothing about the many other principled questions in dispute. These letters were published in volume I, # 3 of our publication. Just the word from Trotsky that we were strike-breakers was enough to cement the groups against us, and since the Pope had spoken, we were doomed to quick expulsion. For that was all Cannon was waiting for to give us the axe.

From then until now Trotsky left us alone, except once when Schachtman tried to polemicize against us and again burned his finger; and once when Trotsky played Eiffel for his ultra-left position on Spain and China and presented an amalgam of Eiffel and Ohlser on the question. But the R.W.L. had expelled Eiffel for the position Trotsky accused us of having! Now comes the Ukraine question.

He says we are only sectarians and muddle-heads --- not opportunists like Vereeken and Sneevliet; that we will not live long enough to develop to that stage. We will live long, longer than capitalism, because we present a Marxist line and have established ourself INTERNATIONALLY as a part of a tendency (Marxism) separate from all varieties of ultra-lefts as well as the rainbow collection of centrists.

What Trotsky is really doing, even though we give him credit for understanding the importance of the Ukraine question, (which we cannot say for his followers such as Cannon, Schachtman and others), is presenting a FLANK ATTACK upon our international tendency. In the United States and in Europe we have given the Trotskyites more than a battle. Now we have the provisional INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION, and although Trotsky can say he never heard of it, he cannot really deny that he has heard of what is going on (just as he can say that the Marxist is a "tiny" publication, even though it has a circulation of over half that of the Trotskyite New International) in his European sections, as well as his Mexican section, right under his nose. He at least knows that they have developed fractions that for some unknown reason present the same fundamental arguments as the R.W.L.

Trotsky has no time to discuss our differences with him on revolutionary defeatism, on support of left-bourgeois governments, on support of third capitalist parties, etc., etc., but he does have time to take up our position on the Ukraine question. We are very glad to hear from him on this. We think he has done the revolutionary movement a service to reveal even clearer Trotsky's centrist position on the UKRAINE question, as a further indication of his entire centrist line.

— September 25, 1939 —

THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES

One of the key questions of the coming American revolutions is the Negro question. Without a correct answer to this complicated question of the revolution, without day to day activity to help the Negro masses direct their energies into the class struggle channels, there can be no blending of the unity in action of the white and black workers against the exploiters.

In theoretical material adopted at the first convention of the Revolutionary Workers League were polemics against the false Stalinist and Socialist positions. But we have been unable to present agreement or disagreement with the Trotskyites up until now because throughout their entire existence since 1928 in the United States they have refused to take a position on this vital question. It has taken them eleven years of existence before they are able to present their position; and at that, the cowardly theoretical leadership of the United States section was forced into adopting this position under the blows of James and Trotsky. But the position of James and Trotsky, endorsed by Cannon and Schachtman, is non-Marxian and void of class content. In the Communist League of America the prevailing position that showed its face to the class was the position of the comrades who later made up the faction that became an important part of the R.W.L. Outside of this unofficial position the Trotskyites have ignored the Negro question for eleven years.

CAPITULATION TO STALINISM

Speaking of the false Stalinist position on self-determination for the Negroes, James says: "But the Negro, fortunately for Socialism, does not want self-determination." In the same paragraph James says: "If he wanted self-determination, then, however reactionary it might be in every other respect, it would be the business of the revolutionary party to raise the slogan."

Our authority of the Trotskyites continues: "The danger of our advocating and injecting a policy of self-determination is that it is the surest way to divide and confuse the workers in the South.

"I therefore propose concretely: (1) that we are for the right of self-determination (2) if some demand should arise among the Negroes for the right of self-determination, we should support it. (3) We do not go out of our way to raise this slogan and place an unnecessary barrier between ourselves and socialism. (4) An investigation should be made into these movements: the one led by Garvey, the movement for the 49th state, the movement centering around Liberia."

Crux, speaking on the same question, says: "I do not propose to inject but only to proclaim our obligations to support the struggle for self-determination if the Negroes themselves want it."

Crux, speaking again on the same question of giving up the class position in the United States for the Stalinist position of self-determination, says: "I will give you another example. We are terribly against the French turn. We abandoned our independence in order to penetrate into a centrist organization." "Why did we penetrate into the Socialist Party and the PSOP (Pivert)? If we were not the left wing, subject to the most severe blows, our powers of attraction would be ten or a hundred times greater. The people would come to us, but now we must penetrate into other organizations (capitalist Labor Party and bourgeois Negro organizations--Editor), keeping our heads on our shoulders and telling them that we are not so bad as they say."

The above quotations are taken from an Internal Bulletin of the Socialist Workers Party. At their second convention they adopted a resolution on the question which is printed in the Socialist Appeal of July 11, 1939. In this official resolution the convention did NOT adopt a position on the NEGRO QUESTION. They only adopted a resolution dealing with the organizational question of the S.W.P. helping the Negroes build a "mass" organization, which will have "Negro" nationalist tendencies, supported by the S.W.P. The unofficial position of James and Crux by default has become the official position.

It is true that the majority of the Negroes do not want self-determination, a segregation of the Negroes by sugar-coated pills rather than by bullets, but with the same effect. The Negroes of the United States want social, political and economic equality with the whites. It is likewise true that the slogan of self-determination plays into the hands of nationalists and reactionaries who desire to set up black ghettos. But it is false to say that if some of the Negroes want self-determination, it is the duty of the revolutionist to support such. This is opportunism and a betrayal of the interests of the Negroes and the working class.

THE HISTORIC INTERESTS OF THE PROLETARIAT

Revolutionary Marxists support those measures that are for the INTEREST of the working class and for the INTEREST OF THE OPPRESSED MASSES, not the desires of the class and the oppressed masses. The Trotskyites argue from the subjective axis of the desire of the Negroes, rather than from the dialectic axis of objective reality --- the interests of the working class and the oppressed masses. The revolutionists must do everything possible to BREAK DOWN RACE PREJUDICE OF THE WHITES AGAINST THE NEGROES. The revolutionists must avoid two opposite dangers: White Chauvinism on the one hand (and not Black Chauvinism) and on the other, a line of march that will increase the racial barriers of the whites against the blacks, such as the slogan of self-determination for the Negroes in the SOUTH, Black Chauvinism as a stage of the evolution of the mental process of the individual and the group from meek subjection to a position of struggle against the white exploiters' subjection, is

inevitable; and has nothing in common with WHITE CHAUVINISM; but the revolutionists furthers the process on toward the left, to a position of CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS, over and above race consciousness.

The Trotskyite position on the Negro question, like all other vital class questions, is tail-endism of Stalinism. More serious, though, is the fact that their position of self-determination (if the Negroes "want" it) is tail-endism to the class and Negro needs. The Trotskyite "vanguard" has tailed behind the workers and oppressed masses in all important events.

The majority of the workers today support Roosevelt and the majority of the members of the A.F.L. support Green, just like the majority of the workers of the CIO support Lewis, but that is no reason for the Marxists to support them; and that is no reason for the Marxists to support self-determination or black segregation if the Negroes want it.

The Marxists present a PROGRAM for the INTEREST of the class and the oppressed masses no matter how many oppose it at the moment. What must be decided from a scientific point of view is the question --- is self-determination for the INTEREST of the Negroes in the United States? We have replied to this in the negative in our previous polemics. James also replies in the negative by saying it is reactionary and it is a barrier in the United States to steps toward Socialism, but Trotsky and his other followers have avoided the question. Are they "neutral"?

THE SLOGAN OF "SELF-DETERMINATION"

To begin with, the correct slogan is not self-determination but the RIGHT of self-determination. It is a slogan of the Marxists and the working class NOT FOR THE WORKING CLASS but for backward layers of the oppressed ground under the heel of imperialism, to win them as ALLIES. It is a strategical concession on our road toward the social revolution to undermine the imperialists. It is presented for those peoples and under those conditions where the working class and the oppressed masses can benefit. When the victorious European imperialists dismembered the central powers under the slogan of "self-determination", we did not favor such. Now when Hitler has turned the slogan on the former Entente to extend German imperialism, we do not support Hitler's slogan of "self-determination". Furthermore the slogan is used for people who have all the basic requirements of a NATION.

Those people caught in the web of imperialist expansion who had developed all the requirements for a nation, but were stunted from further growth and subjected for double exploitation by the few powerful imperialists, are the forces we win as allies by this slogan.

The Negro problem in the United States (not Africa and parts of the West Indies) does not come within the framework of this slogan to win ALLIES. The Negro masses in the unique historical pattern of American development have skipped this stage, even though they have carry-overs of the slave-serf period. The Negro masses do

not have the material conditions for a NATION. The Negro is already integrated in the ENTIRE economic structure of American capitalism even though he is doubly exploited.

CLASS STRUGGLE PROGRAM

The backbone of the Negro masses, the decisive force in the class struggle and the revolution, as an integrated part of the economy, are already WAGE SLAVES. The Negro worker is not won on the basis of the slogan of "self-determination". The Negro worker is won on the CLASS line of demarcation, not on the race line. True, in the dynamics of the shift from meek subjection to militant class struggle, the Negro, even as a worker, will pass through the stage of Negro "nationalism", black chauvinism, etc.--- just like the working class as a whole passes through the stage of reformism --- but the Marxists do not advocate reformism any more than they advocate "black" nationalism. The Marxists present a CLASS STRUGGLE LINE FOR THE NEGRO MASSES. On this basis we gather the cement today for the bricks of the class storms of tomorrow.

While the decisive section of the Negroes as members of the working class are doubly exploited because of racial discrimination it must be understood that the other aspect of the question is more complicated and just as important for the revolutionists. It is the agrarian carry-over as part of the unfulfilled second American revolution (the Civil War). It consists of the share-croppers and the democratic rights of the Negro masses. Developing American imperialism also utilized the double exploitation system against the foreign born workers, until their sons and daughters cemented them into the structure. The Negro, and to a lesser degree, the Spanish American, was oppressed from generation to generation not only as a worker but doubly oppressed due to racial and color discrimination.

The Negro question in the United States is a two-fold contradiction: doubly exploited as a worker and due to racial discrimination, and as an oppressed minority due to the fact that part of their oppression has its roots in the unfulfilled second revolution (1861) in the agrarian-democratic carry-over. Only the social revolution will solve these problems. But the struggle for these demands must be begun NOW. In the South, due to this agrarian-democratic carry-over, the first phase of the coming proletarian revolution in the United States will be highly complex. The revolutionary Marxists must present a class struggle line to the Negroes. They must ruthlessly stamp out white chauvinism in their ranks. They must not tolerate white chauvinism in the workers organizations in the South, not to speak of the North.

July 29, 1939

* * * * *

"Labor in a white skin cannot emancipate itself so long as labor in a black skin is branded". -- Marx

ON THE QUESTION OF THE CHEKA AND THE GPU

One of the chief arguments of the opportunists of all shades who seek by every possible means to wash out the necessity for proletarian dictatorship, is the question of the GPU and its campaign of physical extermination of all political oppositionists to Stalinism. These arguments must be answered by the Marxists by making a POSITIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP -- in this instance, the development of the Cheka under Lenin, its distortion, the GPU under Stalin and the theoretical lessons that may be learned to be assimilated for the coming proletarian revolutions.

THE CHEKA --- INSTRUMENT OF THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

The THEORY of the proletarian dictatorship as advanced by Marx and Engels and extended by Lenin clearly pointed out that it would have the task of organizing the new society which necessarily meant the SUPPRESSION AND LIQUIDATION of the bourgeoisie in its efforts to reestablish the old exploiters regime. And when Red October gave life to this theory the Bolsheviks faced the task of concretising the theory in practice. Immediately after the seizure of power when the Whites were organizing their counter-revolution, when the world imperialists were moving to crush the workers' state, before the Red Army was established and the proletarian regime had had time to consolidate its ranks, the Extraordinary Commission for the Suppression of Counter-Revolution, Sabotage and Speculation was established by the Council of Peoples Commissars (Dec. 20, 1917).

As its name implies, the job of the Cheka was to SUPPRESS counter-revolution, speculation and sabotage. It was given almost unlimited powers by the Bolshevik government. As Y. Peters, assistant to the first head of the Cheka, Latsis, says: "In its activity the Cheka is completely independent, carrying out searches, arrests, shootings and AFTERWARDS making a report to the Council of Peoples Commissars and to the Soviet Central Executive Committee." And in the course of its first three years the Cheka functioned vigilantly in the interests of the Soviet power, suppressing, according to Latsis, 344 insurrections, as well as fighting, liquidating other forms of counter-revolutionary activity on the part of individuals and groups.

The imperialists of the world and their faithful agents, such as Kautsky, Vandervelde & Company, and today as well, a whole slew of ultra-lefts, howled and continue to howl about the "atrocities," "butchery" and "mass murder" of the Cheka. These gentlemen, who were just concluding a world-wide carnage that took ten million lives in the interests of the imperialist redivision of the world, and who proceeded to launch a campaign of armed intervention to crush the workers' state, have the gall to yell about the few thousand who were killed by the Cheka because they were engaged in the counter-revolutionary activities of these same imperialists! As Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders pointed out time and again, the CLASS TERROR of the workers' state was not only historically necessary as proved by the history of all previous social revolutions, including those of the bourgeoisie, but in the face of the tremendous imperialist slaughter in the war and intervention, it was indeed mild by comparison.

We are of the opinion that the establishment and functioning of the Cheka as a "special body of armed men" of the proletarian dictatorship to smash and destroy the counter-revolution of the exploiters, was POLITICALLY CORRECT AND NECESSARY.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVILEGE AND BUROCRACY

But now under Stalinism, in the face of the terrific degeneration of the workers' state and the monstrous police apparatus of this bureaucracy, it is necessary not only to condemn and fight these cancerous growths, but to search for their roots, to determine the source of their development.

Therefore, we must examine the functioning of the Cheka to determine the partial development of bureaucracy in this as well as other Soviet bodies which partially contributed to its degeneration into the Stalinist GPU.

Every "special body of armed men" (as well as all other social bodies) in a SOCIETY BASED ON CLASSES, has the tendency to perpetuate and to extend the material base of its existence, to develop and acquire special privileges and then to further extend itself in order to guarantee these privileges. It is not surprising, therefore, to find evidence of this in the Cheka. We here deal with two of the more salient, as the official "Bulletin of the Cheka" takes cognizance of them: "It is necessary to stop forever the giving out of goods in a lump. Such a method leads to a good deal of corruption and the spreading of all sorts of reproaches against the Cheka." It must be remembered that in the years of war communism, because of the low level of production and the imperialist intervention, all the necessities of life were at a premium, food was rationed through a card system, etc. Under these circumstances the fact that the Cheka confiscated property and personal goods provided a base for some of these agents to sell and barter these goods and property for personal gain, thus acquiring (in addition to the fact that they were in the "top rank" of the food

card system) still more special privileges. The Cheka leadership attempted to stop this but in one form or another these practices grew.

Coupled with this was the fact that "into the provincial and especially into the county Chekas, people who are not only unworthy but who are actually criminal, are trying to make their way." (Bulletin of the Cheka, No. 4, October 13, 1919). Altho Dzerzhinsky and other Cheka leaders tried to make a practice of having as Cheka agents only workers-revolutionists of many years, in the vast peasant districts where before the revolution there were only scattered handfuls of Bolsheviks, it was not unnatural that kulaks, former government officials and other non-proletarian elements, should "jump on the bandwagon." The Soviet government tried to stop this by liquidating the county Chekas into the militias but this practice prevailed in all the armed bodies and hence continued to make headway.

These two factors, together with the "complete independence" of the Cheka, and other similar factors, enabled bureaucracy and social privilege to gain ground, as in all other departments of the state apparatus, thus providing part of the social composition and laying the material base for the bureaucratic caste.

In 1922-23 Lenin, greatly alarmed by this growth of bureaucracy, tried to organize against it. Thus, at the ninth congress of soviets in 1922 the powers of the Cheka were limited, placing it under the Commissar of Internal Affairs. But just as the Control Commission which Lenin wanted to establish to fight bureaucracy became one of the chief instruments of the Stalinists to crush the Marxist wing of the Party, so this measure led to further bureaucracy; and in 1923 the Cheka was abolished, and the OGPU established with its president APPOINTED by the president of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR which, within two years, was effectively under the control of the Stalinists.

THE GPU -- INSTRUMENT OF BUREOCRATIC DEGENERATION

With the growth of Stalinism, the GPU functioned NOT as an instrument of the CLASS to crush the exploiters, but as an instrument of the BUREOCRATIC CASTE to crush the revolutionary vanguard of the class and other political opponents of Stalinism. ITS POLITICAL AXIS WAS COMPLETELY REVERSED, and instead of being the spearhead of the workers' state against counter-revolution, it became the spearhead of the bureaucratic usurpers of the workers' democracy and control against those who sought to defend and extend the revolutionary Marxian policy and workers' democracy. And now it functions as one of the most vicious police forces of all time, to imprison, torture, shoot and kill all who have

fought or now fight or can not be of service to the bureaucracy. Instead of being a small body of several thousand to root out counter-revolution, it is a monstrously privileged force of two hundred thousand, terrorizing the entire working class in the interests of the continued rule of the bureaucracy. Its actions, policies and practices must be thoroly condemned and fought against as decisively counter-revolutionary, both in the Soviet Union and on a world scale where it functioned as the spearhead of capitalist counter-revolution (Spain) and murdered scores of political opponents of Stalinism. It is the vilest excrescence of the degenerate Stalinist bureaucracy and together with the latter must be smashed and destroyed by a political revolution of the Soviet workers.

FALSE CONCLUSIONS OF THE ENEMIES OF PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

The ultra-leftists, centrists and reformists (as well as their imperialist masters), now howl with glee that the GPU is the logical outcome of the Cheka, as they claim that Stalinism is the logical continuator of Leninism. Thus they do deadly service for the bourgeoisie because, in the last analysis, all of these arguments lead to the conclusion that there must be no proletarian dictatorship. We are not hesitant about citing the above facts of the growth of bureaucracy but they in no way lead to the above false conclusion. We point out these facts in order to understand the development of the bureaucratic PERVERSION of the proletarian dictatorship so that we MAY GUARD AGAINST IT IN THE FUTURE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIPS. The bureaucracy as a whole and its GPU section did not develop out of the thin air but out of the material conditions of a backward economy of a country beset by imperialist intervention on twenty-one fronts, by the defeat of proletarian revolutions in western Europe and the consequent temporary stabilization of the bourgeoisie enabling them to isolate the Soviet Union -- and hence the growth of bureaucracy as partially outlined above. Under this adverse condition, the DEVELOPMENT of privileged strata and a bureaucracy was INEVITABLE but its GAINING OF CONTROL WAS NOT, had the Marxist forces been able to organize their struggle to win out over these elements in the Soviet Union or by another proletarian revolution in the capitalist world. The fact that they did not explains why Stalinism is in control and functions in every way as a non-Marxist force, perverting, distorting and warping all aspects of Soviet life, but this DOES NOT negate the correctness and necessity of proletarian dictatorship. The fact that the GPU now functions against the extension of the proletarian revolution instead of as the best instrument of revolutionary terrorism against the exploiters DOES NOT negate the necessity for such revolutionary class terrorism in future proletarian revolutions. And those who opportunistically maintain the opposite do so because they do not want to see proletarian revo-

lution, proletarian dictatorship and proletarian terrorism. Every class that seizes power uses its class terror against the defeated rulers. The exploiters' terror was for the minority against the majority. The terror of the dictatorship of the proletariat is against the former exploiting minority for the majority. This terror if used against the workers' democracy in the Soviets, the majority interest, is the bureaucratic usurping of red terror.

LEARN THE LESSONS AND USE THEM

Because we stand for the proletarian revolution and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, we recognize the necessity for "special bodies of armed men" -- Red Army, etc., **FUNCTIONING UNDER AND CONTROLLED BY THE SOVIETS AND ARMED WORKING CLASS** to "crush the resistance of the exploiters" and enable the consolidation of the proletarian regimes in their march toward Communism.

But on the basis of the above steps we believe the utmost vigilance is necessary to guard against bureaucratic degeneration in the Cheka and other bodies. In an objective sense, proletarian revolution in more advanced countries will not face the extremely adverse material conditions as in Russia which laid such a heavy material base for the development of bureaucracy.

It is of course impossible to lay down a blueprint to guard against bureaucracy any more than it was possible for the Bolsheviks to lay down a blueprint of all their practical steps to concretize in life the theory of the proletarian dictatorship. But at least three conditions, resting on a healthy Soviet structure with workers' democracy safeguarded by a vigilant and **ARMED WORKING CLASS** should be safeguards against bureaucratic degeneration.

1. The special workers guard, or "Cheka," must at all times be under the control of the Soviet Government. While this workers guard must be able to move speedily and expediently to crush counter-revolutionary activities, its policies and practices must be carefully and regularly scrutinized. Its policies must be presented openly to the working class, and must be determined by the Soviet government. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST IT BE PERMITTED TO INTERFERE WITH OR COUNTERACT THE WORK OR POLICIES OF THE SOVIETS.**

2. The rule must be firmly fixed and followed as closely as possible that only revolutionists of years of service to the movement, with a clear political understanding of Marxism, must be utilized as Cheka agents.

3. To the degree that counter-revolutionary activities, plots, etc., diminish with the advance of Soviet society, to that

degree should the functions of the Cheka be diminished with the perspective of totally liquidating it by the transfer of its gradually diminishing functions to other government bodies as the proletarian regime consolidates itself.

While there can be no complete guarantees against bureaucracy any more than there can be guarantees that a revolution will be successful, the above general policies firmly administered should aid in safeguarding against bureaucracy and permit the Cheka to function as a healthy part of the worker state apparatus to smash the attempts of the bourgeoisie to re-establish their exploiters' rule, and thus enable the proletarian dictatorships of the future to consolidate themselves and take the necessary steps to march toward a classless society.

August 27, 1939

* * * * *

ON THE QUESTION OF REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM

"There can be no successful revolution without **CRUSHING THE RESISTANCE OF THE EXPLOITERS**. It was our duty to crush the resistance of the exploiters when we, the workers and toiling peasants, seized state power. We are proud that we have been doing it and are continuing to do it. We only regret that we are not doing it in a sufficiently firm and determined manner."

-- Lenin, Letter to American Workers, p. 18

"The meaning of terrorism in the revolution is that **THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS, EVEN IN THE HOUR OF GREATEST DANGER, SHRINKS FROM NOTHING IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH ITS WILL, AND DEPENDS ITSELF WITH ALL ITS MIGHT.**"

-- Redek, Proletarian Dictatorship and Terrorism, p. 59

FRENCH GROUP ENDORSES FOURTEEN POINTS

Dear Comrades:

*****, France
September 7, 1939

We have received the last numbers of the Fighting Worker and the Marxist as well as 10 copies of the International News. As our comrade Z. has already informed you, our committee is in principled agreement with the Fourteen Point Programmatic Declaration. In our internal discussion with the cadres inside the country, we have offered the following supplement thereunto (regarding revolutionary perspectives in the fascist countries): Today the Marxists must exert all their energies so that fascism will be destroyed, not by a "democratic republic", but by dual power; i.e., we agitate today for the struggle for workers' democratic rights and hold the opinion that fascism will be at once destroyed by the dual power, in which we will agitate not for the support of "democracy" but only for the support of the workers councils and other proletarian institutions. This summary is added because the opposition which split from the Kampfbund (with whom you were at one time in contact) takes the position on this question that we must be for support to the break-up of the democratic republic --- to be sure with the clarification that our final aim is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Due to the development of events (outbreak of the war) the cadres within the country could not take a position.

Regarding the national question, we think the proletariat of an "oppressing" nation can only win over those active in national minorities if it carries the solution of the right of self-determination EVEN TO SEPARATION, while the proletariat of the oppressed nation must struggle especially against its own chauvinism and for revolutionary brotherhood with the proletariat of the "oppressing" nation. Here too we have added a supplement with this idea to the Fourteen Points. ~~These points are also on the program of the Bolshevists (the four world congresses and of Bolshevism-Leninism) have been discussed internally --- we here are not of his opinion. Further positions on the above-named publications follow in the next letter.~~

We have also sent the Fourteen Points to other revolutionary groups (which are affiliated to none of the other existing international groupings), where they were rather favorably accepted. The French Internationalist Communist Party group (Molinier's group) was also sent the document. In the last number of their theoretical organ Verite, they published only the first half of it "due to lack of space". They characterized the Fourteen Points as "confused", because the latter "made no distinction between the centrists and the Trotskyites". (!). This indicates their political concepts well enough. They are also publishing an "explanation" with the Fourteen Points. The group has some good organizers, but --- like all centrists --- they are not fit for a scientific discussion. These people agitate for a "regrouping of revolutionary forces", i.e., a unification of all forces outside of the Trotskyites, for the purpose of entry or re-entry into the Trotskyite organizations. In Belgium they have succeeded in winning over Voreekon, who has no serious clarity on any political question, for their "revolutionary regroupment".

With the outbreak of war a wave of reaction broke out in Belgium. After the social-democrats again took part in the regime of the sacred union and

the Stalinists have kept quiet due to lack of any official instructions from Moscow, the bloc was struck at the various centrist groups.

With revolutionary greetings,

(signed) E. T.

REPLY OF THE I.C.C.

September 30, 1939

*****, France
E. T. Secretary

Dear Comrades:

We are glad to receive your letter of September 7th, and your agreement with the Fourteen Point Programmatic Declaration of the Provisional INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION. The two supplements you have added to the document which you have sent to your membership in the different countries, are correct positions. In order that there shall not be any confusion on the matter, we are sending copies of your letter and your supplements to the Red Front of Germany and the Leninist League of Scotland and the Revolutionary Workers League of the United States.

We herewith quote two excerpts from the PROGRAM of the Revolutionary Workers League of the United States that deal with the questions you present. The reason we present these quotations instead of reformulations is as follows: Before the Program was adopted by the Third Convention of the R.W.L., it was sent in draft form to the Red Front and the Leninist League, as well as other organizations, for suggestions, criticism, etc. These two organizations sent back suggestions to strengthen the document. The Executive Committee of the Red Front and the Leninist League then endorsed the document with important but secondary amendments which were added before it was finally adopted.

Therefore these two quotations have been approved by the Red Front and the Leninist League, which means complete political agreement on these questions by the affiliates of the INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION.

1 -- THE RIGHT OF SELF DETERMINATION

"Marxists fight for the RIGHT of self-determination for the oppressed minorities and the national minorities, and utilize the slogan as an auxiliary action to win allies against the imperialist oppressor. In the colonial and semi-colonial countries our aim and line of action is to win the proletariat AS WORKERS FOR PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION, and not as allies through auxiliary slogans. The auxiliary slogans are used to win over the other layers of the oppressed and for BACKWARD layers of the workers who are not won over on the main line of action.

"No slogan "Right of Self-Determination" is a necessary concession just as is the slogan "land to the peasants", to a backward layer of capitalist society. But it must be understood as a concession within the general line of the struggle for a world proletarian society. With the advance of world economy under the socialist mode of production, the inequalities between the "home" country and the "colonial" country will disappear and there will be a natural blending into the world socialist state of those nations or minorities who exercise the right of self-determination to remain independent."

-- Program of the R.W.L. (first edition) pp. 47-48.

2 -- THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

"In Fascist or countries of extreme reaction the advancing of the slogan by the reformists and "liberals" (i.e., the slogan for a Constituent Assembly; cf. preceding section)--- Ed.) is a historical anachronism serving no revolutionary purpose. Bourgeois democracy (which must not be confused with democratic demands) is no solution for the problems of fascism, although the bourgeoisie can revive it for short periods to head off the class struggle. It cannot solve the problems of the working class. The masses are already far beyond such stages. The attempt to establish a Constituent Assembly in Fascist countries can lead only to still further disillusionments and demoralization within the masses. We fight at all times -- especially under Fascism -- for democratic rights, for the social revolution; we fight against the "democratic" state or its establishment."

-- Ibid., p. 51.

Comradely,

(signed) Hugo Ochler
for the
Provisional INTERNATIONAL
CONTACT COMMISSION

GREAT BRITAIN NEEDS A WAR

EDITORS' NOTE-- This article was written before the outbreak of the second imperialist war. It reveals the position of England which led up to the war and clearly points out that the main antagonism, in spite of the open war between England and Germany, still remains between the United States and Great Britain. The article also presents the thesis that the Nazi Anti-Comintern Pact was a smokescreen aimed primarily at Great Britain, at the "western democracies". Hitler realized the weak position of the Soviets under Stalinism and continued his undermining in an attempt to carry out on a gigantic scale his feat in Austria and Czechoslovakia.

* ** *** **** ***** **

Great Britain lost her dominant position in economy to the United States just after the war, as an outgrowth of the armed imperialist conflict. Since then, a titanic economic struggle has been waged in all parts of the world, and within the Empire and the 48 States between these two giants. England is struggling to maintain her political supremacy, the economic base for which she lost in the World War; and the United States is struggling to displace England as the first power in the political arena. This struggle has taken on the form of naval "treaties", the Pound-Dollar struggle the war debt, the Dawes-Young plans, airways, the oil struggle in the Soviet Union, Nicaragua, the chemical cartel battle, nickel, rubber, communications, etc. All other imperialists in one degree or the other were also involved.

England's "victory" in the last imperialist war was snatched from her by America, and to an extent, by Japanese consolidation in Asia; and above all by the October Revolution. This war "victory" heralded the decline of the British Empire. Its far-flung domination is not able to withstand the violent eruptions of DECAY CAPITALISM and the social revolutions.

THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE

The British Empire has lost ground elsewhere, too, since this new relation between America and England took shape. The Anglo-American Antagonism, although remaining the most important underlying factor, has pushed to the surface other factors that threaten to engulf the Empire in a struggle she will be unable to withdraw from favorably. The British-German antagonism for the hegemony of Europe and the British-Japanese struggle in Asia, to say nothing of her difficulties with the Soviet Union, force the British Lion into compromise and appeasement for fear of what American Imperialism will do if England becomes so involved she cannot protect her Empire.

England's domination of Europe through France and the League of Nations is over. England's domination in the Mediterranean is being effectively challenged by Italy and Germany. England's domination of Eastern Europe through the French set-up has been torn to the ground by the eastward march of German imperialism. England's position that considers the Rhine her front line is seriously threatened by modern war conditions. England's position in Asia is being seriously challenged by Japanese advances.

England has been losing ground in Latin America to the other imperialists, especially to the United States and Germany. England's Empire is in the greatest internal contradiction with the workers and oppressed masses in greater motion and restlessness. London has lost its commercial and financial position as the major hub of world commerce. England is in decline.

Its decay will throw to the surface mediocre statesmen, just as its rise threw to the surface farsighted, capable capitalist strategists.

POWER POLITICS

The League of Nations was a weapon to consolidate Europe under British hegemony against the extension of the October Revolution and against the attempt of the United States to place Europe on its knees. The rise of Hitler put an end to the League and again England sheds the cloak and resorts to open power politics. This change does not represent new strength. It represents weakness in the face of a more serious situation.

Its antagonisms with Germany have again come to the surface. Its attempt to use Germany as its policeman in Europe as it did in the latter part of the last century, and as it did with France after the war, is not materializing. Its attempt to play off one power against the other of the four leading imperialist powers, is failing. Why this failure today after so many decades of success?

The failure of the British attempt to play off one power against the other is due to the new objective situation. Yesterday this policy was utilized within the framework of developing capitalism. Today it functions in decay capitalism.

Yesterday it did not confront the October Revolution and the Soviet Union. Today the danger of a proletarian revolution and the existence of the Soviet Union, in spite of the degeneration within the Soviet Union under Stalinism, alters the situation. Today the British imperialists confront, in addition to the other three European imperialists, two of the most powerful and favorably placed imperialists in the orbit of decay capitalism---the American imperialists with an almost free hand in the Americas and Japan with its increasing domination of Asia.

The balance of power in Europe yesterday, with very little pressure from the United States and Japan, was one thing; but the attempt at the balance of power in Europe with these two imperialists and the very existence of the Soviet Union today completely alters the relations.

CONTRADICTIONS UTILIZED

These contradictions Hitler understood and has taken advantage of. These contradictions Stalin and his followers have fallen victim to.

The Four Power Pact, as a working imperialist bloc under England (or Hitler) is impossible in decay capitalism. England and Germany must continue the fight for European hegemony before they can free their hands elsewhere. At best such a four power pact can only be like Locarno. The Anti-Communist Pact of Hitler in reality is an anti-British pact aimed at preventing Britain from realizing this bloc. Bismarck once said: "Whoever holds Bohemia is master of Europe." The conquest of Bohemia, Moravia by Hitler last year was a withering blow to British status-quo politics.

The German drive eastward has its objective in the Near East, the Soviet Union and Asia. But objectives are not obtained in one jump. The first obstacles that had to be removed was the Anglo-French domination of eastern Europe. The taking of Czechoslovakia, the key-point in military strategy, was a gigantic step toward the ENCIRCLEMENT of the Encirclers---at least making impotent to a great extent, the British threat of encirclement. With the shattered "balance of power" position, John Bull immediately got busy with military steps, a war budget equal to none and open war preparations.

The thrust southward and the Anschluss has become an effective club over the head of Germany's weak Italian partner. It counteracts effectively British pressure on Italy and gives Germany a giant step toward the Mediterranean.

GREAT BRITAIN NEEDS A WAR

Some say that England's world position is in decline and is being threatened on all sides, her policy must be to maintain the status quo---she is therefore a big factor for world peace. They also say this in behalf of "democratic" France under the Daladier Dictatorship. But the status quo of the Versailles Treaty has already been overthrown. There is a new situation and the time is rapidly approaching where further "peaceful" onslaughts and "bloodless" victories of Germany, Japan and others that are chopping at the Empire will have to be met. A transformation has been reached. The policy of status quo was possible only on the basis of the League of Nations system and a docile Germany. Today, with power politics the theme of world diplomacy, any concept of status quo is a mere delusion. The holding of such a concept can only further aid the DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE, can only spell doom.

The far-sighted statesmen of England understand this. They WANT WAR, ARE PLANNING WAR, and are only now tactically organizing their forces for the strategic advantages.

More important, however than the mere desires of imperialist policies, is the actual process of objective events. These factors are inevitably driving England to war. Only a social revolution, a proletarian revolution, can stop the coming imperialist slaughter. The British workers must prepare themselves accordingly. They must stand on their class interests. They must reject social-patriotism. They must be defeatist for British Imperialism.

August 15, 1939

Provisional

International Contact Commission

for the New Communist (4th) International.

Central Committee of the Red Front of
Greater Germany.

Leninist League, Scotland.

Revolutionary Workers League, U.S.A.

OFFICIAL ORGAN

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Address: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1904 Division St.

Chicago, U.S.A.

LABOR DONATED

