

BOOKS OF THE DAY

Volume X of Lenin's Works Is on Third International

VOLUME X, LENIN'S SELECTED WORKS, containing his writings on The Communist International. 333 pages. \$2. International Publishers, New York.

By Francis Franklin

It is an appropriate time for the publication of Lenin's writings on the Communist International.

This small volume consists of proposals for the Third International, written before its actual formation; of various resolutions, reports, and speeches presented by Lenin to the first four Congresses of the Communist International; of various writings on the nature of the Third International and of letters to various Communist parties.

It was the betrayal of the internationalism of the socialist movement during the World War which demonstrated the necessity for a new International. Fired with enthusiasm by the victory of the Russian people in 1917, the majority of members of most of the parties of the Second International favored affiliation to Lenin's International. However, Lenin warned that the good desire to be a Communist was not enough. All the parties desiring affiliation were still permeated with Social-Democratic theories and habits. In order to become Communist Parties, the fight against remnants of opportunism must assume first importance.

However, the opposite danger of "infantile leftism" and sectarianism also asserted itself. Certain comrades, in their alleged zeal to rush along a "straight road" to Soviet power, forgot that popular traditions and sentiments made a straight path impossible. Such impatient "leftists" advocated a policy of "no compromise" and boycott of the reactionary trade unions and of the bourgeois legislatures.

Lenin's powerful refutation of these "leftists," entitled "Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder, is included in this volume. These writings are especially important today. In this great work, Lenin declared the task of the Communists of different lands to be "To investigate, study, seek out, divine, grasp that which is peculiarly national, specifically national in the concrete manner in which each country approaches the fulfillment

of the single international task." It was here (pp. 135-6) that he foretold the need for finding "forms of transition or approach to the proletarian revolution," such as are actually being created now in the People's Front. It was this passage which Dimitroff quoted in his famous Report to the Seventh World Congress.

Every Party member should read and study over and over again both this masterpiece and Lenin's **Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Bourgeois - Democratic Revolution**, two works of especial importance in understanding how Leninism in the present period of the menace of fascism is the policy of the People's Front.

Over and over again, Lenin drives home the theme, "Right doctrinarism persisted in recognizing only old forms, and became totally bankrupt, for it did not perceive the new content. Left doctrinarism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms and fails to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how to supplement with the maximum rapidity one form with another, to substitute one for another, and to adapt our tactics to every change that is called forth by something other than our class, or our efforts."

In his last report to a Congress of the Communist International, Lenin criticized certain resolutions as being "too Russian" in form. "We have not understood how to present our Russian experience to foreigners." In order to overcome all such weaknesses, Lenin ended this last report with the advice that "the most important task that confronts us today is to study and study."

This advice should be followed by "studying and studying" these writings in order to know how to study the experiences of the Soviet Union and how to study our own country. Thus we may use the tremendous experiences of the U.S.S.R. in the task of saving and extending American democracy.