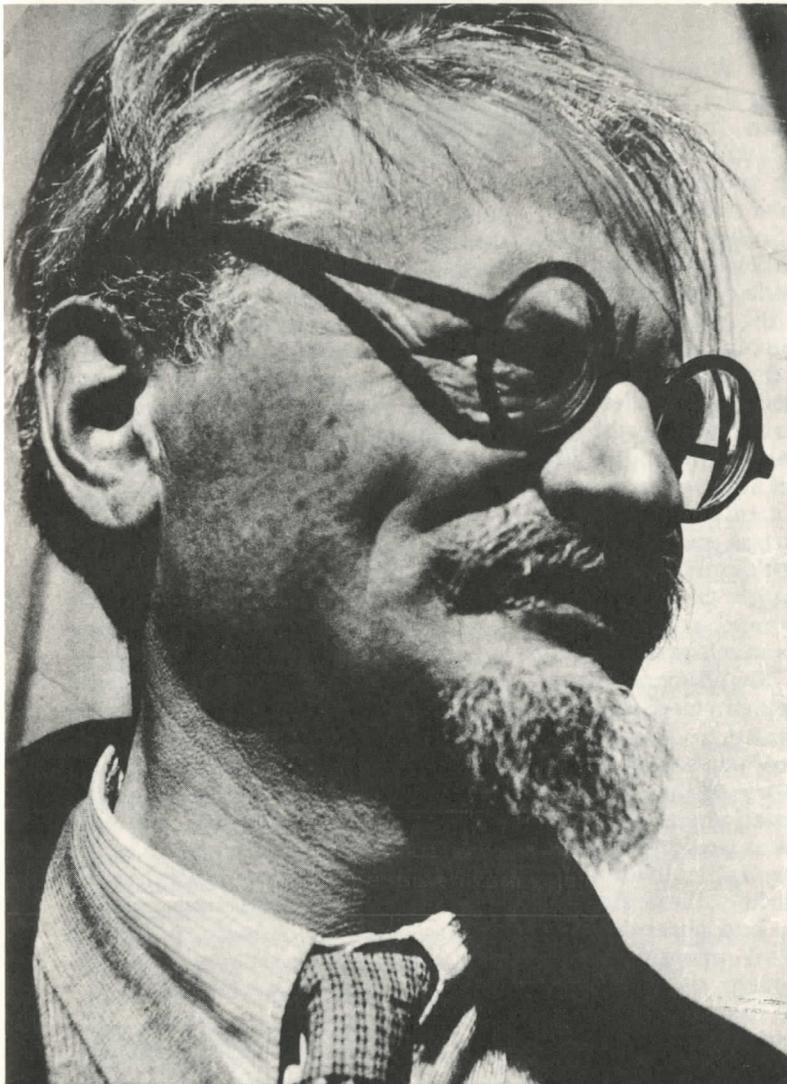


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**INTERNATIONAL
SOCIALIST
REVIEW**



Leon Trotsky

1879-1940

SPECIAL ISSUE

**TWENTY-FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY OF
THE ASSASSINATION
OF LEON TROTSKY**

In this issue for
the first time
in English

**LEON TROTSKY ON
LENIN'S FINAL
STRUGGLE AGAINST
BUREAUCRACY**

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A TROTSKY ANTHOLOGY

BY JOSEPH HANSEN

The great economic and social crisis that swept the United States in the thirties pointed, it seemed clear at the time, to a spectacular rise in class consciousness among the American workers. One of the fundamental objectives of Roosevelt's policy was to block this development. The revolutionary socialists on the other hand sought to further it. All their discussions on perspectives in the United States in those years revolved around this possibility. Trotsky encouraged an energetic approach to the problem. He held that the notorious backwardness of American political life could give way to highly advanced forms of the class struggle, which, once started, could proceed with characteristic "American speed," placing the socialist revolution on the order of the day.

There would be many advance indications of such a leap, some of sensational nature like the threat of a fascist movement. Others would appear more indirect although they would be nonetheless important. Among these would be a noticeable shift in attitude toward Marxist theory. No longer would it be dismissed in intellectual circles as outmoded or irrelevant. It would, Trotsky held, begin to be taken seriously. In the land of pragmatism this would certainly take an active form and we could expect to see a generation of Marxists who would make worthy contributions of their own.

The outbreak of World War II, of course, brought the crisis of the thirties to an end in the United States, replacing it with the immense boom of the war years. World War II came to a close with the decisive victory of the Soviet Union over German imperialism — against the backdrop, provided by American imperialism, of the smoking ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. All this greatly altered the logic of world events. The United States underwent decades of glittering prosperity upheld by colossal preparations for a nuclear conflict and by the expansion of American military bases to the center of Europe and the shores of Asia. Roosevelt's policy of softening the class struggle through timely concessions became a permanent feature of government, practiced by Democrats and Republicans alike.

This was supplemented by McCarthyism — initiated by Truman — the worst and most prolonged witch-hunt in the history of the country. Among the consequences of these major changes was prolonged postponement of the radicalization of the American workers, the beginning of which Trotsky had observed with such fascinated attention from Mexico in the years of the rise of the CIO and the first storm signals of a native American fascist movement. Only today are we beginning to see indications in the United States of the intellectual ferment which Trotsky forecast before his death at the hands of a Stalinist

assassin twenty-five years ago.

And significantly enough, it is toward Trotsky's writings that the inquiring youth and independent-minded intellectuals of today are drawn. There is a definite rise in interest in "Trotskyism." The 384-page paperback anthology *The Age of Permanent Revolution* is a case in point.*

The project was conceived by the late C. Wright Mills, one of America's leading intellectuals, after first-hand experience with the Cuban Revolution convinced him that he must finally begin a genuinely serious study of Marxism. In the course of his intensive if belated investigations, he came to the conclusion that no matter what one's final judgment might be concerning the validity of Trotsky's theories, it was impossible to really understand present-day world realities without knowing them.

To further this understanding among American intellectuals and students, he decided to sponsor an anthology of Trotsky's writings and to contribute an introduction, presenting his own conclusions, although they were not yet fully formed. He enlisted the aid of George Novack in making the selection and providing explanatory notes. However, Mills' untimely death prevented him from proceeding with the project. The publishers then turned to Isaac Deutscher to sponsor the book and to provide an introduction.

The felicitous choice of selections in the anthology is mainly due to George Novack. As a well-known figure in civil-liberties work in the thirties, he was active in organizing the John Dewey Commission of Inquiry which provided Trotsky with an opportunity for a fair hearing in defending himself against the monstrous slanders levelled in the Moscow frame-up trials. Trotsky met Novack in Mexico and was much attracted to him as a representative of the young radical-minded American intellectuals of the thirties Trotsky hoped to find in him a staunch partisan of dialectic

(Continued on Page 125)

* *THE AGE OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION: A TROTSKY ANTHOLOGY*. With an introduction by Isaac Deutscher. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc. 1964. 384 pp. \$.95.

ON LENIN'S FINAL STRUGGLE AGAINST BUREAUCRACY

LEON
TROTSKY

TRANSLATED BY BRIAN PEARCE

Introduction by the Editors

This year the Trotskyist movement throughout the world commemorates the 25th anniversary of the death of Leon Trotsky in Mexico on August 20, 1940. A pickaxe wielded by Joseph Stalin's hireling assassin ended the life of the man who, together with Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, led the Bolshevik Party to victory in the Russian Revolution of October 1917. By this murderous deed Stalin hoped to destroy the last authentic voice able to speak out and command a hearing in defense of the revolutionary program, organization and tradition of Bolshevik-Leninism against the reactionary Stalinist bureaucratic caste which had usurped the workers' power in the Soviet Union.

Trotsky fought throughout his years of opposition and exile on many fronts, not the least of which was his indefatigable struggle to rescue and preserve the revolutionary spirit of Lenin from his detractors and defamers in the camp of the petty bourgeois and bourgeois historians, on the one side, and the defilers of Leninism in the camp of the Kremlin apologists, on the other. Both have sought to prove that Stalinism was an inherent, logical and inevitable extension of Leninism. No greater distortion of history has ever been attempted.

The record shows that the struggle against Stalinism, that is, against the process of bureaucratic degeneration which began to manifest itself early in the 1920's, was initiated by Lenin and took the original form of a bloc between Lenin and Trotsky

Brian Pearce, who translated the present speech, also translated The New Economics, by E. Preobrazhensky, which has recently been published by Oxford University Press.

prior to the 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, scheduled for April, 1923.

In this commemorative issue of the *International Socialist Review*, we are publishing for the first time in English a product of this bloc, Trotsky's address to the 12th Conference of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, given in Kharkov, April 5, 1923. It has been translated from a pamphlet published in Moscow in 1923 (*Zadachi XII s'ezda RKP*). In this speech, Trotsky explains and develops Lenin's program of opposition to Stalin's bureaucracy.

The year 1922 found the new Soviet state in a critically weakened condition, following years of civil war, the destruction of much of the nation's wealth, the death of many of the leaders of the revolution, itself, and the defeats of the European revolution to which the Bolsheviks looked for material support to the Soviet Union.

These conditions paved the way for the emergence in Russia of an opportunist and non-revolutionary state and party apparatus under Stalin's leadership — a process which became clearly visible in late 1922. Lenin, who had already suffered his first stroke, and Trotsky planned to move jointly against Stalin at the 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party.

Trotsky and Lenin had no sooner agreed upon the necessity of attacking Stalin, however, when a second severe stroke totally prevented Lenin from appearing to deliver the attack at the 12th Congress.

Lenin's illness placed Trotsky in a difficult position. The Stalin faction had been assiduously circulating the rumor that Trotsky had ambitions to "seize" the leadership of the party upon Lenin's death. In a transparent attempt to provide "objective evidence" confirming the rumor, Stalin nominated Trotsky to make the report in Lenin's absence. When Trotsky refused to walk into the trap Zinoviev was desig-

nated as substitute reporter for Lenin. Trotsky was concerned above all not to permit even the appearance of personal rivalries to obscure the crucial political issues at stake.

The struggle against the bureaucratic apparatus was not an abstract question or one of personalities. It was grounded part and parcel in the concrete and specific problems facing the young workers state. For Lenin and Trotsky these questions had to be met head on, the danger inherent in Stalin's policies had to be discussed around specific issues—and it was to these questions that they addressed themselves primarily, not to Stalin's personality.

In spite of his illness, Lenin attempted in the period before the opening of the 12th Congress to raise these issues in notes to the Central Committee. The Stalin faction, commanding a majority of the Central Committee, refused to publish Lenin's notes,* but Trotsky used them as the basis of the present speech, although, because of his reluctance to attack Stalin personally, Trotsky did not mention Stalin by name.

The paramount question which Lenin pointed up in his notes was the problem of the national minorities. The bureaucratic attitude of the Stalin-controlled apparatus exploded an internal party crisis in Georgia directly prior to the 12th Congress.

It was imperative for the Soviet state, Lenin and Trotsky held, that the huge masses of peasants, many of them with different languages and cultures, be integrated into the construction of an autonomous socialist economy at the tempo which the peasants themselves understood and accepted. It was necessary to move slowly and with thorough education of the peasant. Unnecessary exacerbation of the national minorities could provoke dangerous splits, could even lay the groundwork for counterrevolution.

The key to the national question for Lenin was self-determination, with the obvious limitation being,

as Trotsky mentions in his speech, that the state could not tolerate counterrevolution on the part of a minority which would endanger the whole union—the possibility of which had all too clearly been shown in the Kronstadt rebellion two years earlier.

Closely related to the national question is the more general question, Trotsky points out in the speech, of the economic relationship between the workers and peasants, in the early period of socialist construction. The idea of arbitrary and unlimited taxation of the peasantry for the sake of building heavy industry risked alienating the peasants from the process of socialist construction. On the other extreme was the danger of allowing the peasants to develop as a separate economic force which could cripple the development of an industrial proletariat by refusing to sell produce at rates the worker-consumer could afford.

The key to the worker-peasant alliance was planned parallel development, whereby regularized taxation would provide funds for the development of industry, but would allow the peasants to benefit at the end of each year, while industry would provide necessary equipment for technologically improving agriculture.

To Stalin, these specific problems of the New Economic Policy—the plan to build an integrated Soviet economy—were all subordinated to his primary purpose of building a bureaucratic apparatus under his personal control. An example was the crisis in the Georgian party. Scurrilously charging the Georgian party with national chauvinism, Stalin removed its leaders in favor of his own cohorts, Dzerzhinsky and Ordzhonikidze.

The case impelled Lenin to an arch criticism of Stalin's bureaucratic manhandling: "In good conscience," Lenin wrote, "we must now say that our apparatus is still alien through and through to us, and is a bourgeois and Tsarist mechanism, which proved impossible to overcome in the course of five years, lacking help from other countries . . .

"I think that the hastiness and administrative zeal of Stalin have played a fateful role, as well as his spitefulness against the notorious 'Social Nationalism.' Spitefulness always plays the worst role in politics."** (Emphasis added)

In order to counteract Stalin, Lenin conceived of instituting a Control Commission elected by the party which would watch over the government apparatus. This party Commission was to take over some of the functions of the Stalin apparatus-controlled Workers and Peasants Inspection which had already become, in fact, Stalin's private police agency.

* Isaac Deutscher, in *The Prophet Unarmed*, p. 93, states that Lenin's notes were to remain unknown to the party for thirty-three years, when they were ultimately published in *Kommunist*, June, 1956, to support Khrushchev's attack on Stalin. However there is little doubt that Trotsky referred directly to these notes in the present speech, stating that they were available, and probably already had been read by his listeners.

** *Kommunist*, June, 1956, translated by Gerry Paul.

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"Stalinism," Trotsky was later to write in *My Life*, "is above all else the automatic work of the impersonal apparatus on the decline of the revolution." To Lenin and Trotsky in 1923 the only force which was capable of preventing bureaucratization was the party. Their program was devoted to the training and educating of a revolutionary leadership, not to the reform of the petty-bourgeois apparatus of the state.

The ascendancy of Stalinism represented to Trotsky the failure of the party to maintain independent revolutionary leadership. "A regime," he wrote in *My Life*, "was established that was nothing less than a dictatorship of the apparatus over the party. In other words the party was ceasing to be a party."

This lesson, which Trotsky attempted to teach the Bolshevik cadres of 1923 is today being concretely learned in revolutionary Cuba. At the 12th Anniversary of the attack on the Moncada barracks, July 26, 1965, Fidel Castro formulated a bold plan for the socialist construction of Cuba in which he asserted that the cadres of the revolution, not functionaries and petty-bourgeois bureaucrats must become the leaders of the administration.

The struggle of Cuba's leaders against bureaucracy, from the attack on Anibal Escalante to the present, demonstrates the contemporary importance of Trotsky's theory of the petty-bourgeois degeneration of the Stalinist parties. In fact, there is no better memorial to the twenty-fifth anniversary of Trotsky's death than the fact that the struggle against bureaucracy undertaken jointly with Lenin over 40 years ago is today being waged in earnest in revolutionary Cuba.

Trotsky's Speech

Comrades! The party congress is held once a year. That means, formally speaking, that the task of the congress is first and foremost to evaluate the experience of the past year and to lay down the fundamental line for work in the year that lies ahead. But our party is not a party of political empiricism, that is, it is not a party that lives from case to case and from day to day. We are the party of Marxism, of scientific socialism; our methods, ideas and evaluations of events embrace not just a year but a whole great period of history, and therefore we evaluate the experience of the past year and the tasks of the year before us from the standpoint of our view of the entire epoch through which we are passing—not in order to lose ourselves and dissolve our ideas in commonplaces and generalities, but, on the contrary, in order to deduce from a general evaluation certain quite specific and clear-cut directives for our conduct in the period immediately in front of us.

If, comrades, we look at the question in the perspective which I have just shown, then we shall be obliged to ask in the first place whether in the year which has elapsed since the 11th Congress of the Russian Communist Party there have been any *basic* changes, any changes *affecting principles*, in the international or the domestic situation, any changes which would call for a radical revision of our tasks.

Would such changes be possible in general? Certainly. The 10th Party Congress, two years ago, marked a very important landmark, and your corresponding Ukrainian congresses carried out the same work — a review of the road traversed, a re-evaluation of tasks and methods. From the policy of War Communism we went over, in connection with the international and domestic situation to what was called the New Economic Policy, which has now developed into an entire historical epoch with a particular grouping of forces and with particular methods of work.

We are living in this epoch today, and we have to ask ourselves: Since the 10th Congress, and since the 11th Congress, which merely rendered more precise and more profound the tasks set forth by the 10th Congress, have there been any radical changes in the international and domestic situation? This, comrades, is the central question, since we want to evaluate correctly the work of our party as a whole, both on the scale of the Ukraine and on that of the work of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, by whose instructions I am giving this address.

What does "the international situation" mean? For us the international situation is first and foremost the aggregate of those conditions which hasten or delay the international revolution. Has this international situation changed or not? Certainly it has changed. But has it changed *in principle, qualitatively*, since the 10th Congress? No, it has not changed.

This is the essence of the matter. What was the origin of that great historical turn which we carried through at the 10th Congress, placing the party under the sign which it still lives under to this day? This turn sprang — and we must not forget this fact for a single minute, otherwise we shall sink into provincialism and national limitedness — from the slowness in the rate of development of the world revolution. In 1917, 1918 and 1919, and to some extent still in 1920, when we were advancing on Warsaw, we estimated differently, not the general course of development of the world revolution, but its tempo, its speed, not as we estimate this today.

It has become clear, however, in terms of facts, that the world revolution, understanding thereby both the struggle of the proletariat for power in the West and the struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of the East for national liberation — these two wings, two sides of one and the same struggle, directed against imperialism — it has become clear, I say, that the world revolution is obliged in its preparatory stage to overcome very much greater obstacles than we were all inclined to suppose at the end of the imperialist war and immediately thereafter.

Yes, this is the essence of the matter. It became clear to us during 1920 and 1921, with absolute clarity, that the Union of Soviet Republics would have to go on existing, perhaps for a rather long time, in the midst of capitalist encirclement. We shall still not receive tomorrow any direct and immediate aid from a proletariat organized in a state, a state of a much higher type and with greater economic might than ours. That is what we told ourselves in 1920. We did not know whether it would be a matter of one, two,

three or ten years, but we knew that we were at the beginning of an epoch of serious and prolonged preparation.

The basic conclusion from this was that, while awaiting a change in the relation of forces in the West, we must look very much more attentively and sharply at the relation of forces in our own country, in the Soviet Union. The chief relation of forces at home here is the relation between the working class and peasantry. The working class is the only class which is capable not only of leading our country in the future to socialism but also of directly saving it from ruin, disintegration and devastation. But in numbers this class is a small minority, side by side with an overwhelming majority of peasants.

The fundamental task, as it was defined by Comrade Lenin at the 10th Congress, is to establish correct economic and political relations between the working class and the peasantry, for to make a mistake in this field means to risk a mortal fall. And this is all the more dangerous because up to the present nobody is as yet ready to support us, nobody in the West will hold us up if we stagger and are about to fall; the proletariat is not yet in power over there. Now, let us ask ourselves whether, from this point of view, there have been any radical, basic changes in the world situation—and I have already said that the world situation means for us the aggregate of conditions which hasten or delay the progress of the proletarian revolution.

Let us recall the fundamental facts: the triumph of Fascism, the coming to power of the Conservative imperialists in Great Britain, the victory of the extreme imperialist wing of the National Bloc in France and the occupation of the Ruhr by the French, which has led in the last few days to the shooting of workers in Essen by French soldiers. These are four outstanding facts from this year! They signify that on the political plane the movement of forces during this year has gone in favor of a strengthening of the dictatorship of imperialism, in the shape of its most extreme wing, with the using of the most extreme and ruthless methods of militarism. That is how we can sum up the political process which has developed in Europe during the past year.

Pessimistic and gloomy conclusions would appear to follow from this, at first sight. It would seem that the bourgeoisie has grown stronger during this year than it was at the time of the 11th Congress. As regards form and appearance this is true, but in essence it is not true. The day after the imperialist war the bourgeoisie felt incomparably weaker than now, while the proletariat felt revolutionary and pressed forward spontaneously. That's how it was all over Europe—more so in some countries, less in others. The collision between the classes found expression in various forms. The proletariat convinced itself, however, through hard experience, that it did not possess sufficient power to overthrow the bourgeoisie, because it lacked leadership, organization, cohesion, experience. The bourgeoisie convinced itself that it was still standing firm, that the proletariat would not easily overthrow it—and so there took place a shift in the consciousness of these two classes.

From 1919 onward the bourgeoisie began to be strengthened more and more in its class self-confidence. The European proletariat which in 1918-1919 was spontaneously pressing forward against the bourgeois state began in the mass to doubt whether it possessed what was needed to take power, to change the social order. And these two waves—the wave of consolidation of the political self-confidence of the bourgeoisie and the wave of the spontaneously revolutionary mood of the proletariat now ebbing—have been flowing before our eyes during the last three years. These are two processes of prime importance. Whoever does not take them into account is not taking into account the international situation.

But Marx taught us that a class does not always think itself to be what it really is—a class can already be powerful in its position in production, in the role it plays, and yet not understand that this is so. A class can have forfeited half or three-quarters of its economic power and yet keep itself in position through its experience, through inertia, through the habitual procedures of the state. And that is the situation we have in Europe today. The bourgeoisie considers itself, after the experience of 1918-1919, very much stronger than it is in fact, for its economy has not been restored to health, the breakdown of capitalism continues, and the bourgeoisie has no methods at its disposal other than predatory ones, methods of grabbing and smashing, as in the Ruhr, and a class which cannot advance production is a class which is doomed. The bourgeoisie imagines itself, as a result of the experience of 1918 and 1919, much stronger than it is in reality.

The proletariat of Europe, on the contrary, feels after that experience, so far as the overwhelming majority is concerned, much weaker than it really is. Europe is passing through its Stolypin period,* a period of imaginary strength, before coming to its Kerensky period. This is now the key to the entire political situation—the lack of correspondence between the political awareness of the classes and their objective position and objective strength.

The Next Period

Comrades, whoever has not mastered this, whoever has not thought it out to the end, will lose his bearings through day-to-day newspaper reports, will be unable to find either the main key to the world situation or the day-to-day keys, and he may fall into pessimism. The process which is taking place in Europe may push official policies still further to the right, towards imperialist monopoly rule by the extremist groups of the bourgeoisie, but this very shift rightwards of the official bourgeois apparatus will create a still bigger gulf not only between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but also between the bourgeois state and the basic elementary needs of the economy and the standard of living of the whole people and thereby will prepare a fatal, inevitable revolutionary catastrophe.

This catastrophe is being prepared both in the West

*Reference to the period of reaction following the 1905-07 revolution in Russia. (Translator)

and in the East—more slowly than we expected in 1918. I said "and in the East" because, while the struggle of the Indians, the struggle of China and the other colonial and semi-colonial peoples belongs to another historical epoch, a much more backward one, than the struggle of the proletariat for power, yet these two epochs are today united in practice in a single epoch. The Indian is fighting against the same imperialism which the advanced proletariat of Britain is fighting against. And therefore in the scales of history, in the scales of our Communist International, the struggle of the oppressed colonial peoples and that of the advanced European proletariat constitute two parts of one and the same struggle, merely waged with different types of weapons.

For us, therefore, the colonial and national struggle is not an echo from some ancient epoch which we have half forgotten, but a condition for the victory of the proletarian revolution throughout the world. I was recently looking through the report of the 11th Party Congress and, among others, I noticed Comrade Skrypnik's speech in which he declared with undoubted correctness that the question of our national policy inside the country, within the RSFSR, within the entire Union which exists today (there was at that time no Union but only a formless federation), is a question of our world policy in relation to the East, and the East, that is, the struggle of the oppressed nations for equality and freedom, is a colossal factor in the world revolution. This is especially true now, and to this matter I shall return.

Time, comrades, plays an enormous role in politics. Time is an important factor in politics, and it has turned out that the time needed by the backward peoples of Asia and the advanced proletariat of Europe to prepare their revolution is more than we thought. This was what gave rise to the review of our immediate tasks and methods which was carried out at the 10th Party Congress and the 3rd Congress of the International, on the world scale. A very big new landmark was set down at the 3rd Congress of the International: "Win the masses before talking practically about winning power." We have called the phase of politics since the 3rd Congress the *new stage*. In our internal life, at the 10th Congress we named our new course the New Economic Policy, NEP for short. But "NEP" can stand not badly both for the new stage* and for the New Economic Policy, and this, comrades, is a kind of symbol in verbal form, because the New Economic Policy inside the Soviet countries resulted almost entirely from the new stage on the international scale.

Since the European workers were going to take an undetermined number of years getting ready, since we should not receive German or French technical and organizational aid tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, we said to ourselves, two years and more ago, we shall have to give better and more vigilant attention to what is happening under our own feet, to the relation of forces inside our own country, to the state of the peasants' economy, to its solvency and historical staying-power and, in accordance with this, construct

*In Russian, *novy etap*. (Translator)

and reconstruct our policy. This gave rise to the new course.

And in such a long perspective as this, has the last year given us grounds or data for reconsidering the new course? No. That shifting of forces which began after the defeat of the Italian workers in September, 1919,* which continued in 1920 after our retreat from Warsaw, after the March events in Germany, after the defeat of the German proletariat as a result of a premature revolutionary offensive—the shift of forces after these events which put an end to the first spontaneously revolutionary wave is still continuing, has not yet reached its turning point.

These are the basic facts and, along with them the basic criteria for evaluating the present moment. We have often, following the example of Vladimir Ilyich, called the new period which began after the end of War Communism the "breathing-space." This expression has now gone out of circulation, and not accidentally. Today we use more frequently another expression of Comrade Lenin's, the "bond," in relation to the peasantry. Why do we talk so infrequently now about the breathing-space? Because in 1919-20 this new period was not yet defined for any of us in its full magnitude. Yes, there is an interval, we said, and a serious interval, but perhaps it will be exhausted in one or two years, depending on how events go in Germany, on the frontiers of Germany, in France, and so on; in other words, we at that time defined this transitional epoch as shorter than it has proved to be, through our self-confidence in approaching it.

It has turned out, however, that this is not simply a "breathing-space" but a big historical pause which has been transformed into a whole epoch. Three years have passed since we adopted our new orientation on the world-wide and domestic scales and we still don't know when this new period will be exhausted, how much time will pass, whether it will be a matter of years or only months . . . It is impossible to guess, but if you were to ask me whether it will be years or months, then I should answer you (adding again in brackets that it is impossible to guess): If months, they will probably be many, if years, they will probably be not so many [*laughter*]; don't ask for more precision than that in forecasts. But it is unquestionable that this is already not just a breathing-space but a whole historical epoch.

And this, comrades, is the explanation of our party's demand, a demand which arises from the experience of last year, that we re-examine, check and ventilate the fundamental questions of our work from this very standpoint that the new stage is dragging out into a whole historical epoch. On the given road, that is, on our Russian cart-track, in the given vehicle, that is, our badly-lubricated Russian cart, and in your Ukrainian cart which I don't suppose is much better lubricated than the Russian one [*laughter*], we shall still have to make a considerable historical journey, over, perhaps, a prolonged period of time.

*There seems to be some confusion here. The reference is apparently to the withdrawal by the workers from the factories after occupying them in September, 1920. (Translator)

And the party says to itself—let's check up and see what sort of an axle the cart has, what state its wheels are in, and the linchpins, will they hold or won't they; ought anything to be replaced? That is the basic problem before the 12th Congress. We are not saying that we have left one epoch behind us and are entering into a new one, which we go on to define. No, we are saying that the epoch which we entered officially as from the 10th Congress has been prolonged in the West and therefore also in our country. Let us examine our weapons, our ways and means and methods. Will they stand the strain of a prolonged epoch? Let us check our Soviet cart in all its main parts.

That means, above all, the relations between the working class and the peasantry, and the relation between the working class and the peasantry in its broad sense also embraces the problem of industry, for industry in our country rests on a peasant foundation; the relation between the working class and those nationalities which were formerly oppressed, because this is essentially only a sub-problem of the basic problem of the relation between the working class and the peasantry; the problem of the mutual relations of the party and the working class; the problem of the mutual relations of the party and the state machine, that is the least well lubricated wheel in our cart. These, comrades, are the main problems. Here you have in essence the whole mechanics of our dictatorship—party and class, working class and peasantry, party and state machine. Industry and the national question are fully linked with the problem of the relation between the proletariat and the peasantry. Testing and sounding these fundamental problems is the task of the 12th Congress and also of your conference.

If the NEP epoch is further prolonged, then the conclusion which first and foremost follows from that is that the dangers inherent in this epoch are multiplied, and along with this, that our tasks demand a more accurate and calculated approach on our part. In advance, before we come to deal with particular problems, we can, therefore, say that what we have to do is not to reconsider what our tasks are, for they remain the same, since the aggregate of new conditions remains the same, but to adopt additional *preventative measures* against dangers and to *regulate and systematize* our methods of coping with the fundamental tasks of our epoch. That, as it seems to us, is the general formula for the 12th Congress.

Let us check this against particular problems, for then only will it acquire concrete meaning.

The Proletariat and the Peasantry

The proletariat and the peasantry—this is a problem of our state machine, of its sources of income, of its costs and expenditures, and it was not without reason that Vladimir Ilyich, when he fell ill and before his illness became graver, concentrated all his thinking on two closely connected questions—the first was that of the proletariat and the peasantry as a whole, and the second was the national question. It is to Comrade Lenin's initiative that we owe it that both these questions have been posed so sharply and vividly.

In his articles devoted to the Workers' and Peasants Inspection, the Central Control Commission and so on—you all remember them, I am sure, and have all had occasion to re-read them more than once already—he draws a conclusion which can be formulated like this: Go forward, but don't go too far ahead, remember that we are still in the conditions of the new stage on the world scale and the domestic NEP, that our industry, and along with it our state machine, rest and cannot but rest upon our backward peasant economy and that our state machine and our industry can absorb and demand from the peasantry, in order to make progress, only a limited amount of resources.

What amount? This, of course cannot be defined theoretically. Here exact calculation is needed and, also of course, to deduce from the problem of how much in a given year the peasantry can contribute to the needs of the state machine, defense and industry, to deduce from this a slogan of ideological struggle, as do certain comrades who talk and write about how we are taking too little from the peasants, that we are "lovers of the peasantry" (I have in mind here, in particular, some articles of Comrade Larin's) is unquestionably a mistake.

The problem of how much the peasants can contribute is a very important one, but it is a practical problem, not one of principle. It is necessary that the peasant should give not less than he is able to give, but also not more. We need to establish the rule: *Take from the peasant so much as will still leave him richer next year than he is this year.* This is a formula which the peasant understands, and this is the basis of our present state policy. It is quite different from the previous formula, which prevailed in the days of War Communism, when we said to the peasant: Hand over all your surplus.

Without a surplus the peasants' holding can't carry on, it won't live but will collapse. Now we say: The peasant needs a surplus in order to develop his holding. Unless agriculture advances there cannot be any industry at all. So then we must measure our cloth seven times before we cut it. But this is not a question of class struggle in our country. Or rather it would be truer to say that the entire wisdom of our party ought to be directed to ensuring that this question is not made a question of class struggle but a question for conciliation, for compromise. Yes, we are conciliators on this question, we are thoroughgoing conciliators on this question of workers' states coming to an agreement with the peasants.

You, peasant, give us the maximum that you can, and after a year or two or three you will be indemnified for this advance, and in any event we will guarantee you against counter-revolution, against White-guardism. In this matter the state is wholly and completely prepared to reach agreement with you, for this is our common interest, to take from you so much as to ensure that next year you—and also the whole state—may be richer than this year. Of course, we may make mistakes in our calculations, and this is inevitable in particular districts and localities, but our basic line is unquestionably correct. This is how the question of the amount of taxation is decided.

FIDEL CASTRO

Excerpt from the July 26th speech commemorating the 12th anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks.

"The petty bourgeois spirit in the government administration has been responsible, not only for the fact that all the creative energy of the people has not been used, but it has also been responsible for the enthroning of bureaucracy. Because in the mentality of a petty bourgeois there is no room for any kind of revolution except a bureaucratic revolution, in the mind of a petty bourgeois the masses may be dispensed with . . .

"It is true that bureaucracy is not an evil which is exclusively ours. Bureaucracy existed under capitalism. Bureaucracy is a vice which threatens socialist revolutions as well as it threatens capitalists. But the socialist revolutions must know how to take measures to prevent this evil from becoming enthroned and causing all the damage it is capable of . . .

"We firmly believe that the men at the head of administrative organizations in the provinces must be revolutionaries even if they are not technicians. When we can have a combination of a technician and a revolutionary, that is better. But when there is no revolutionary technician to take charge of that post, then we must have a revolutionary cadre even if he is not a technician . . .

"We are not talking about being a good man, or a decent man. Something more is needed than to be good and decent. It is necessary to be capable and to have a revolutionary attitude towards problems, dynamism, a firm spirit in the face of difficulties, a spirit of cooperation with other organizations, and above all with the party, to allow oneself to be helped by the party."

But then comes the question of *how* to take from the peasantry. This is also not a simple matter. If they harass the peasant month in and month out, if he finds himself constantly up against our taxation fantasies, both central and local, this upsets his equilibrium. The peasant is very much a man who has to plan his affairs. He lives by the sun, by the stars, by the seasons, and work on his holding requires a plan. We disrupt this plan with our unplanned fiscal harassment. And that is why we say this today. First, define correctly the total amount of the taxes to be paid by the peasantry.

I have tried to give a formula for this: The actual figures are, of course, a matter for our state organs, under the leadership and supervision of our party. Secondly, there must be technique in taxation, all these innumerable varieties of tax must be reduced to uniformity. The taxes must be given the form which is simplest for and most easily understood by the peasant and at the same time most efficient. A balance between taxation in kind and in money must be established in

accordance with the special features of the particular district and region, in accordance with the strength or weakness of the peasant.

The question of taxation policy is a very important aspect of the fundamental question of the mutual relations between proletariat and peasantry. Closely connected with this is the question of exports: Since we not only have agreed, but consider it necessary, to leave at the disposal of the peasantry ever larger surpluses, however modest they may be. The peasants cannot realize these surpluses on the home front alone, for this means an even more frightful disparity between prices of industrial products and prices of agricultural produce. This disparity results from the state of our industry and from the isolation of our agriculture from the world market. Therefore, open an outlet for the peasants onto the world grain market, enable the peasants to realize their surpluses, which will get bigger year by year, make it possible for them to realize these surpluses in order to raise agriculture to higher levels.

And in this sphere, between the world market and the peasantry, we establish as the link not the speculative export merchant but the working class and its Soviet State, which now comes forward in yet another new, additional role, derived from its old role, as intermediary between the world market and the sellers of agricultural surpluses, the Russian, Ukrainian and other peasants of our Union. These two questions are closely interconnected. Simplifying, putting in order and giving a planned character to our taxation policy is closely connected with the exportation of our grain abroad.

And the last, 10th Congress of Soviets, if you remember, called for planned organization of all our foreign trade. The monopoly of it in the hands of the workers' state, this immovable condition of the proletarian dictatorship, demands that a planned character be given to our foreign trade, that is, not just proceeding from case to case, selling what you can and buying what you can get, the way we traded, more or less on smuggling lines, in 1919 and 1920. No, bring foreign trade into line with the development of peasant economy, with the inevitable further growth in the potentialities of grain export and with the state of our industry, which we must protect. For we are decidedly supporters of socialist protectionism, otherwise our industry will be plundered by foreign capital.

Hitherto our taxation policy has led us from one case to the next; take what you can, time doesn't wait. There were no regular and orderly methods. Since the situation is being prolonged, that is, since the Soviet State is to remain for a considerable period in direct and severe dependence on the condition of agriculture, we must bring taxation policy within the framework of a serious long-term plan. Don't keep harassing, don't disturb and irritate the peasant, for this is both harmful to him and without benefit to you, but establish a system of planned taxation which looks far ahead and vigilantly. Measure seven times, and be guided by the formula: Take so much that the peasant may be richer next year than this. Give a planned character extending over a number of years to our tax-system and our foreign trade—that, comrades, is the very im-

portant conclusion which I also want to fix in your memories along with the first basic conclusions.

State Industry

Let us now proceed, from the same point of view, to consider industry. The main grievances of our industrial executives during the last year, both here in the Ukraine and with us in Moscow, are connected with the question of what are called *circulating media*. Since the time when we went over to the NEP it has not, of course, been my fate alone to talk with dozens of industrial executives to the effect that it would be necessary simply to close down the given enterprise, to which the reply came: "Just give us a little quantity of circulating media and we'll show you that our enterprise will take a turn for the better, will start on the upgrade, and so forth." This is a very widespread reply right down to the present day. Give us circulating media only and we will give you, in exchange for these miserable circulating media, these bits of paper, such splendid things as metal, leather, coal, everything you need . . .

This attitude to matters is an involuntary carry-over of methods of thinking from the period of War Communism into the conditions of NEP. For what does the shortage of circulating media mean? It means *lack of the necessary market capacity*, understanding by the market both the peasant sector and the state sector of it, for in the last analysis it all comes down to the same thing: Since state industry as a whole does not at present create a profit, the state budget basically relies on the peasantry. Outside the state as consumer (for the army; for the railways, and so on) there exists, again, in the main the peasant market. Thus, on the amount of peasants' surplus—regardless of whether it is spent directly by the peasants on buying industrial products or is handed over by them to the state—depends the amount of the media which can be put at the disposal of our industry.

This is a fundamental truth which you can't get away from or jump over. Of course, as we develop, when industry becomes profitable, when it creates surplus value and hands over this surplus value to the state, industry will create its own market, will itself increase its absorption-capacity for the realization of its own products. But that is for the future. Today the role of the peasantry as the market remains very important and it will so remain for years and years—getting smaller and smaller of course, as time goes by.

And so long as industry in our country (I say this bluntly and frankly) is running at a loss, so long as, taking light industry and heavy industry together, it lives at the expense of the budget, of the tax-system—so long as to say "give me more and more circulating media" means to go in for fantasy—you are trying to lift yourself off the ground by the hair of your own head. Circulating media can be obtained by levelling and deepening the connections between industry and peasant economy, by reducing the cost of production of industrial products, by combining the peasant economy—through an honest and reliable broker, that is, through the workers' Soviet State—with the economy of Western Europe. In this way, and only gradually,

we can secure circulating media for industry. Comrades, even if these circulating media were to fall from heaven, would our industry absorb them?

If America were, God preserve us, to give us a billion dollars in gold, our chief care would have to be directed to maintaining a proper correspondence between town and country, so that neither industry as a whole nor any of its branches should be overfed, for industrial indigestion, in the form of a crisis or a series of crises, would also be dangerous; we should have to give the circulating media to the emaciated organism in such doses as to ensure that the blood flowed equally in all the veins. Metal, for example: With our economy, with the state of our transport, it is not so easy to "digest" it. This means, and this is the problem, that we have to observe definite rates of advance, and not rush too far ahead. All the more so now, when nobody is going to present us with any gifts, as far as I can see . . .

I said, comrades, that our industry works at a loss. I don't doubt that these words will be snatched up by our enemies, both the imperialists and the Menshevik scum of the whole world, and that in every language it will be said that, speaking at a conference in Kharkov, Trotsky admitted that Soviet industry works at a loss and that this means that the dictatorship of the proletariat is threatened with inescapable ruin; for, since industry works at a loss, that is, doesn't grow but rather melts away, this means that the ice-floe on which the proletariat stands is melting away under its feet, and so on.

Nevertheless, comrades, I do not take back my words, because it is our habit in general to say what is. Vladimir Ilyich educated the party in that sense, and we cannot repudiate that education; we must tell ourselves the truth about ourselves, we cannot deviate from that. We may make mistakes and we may correct them and go forward, but if we should get into the habit of telling lies to ourselves, touching up the truth for the benefit of party and Soviet congresses, then we should go down without hope of recovery. Our industry as a whole is still working at a loss. I say, as a whole, that is, taking light and heavy industry together.

Some branches of light industry boast that they are making profits. I don't know whether you have checked whether this is so; I haven't, and it would be difficult to check on it today. I wouldn't assume responsibility for such an estimate; but from such partial checks as I have made I have come to the conclusion that, if not always then in a number of cases, the profits of light industry are fictitious and are often obtained at the expense of other branches of the economy. Naturally, when textile manufacturers are in desperate need of circulating media, but the maker won't accept textile goods at prices higher than the cost of production, then prices have to be reduced and how is this done? This is the job of a certain art of black and white magic that is called "calculation" [*laughter*].

It is calculation if you reckon some old cotton at the price at which you bought it some time ago and not

at the price it bears today, or what is even more serious, not according to the expenditure you should have to make in order to get a fresh supply of cotton. Obviously the textile industry can really make progress only if we can replace the cotton which we put on the market with fresh cotton. If the old cotton is transformed into fabric, and a profit appears in the balance-sheet, but in fact the plantations in Turkestan are declining and the basic resources of raw cotton are being reduced, this means that the profitability is fictitious, it is being reckoned on the basis of old resources which are melting away.

In many other cases light industry is supported by heavy industry, it is nourished by coal, metal and other forms of raw material, and here, in reality, one should take into account all the expenses involved, starting from the beginning, and then only will it be seen whether there is really a profit here or only a squandering of the basic resources of the state. This is a very complex business, especially with our too mobile rouble, but we need nevertheless to learn how to do it, at all costs. We used to say: "Socialism is stocktaking." Now we ought to say: "Socialism is calculation," but not the kind which resembles white and black magic, no, real calculation, which is based on economic realities.

A balance-sheet is stocktaking, but adapted to the forms of the New Economic Policy. This translation of stocktaking into the language of NEP is not very pleasant language, but after all we still speak this language badly, and we need to learn to speak properly in the language of the market. The question of calculation for our industry and the question of balance-sheets is in the last analysis the question whether industry can reckon up what it costs the peasant and what it gives him directly or through the workers' state. This is a fundamental question. The balance-sheet is not a mere technical matter—this balance business, say some people, is for accountants, but we are concerned with "high politics." No, pardon me, calculations and balance-sheets constitute the real check on the stability of the workers' state and the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry.

Apart from these methods we have and can have no others which are really reliable. And this is what complicates the tasks which were set forth by the 10th Congress. If in the field of fiscal policy we say, "from the harassment of the peasant we will go over to a planned system of taxation which looks to the future"; if in relation to the problem of peasant surpluses we say, "from our previous talk about the local market we will go over to a link with the world market through the workers' state,"—then in the field of industry, instead of cadging from the state from

instance to instance, saying "give me some money, give me some more," we will pass over to accurate calculation, accurate balance-sheets, saying "no money will be available to you without accurate calculation and accurate balance-sheets—for this is a question of life and death for our country" [*applause*].

I said that our industry, in general and as a whole, works at a loss, and I added that all our foes will of course seize upon this admission. But here it is necessary to give some general explanation which is not purely economic but of the historical order. The Revolution as a whole has involved enormous expenses. Our economy in general has been brought below the level of 1917. You all know that we are now much poorer than our country was in the last period of the existence of the old regime. But this is a law of history: Every revolution results in the new ruling class beginning its rule on an economic foundation much lower than that on which the previous ruling class ended its rule. Revolution is devastation, civil war.

It may be said that revolution involves "too great" an expenditure. But that is how these classes reckon against whom the revolution is directed, and also the intermediate classes. The proletariat reckons that this expenditure is in the last analysis repaid a hundred-fold; that is why it carries through the revolution. But the revolution is not a single finished turn or overturn. There are turns within the revolution itself. The passage from War Communism to NEP was an important but partial turn within a great revolutionary turn. And every turn has to be paid for. This is how things have been arranged by mother—or stepmother—History: Where you make a turn, there is an obstacle to be overcome. Pay for your training!

For the revolution as a whole the proletariat is paying with a temporary lowering in its general level of production; for the transition from War Communism to NEP, for instruction in the new methods, the working class is paying in this form, that its economic organs are squandering part of that achievement which had survived from the epoch of War Communism, in order to get the industrial machine going. The fact that the workers' state has suffered a definite loss in changing from one set of methods in the economy to another is not in itself tragic for us; on the contrary, it is in the nature of things. But if this is payment for transition from one system of economy to another, it must be a once-for-all payment, not a constant drain. If deficits were to become the norm this would threaten dissipation of the basic resources of the state. We have paid with losses for the transition from War Communism to NEP, but from now on, let there be work which brings profit!

Profitability of industry can be attained only by means of a whole series of measures about which we shall talk in detail when we discuss the relevant point on the agenda. But the general line of these measures is clear; from amateurism and muddle we must go over to systematic, planned work.

Comrades, I have read in your journal *Kommunist* the debates which took place at the Donets provincial conference on Comrade Kvirning's report—a much condensed report, of course. There they told how the party

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organization was obliged to be on the alert at all critical moments—to raise a shout, sound the alarm, and so on—because industry was constantly menaced with financial shocks. This is typical not only of the Donets basin, that is, the heart of our industry, it is typical of our economy as a whole, and from these concussions and shocks, from this unsteadiness and formlessness of economic relations, of course, there is not and cannot be any saving leap into the realm of some sort of absolute planning, but there must be a gradual emergence on to the broad road of planning.

We should, of course, be children after the experience of these years if we were to suppose that we could create an ideal economic plan all by ourselves, the way the spider spins its web, and substitute it for what is done now—that would be a return to the worst illusions of "glavkocracy"* when, instead of a comprehensive plan, there was comprehensive economic constipation. It is quite clear that a living and vital plan can be created only on the basis of the experience of that amateurism, those vacillations, those twitchings this way and that, those mistakes and even that accursed black and white magic *under the pretense* of calculation which we have now—only on this basis, not *a priori* but *a posteriori*, as the philosophers say, that is, on the basis of experience, testing, correction of errors can we construct a plan and render it more accurate. This task must be set before us clearly and distinctly, in its full dimensions.

The policy of "from one case to the next," the practice of improvisation, economic guerrilla tactics, amateurism, must more and more, under the staunch and stubborn leadership of our party, yield place to planning methods and the principle of planning. Otherwise we shall, in the future as in the past, too often find ourselves straining at gnats while swallowing camels. The expression of planning methods in the field of industry and trade is calculation—calculation which produces correct accounts for the past period, calculation which provides estimates and plans for the period immediately ahead. Not only each separate factory, each separate trust, not only industry as a whole, but our entire state, our entire Union, should go over more and more and more to a real balancing of real resources. This is not just a stunt. It is necessary that this balance correspond to reality, that is, to the resources which we actually have. Better less, more sparingly, but with stability.

The last article Vladimir Ilyich wrote was called "Better Less, But Better." This was on the question of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. In relation to the budget and to separate estimates we say: *better less but more solidly*. Cut to the last degree, but so that it may be in firm unity, so that everybody knows what they are standing on! If you've made a mistake, let it be corrected in a planned way. The main thing is for each economic organ to know what it has under its feet, so that there may not be this formlessness and precariousness which, together with our poverty, is one of the

*i.e. the rule of the glavki, the central administrative boards of separate industries. (Translator)

most damaging factors in our economic life. A state-wide balance, a balance for each trust and a balance for each separate enterprise!

As far as I know your debates on the question of the organization of Donbas industry and as far as I can judge the general trade and industrial expenditure of the Union, we ought as soon as possible to complete our task, that is, to emancipate the trusts from those features of "glavkocracy" which still exist. The different trusts live and will go on living in different ways, supply their enterprises differently with raw material, realize their products differently on the market, but each enterprise must be connected with its trust by an elastic spring, not a rigid one. Each enterprise ought to carry out its own calculation and draw up its own balance—not just a bureaucratic set of accounts but a balance which shows how the given enterprise lives in the given conditions, how it breathes, to what extent it absorbs various sorts of nourishing substances, to what extent it produces goods and to what extent garbage.

Only if there is self-checking by each enterprise in particular is a really correct and rational organization of the economy of the trust and of industry as a whole possible. In industry, as also in finance, it is necessary finally to finish with the policy of driving *with the lights out*. If the state budget cannot meet certain expenditure, if you, the enterprise, have had 100 million roubles assigned to you, but I, the state, cannot give you these 100 million roubles in time and withhold the 100 millions for a month, and then give you 100 millions which are worth only 25 millions, that is, I break down my own rouble, changing it into a 25 kopeck piece, but not openly, by stealth, this is also driving with the lights out: Because it is very unpleasant to go down from 100 million to 25, you put the lights out, so as not to see the descent . . .

No, we say, it is not good to go downhill with the lights out. And in the estimating work of a particular enterprise or trust it is the same—better less but more solidly! Contract working industry but put on a solid basis. We need generally and firmly to finish with old methods, with the guerrilla approach, with improvisation in fundamental questions of the economy, we need to learn to approach the economy in a planned way, looking far ahead. And for this we need the brightly burning *lights of calculation and accounting!*

Tasks of Military Defense

In regard to questions of defense of the country it is basically a matter, too, of repeating the same thing. We have no point on the agenda about defense, but since I am speaking about the Congress in connection with the entire current work of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party I ought to say a few words about defense, all the more so because this question will probably be touched on at the Congress, even if only partially, in connection with the problem of industry. For three and a half years we built an army by going from one case to the next, slapdash, one thing today and another tomorrow; we built crookedly and clumsily, but we conquered our foes.

Then for a year and a half to two years we reduced



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the size of the army, which had been constructed very awkwardly and unwieldily; we reduced it in the same way as we had built it, going from one case to the next, here lopping off a bit of the tail and here a bit of one ear, because our country could not maintain for a single day longer than necessary an army of 5 million men. The army was built by improvisation and the work of reducing it was also carried out by improvisation. This was perhaps not only a misfortune but also a fault on our part. That I am ready to admit at once. Now we have adopted the approach that the army must be built and developed in a strictly planned way. This is possible and also necessary.

Hitherto we did not know what we should be doing with the army in a couple of months' time—should we be cutting it down or should we be whistling all round Russia to all the provincial and district party committees: Give us Communards, give us horsemen, give us carts, and so forth. But now we must build the army systematically, solidly, according to schedule, at least over the next five years. We have to draw up a seriously thought-out program of construction, adapted to present-day conditions. Of course this program cannot be ideally co-ordinated, but its fundamental features must correspond to the general state of the country, its agriculture, the development of its industry. The army estimates will be drawn up in accordance with this program.

Broadly speaking, the state will give the army so much in the first half-year, so much per cent more in the next half-year, and so on, in a definite though modest progression. Naturally, everything may be upset if there is a harvest failure or if we are attacked in the near future—but even in this event we shall be better prepared if we work according to a plan. Closely connected with this is the question of military technique, in particular, military aviation. We say that, in relation to the army as well, the principle must be: Better less

but solidly, better less but better, for in relation to the army can we least of all permit to continue the harassment to which we have subjected it, now cutting off bits, now stitching bits on. Military improvisation is incomparably more costly to the state than planned development of the armed forces.

The Party and the State Machine

Let us now proceed to a question of first-class importance, that of the relation between the party and the state machine. In that latest article of Comrade Lenin's which I have mentioned more than once, Comrade Lenin writes about the state machine—and I must say straight out that nobody else would have ventured to utter such words—such words as one doesn't repeat so easily [*laughter*]. Vladimir Ilyich writes about our state machine that it is neither more nor less than very similar to the Tsarist state machine, anointed, as they say, colored in the Soviet style, but if you examine it, it is the same old bureaucratic machine.

Isn't that nice to hear? It's a real Easter egg for international Menshevism [*laughter*]. It's very much "better" than industry working at a loss. But how are we to understand it? Here, of course, we have one of Lenin's especially emphatic formulations; in order the more firmly to get this into the party's head, to hammer it in as deeply as possible, he doesn't refrain from using drastic words which would earn anybody else a hole in the head. But this is not the sole explanation. We must go more thoroughly into the question. What is our state machine? Did it fall among us from out of the heavens? No, of course it didn't.

Who built it? It grew up on the basis of the Soviets of workers', peasants', Red Army men's and Cossacks' deputies. Who led these Soviets? The Communist Party. What the party is we know well. What the Soviets are we know well also, of course. We said and we say: The Soviets are the best form of government in the interests of the working masses. Our party is the best of parties. It is the teacher of the other parties in the Communist International. That is generally recognized. And here we see, coming into being out of the Soviets, that is, the best representation of the working masses, under the leadership of the party which is the best party in the Communist International, a state machine of which it has been said that it is . . . little different from the old Tsarist machine.

From this, perhaps, some simple-minded fellow, from the so-called *Workers' Truth* group, let's say, will draw the conclusion: Should we not take a hammer—just the hammer, without the sickle [*laughter*]—and carry out some mechanical exercises on this machine? Such a conclusion would, however, be groundless, since we should then have to pick up the fragments and begin again. Why? Because this machine, which really is wretchedly bad, nevertheless did not drop onto our shoulders but was created by us under the pressure of historical necessity out of the material which we had to hand. Who is responsible? We all are, and we shall answer for it.

Where has this "quality" of the state machine come from? From this circumstance, that we did not and do not know how to do very much, but we have been



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forced to do a lot, and often we have enlisted people who know, or only half-know, but don't want to do it even a quarter properly, and sometimes don't want to do it at all and do it minus a hundred per cent. In the operations which we carry out you often cannot distinguish between calculation and magic, but in the state machine there are not a few people who consciously pass off magic as calculation. So here we have been constructing a state machine, which begins with a young, selflessly devoted but quite inexperienced Communist, goes on through an indifferent office clerk and ends with a grey-haired expert who sometimes, under irreproachable forms, engages in sabotage.

Well, now, can we abolish this all at once? Can we do without this machine? Of course we can't. What must we do? Our task is to take this bad machine as it exists and set about transforming it systematically. Not anyhow or slapdash, but in a planned way, calculated to cover a long period. Up to now the state machine has been constructed on the principle of going from one case to the next. First we assembled material, then we reduced it. When an institution had become extremely overgrown, we cut it down. If we have learnt anything in the last five years, Comrade Lenin notes in his article, then it is to estimate time, that is, to appreciate how comparatively little can be done in five years in the sense of replacing the old by the new. And how systematically we must therefore approach our great tasks.

Comrades, this is a very important idea. To take power is one thing, but to re-educate people, to train them in new methods of work, to teach even such a thing (a small thing, but presupposing a displacement of the entire psychology!), such a small thing, I say, as that a Soviet official ought to behave attentively and respectfully to an old, illiterate peasant woman who has come into a big, high-ceilinged hall and gazes around her and doesn't know before which inkstand to beat her forehead on the ground—and there sits our red-tapist, directing her with the tip of his finger to number so-and-so, and she hesitates, turning this way and that, in front of number so-and-so, utterly helpless, and leaves the office without achieving anything.

And if she could formulate her ideas she would formulate them, I think, in Lenin's words, what things were like seven or eight years ago they are also like today; in the same way then she went into the office and in the same way she failed to get what she went for, because they spoke to her ideas she couldn't understand in a language she couldn't understand, not trying to help her but trying to get rid of her. This, of course, doesn't go on everywhere and all the time. But if it is only one-third true to life then there is a frightful abyss between the state machine and the working masses. I recently wrote an article about this "tip of a big problem,"* an article which was transmitted to your newspapers by telephone for reprinting, but, as, alas, Soviet technique is still poor, I only half-recognized this article as it appeared here [laughter] but the point of this

*Included under the title "Civility and Politeness as a Necessary Lubricant in Daily Relationships" in the English edition of *Problems of Life* (1924). (Translator)

article was what I have just expressed.

Comrades, what is the meaning of Comrade Lenin's plan, which has now already been adopted by an overwhelming majority in the party? This plan means an approach to a *planned* reconstruction of the state machine. The party created the state machine, yes, the party created it, and then it looked at what it had created . . . Remember what the Bible says: God created, looked at his creation and said that it was good [laughter], but the party has created, looked and . . . has shaken its head [laughter, prolonged applause]. And now, after this silent shaking of the head along comes a man who has ventured to call what has been constructed by its name, and to do this at the top of his voice.

But this is not the voice of despair—oh, no! The conclusion to be drawn from the situation is this, that whereas we have in five years created this clumsy, creaking machine which to a considerable degree is not "ours," we must now devote a minimum of five years to altering and reconstructing it, so as to make it more like a machine about which there will be no occasion to express oneself so strongly . . . That is why I pay attention to that phrase which Comrade Lenin puts in parenthesis. Yes, we have now for the first time learned to estimate the "capacity" of the time in which our efforts are confined. A lot of time is needed. And so it is not now just a question of making corrections—we shall, of course, make corrections from case to case in the future as well—but our fundamental task is that of *systematic, planned reconstruction of the state machine*.

Through what agency? Through that which erected it, through the party. And for this party too we need a fresh, improved organ for sounding this machine, a probe which is not only moral but also political and practical—not on the plane of formal state inspection, which has already shown its complete bankruptcy, but on the plane of party penetration into the heart of the matter, to carry out a selection process in the most important fields of work. Again, what this organ will be like at first, how this Central Control Commission will work in conjunction with the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, is a matter for further experience, and serious-minded workers cannot entertain any illusions about the possibility of rapid changes.

But it would be quite base on our part to say that nothing can come of this planned approach to the problem, to report that "your ears won't grow any higher than your forehead," and so on. It is, of course, a very difficult task, but for just that reason it must

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be dealt with in a planned way, systematically, not on a case-to-case basis. Precisely for this reason there is needed an authoritative central Party-and-Soviet organ which will be able to sound the state machine in a new way both from the angle of its general efficiency and from that of how it responds to a simple illiterate old woman; and all this, perhaps, will be given us by a combined organ of the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, working on the principle of selecting the best workers and systematically educating them in a combination of formal state-service practices with the methods of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—of what is best in it, that is, a small nucleus. This experiment must be made, and we are making it.

The Leading Role of the Party

Comrades, the question of the state machinery is very closely connected with the role of our party, as are all the fundamental questions which I have mentioned. If there is one question which basically not only does not require revision but does not so much as admit the thought of revision, it is the question of the dictatorship of the party, and its leadership in all spheres of our work. Yesterday we had here a very vivid demonstration by non-party people in favor of this dictatorship and its leadership. And at the same time we once again signed our names to a very big promissory note, to use the language of NEP.

Yesterday's demonstration by non-party people signifies that tremendous changes have taken place in the mood of the Ukrainian workers, and this is the most important and valuable achievement of the last two years, but it is also a sign that the working class, while coming towards us more strongly, will more attentively than before follow the progress of our work, that this class will demand from us increased profitability in our state enterprise, ability to bring order into the market, a true bond, that is, in the economic sense between town and country, and so on and so forth, ability to even out rates of wages in the different branches of industry, and so on. And here, comrades, I repeat, we have signed a big promissory note, especially as regards wages, that is, the question which most vitally and acutely concerns the mass of the workers.

It is especially important that the light should shine brightly in this sphere, so that the workers may see the limits of those demands which can be satisfied with the economy in its present state. We must never lose sight of the question of the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, when the party speaks to the non-party workers, because if Menshevik demagoguery, which is reviving here and there in the Ukraine in its most Makhnovite* form, can win any success in this sphere it will be setting the workers against the peasants on the wages question, so as the better to shove a wedge thereafter between the non-party workers and the party vanguard.

*Makhno was the leader of an anarcho-kulak bandit movement in the Ukraine which was not crushed militarily until 1921. (Translator)

One of the reasons for the gravitation of non-party workers towards the party is a certain improvement which has taken place in their material positions—they can breathe more easily, their wages have risen. In heavy industry and in transport wages still lag behind. Where has the increase come from? Not so much from the market as from the budget. In this way we here again and again find ourselves up against the fundamental relationship of classes in Soviet society and, in order to avoid misunderstanding in the future it is especially important to explain this relationship to the non-party workers, so that on this fundamental question they may think as the party thinks and not fall prey to demagoguery. The non-party workers are drawn to the party, not to the Soviet state, as such. This is a very important circumstance.

The Smenovekhite* petty-bourgeoisie is taking up the Soviet platform because it thinks that Communism is a utopia which merely "gets in the way" of the real work of the state. The mass of the workers, on the contrary, are attracted to the Communist Party, and put up with the Soviet state machine in its present form in the hope that the Communist Party will in due course set it to rights. This is the nub of the question. In such conditions as these, can the party allow the thought to enter its head that it might give up its fundamental role as leader of all work, and above all of all the work of the state?

Our party is the ruling party, which, with the confidence of the proletariat and, by and large, of the mass of the peasantry, holds in its hands the helm of state activity. This is a fundamental fact. To allow any changes whatever in this field, to allow the idea of a partial, whether open or camouflaged, curtailment of the leading role of our party would mean to bring into question all the achievements of the revolution and its future. Whoever makes an attempt on the party's leading role will, I hope, be unanimously dumped by all of us on the other side of the barricade. We don't know what awaits us in the future. Only by taking into account the experience of these five years as a whole, not only this very gratifying demonstration we had yesterday, the fraternization of the non-party workers with the party, but also the experience of the tragic Kronstadt demonstration in February, 1921, when the guns of Kronstadt blazed away at us—only a bringing together of all these facts in correct historical perspective can show and make comprehensible what our party is, what role it plays, how and why it has endured what has happened in the past, gone forward to what we have today and is leading us on to bigger and better things.

This is a fundamental question and the party is unanimous on it. And that is why I mention only in passing and in parentheses that when there appeared the platform which has become known in the party as the "anonymous" platform, a platform which diplomatically and evasively raised the question of liquidating

*The "Change of landmarks" group of civil servants and professional men who supported the Soviet Government in confidence that it was bound to develop into a bourgeois-democratic regime. (Translator)

party leadership, it did not find in any of the previous groupings in the party a single comrade who would admit to bearing even a share of responsibility for this platform. You know from the "Discussion Sheet," which has made definite statements on this, that this platform is connected with the ideas of the former "Democratic Centralism" group, but all the comrades who formerly belonged to that group have declared that they have nothing in common with this platform and consider it profoundly pernicious.

If the party has reacted like this to it one can say with confidence that there will be no differences at the 12th Congress on this issue. And if the question of the leadership of the party is on our agenda in connection with other questions and especially with Comrade Lenin's proposal, it is there in the sense of how to improve the leadership of the party, how to give it a more systematic and planned character. For not a single serious party member will claim that in the sphere of party leadership we have attained perfect and unchangeable forms, and that as our work inevitably becomes more complicated and subdivided the party will not be threatened with the danger of becoming dissolved in this work and losing the ability to see the forest for the trees . . .

Up to the present we have built from one case to the next and tested and led in the same way, in all spheres of work: In general this accorded with the character of the past half-decade, and we coped successfully with the main task. But now we must go over more and more in every sphere to systematic and planned work with big schemes and well-thought-out projects. Consequently, the leadership exercised by our party must become more complex and must be carried on by more systematic methods. The creation of the Central Control Commission, of an organ for checking on the state machine—this too is one of the means of more systematically gathering information and intelligence, a more planned way for the party to survey everything that takes place both in the Soviet machine and under it among the masses and in the entire party as a whole, in order that, on the basis of more complete and systematic information, measures of party leadership may assume a more planned character, with a perspective of long-term, persistent work.

The state machine is bad, we say, very bad. Must we smash up the state machine with a hammer, I ask? Of course we must not and we are not going to. But if we were to smash it up and build it afresh, we *could* build it afresh, because the party exists. The party created the state apparatus and can rebuild it anew, if it really is the party. But if the state machine exists and there is no party, the party can't build a state machine. That is the fundamental idea; from the party you can get the state, but not the party from the state. But the party itself has now to take up the question of approaching the state machine in a new way, embracing and evaluating it as a whole in respect of the most important matters and fundamentally, and along these lines subjecting it to regular influence.

The party must more and more persistently demand and secure from the state, from all its organs, that they learn to work within the framework of a plan and a

system, to construct a plan which looks to the future, not staggering from one case to the next, that they learn to train their workers within the framework of this plan, systematically enriching their experience both in the line of specialized Soviet work and in the line of party work, that we may learn, in order to renew the whole state machine, in the machine as a whole and in the departments in particular, to build under the leadership of the party a system of party and Soviet educational institutions where new generations of Soviet experts from the ranks of the workers and peasants may be trained, technicians, functionaries in all spheres, who have grown up into our system from the bottom, who will not look down their noses at an illiterate peasant woman, who will really embody in themselves the demands, feeling and aims of the whole workers' and peasants' state . . . It is in this sense that the leading role of the party must be raised to a higher level.

The National Question

Comrades, I must now turn to a question which is of particular importance for the Ukraine, the national question. I have already made the point that the initiative in raising this question is Vladimir Ilyich's. On the eve of his illness he sounded the alarm on this question, fearing that serious mistakes might be committed in this question as in the peasant question. And I felt very acutely the possibility of such mistakes when I read the report in the paper about the Lugansk district conference, where it was said: "Comrade Rakovsky made a report on the national question, but this report found us unprepared and there was no discussion."

I think it was in the same news report, or perhaps it was in another (in *Kommunist* or *Proletary*) that I found the statement that many comrades do not understand why the national question is being brought up again. They think this question is "settled" as far as they are concerned. I must say that I have often met this same mood not only in the Ukraine but also in the North, in Great-Russia, especially in Moscow, where some comrades haven't understood how it can be that now, in the sixth year of existence of the workers' and peasants' Soviet (etc., etc.) State, where all nations are equal, we suddenly put the national question on the Congress agenda. After all, haven't we "settled" it long ago? The Ukraine is independent, Georgia, Azerbaidjan, Armenia are independent republics, and so on. What more is there to be done?

Of course, comrades, the national question is not our fundamental aim—our aim is communism. The social question, not the national question, is the basis on which we stand. But then, the peasant economy is not our aim either, but centralized socialist production, high technique and so on. However, the peasant economy is a fact—and not a program or an aim, but a fact, and a fact in many, many millions, tens and hundreds of millions of acres, of farms and of people, and a careless attitude to this basic fact would turn our whole program head over heels. It is the same with the national question. These two questions, the peasant and the national, are very close to each other. They are expressions by and large of the same epoch.



Leon Trotsky addressing the Red Army

We have, of course, proclaimed the elimination of national slavery, inequality and so on. Of course we have proclaimed the right of each nationality to settle its affairs in its own way, right up to separation from the state—while, naturally, we set above this right our duty of revolutionary self-defense. Wherever any national group links its fate not with the working class but with imperialism, for struggle against the working class, the law of the class war, as was the case in relation to Menshevik Georgia, stands higher than all other laws; but when the task of defending the revolution is accomplished, we say to the peasants, petty-bourgeoisie and backward workers of the nationality concerned: We shall have no differences with you, comrades, on national matters.

We shall not only "allow" you, as it is sometimes inappropriately expressed, no, we shall help you to settle your affairs in the national sense, in the best and most satisfactory way. We shall help you to share through the medium of your own language in the best attainments of human culture, for this is the essence of the matter. Not in our proclaiming "arrange things as you wish," because the peasant is helpless, especially the backward peasant who belongs to a small nation which used to be mercilessly oppressed. He is helpless, and when he sees over him a state machine which may be a workers' and peasants' affair but is inattentive to him, to his national peculiarities, to his language, to his backwardness, he feels himself doubly helpless.

Estrangement of the ruling party and state machine from the bulk of the population in respect to language is a very dangerous kind of estrangement. One cannot have a frivolous attitude to such a political "link" as

the national language, the everyday speech of a people. This question is important for the whole of our Union and of tenfold importance for the Ukraine. In Comrade Rakovsky's letter to the Donetsk provincial conference I found an idea which seems to me exceptionally significant: He combines the peasant question with the national question. If there were to be a split between the proletariat and the peasantry; if the bourgeoisie were to manage, in the person of its political agents, the S.R.'s and Mensheviks—or others, more determined and resolute—to take the leadership of the peasantry, that would mean, Comrade Lenin wrote not long ago, civil war, civil war all along this line until the victory of the proletariat in the West, and we can add that the outcome of this civil war would be doubtful for us.

But, comrades, if a misunderstanding between the proletariat and the peasantry is dangerous it is a hundredfold more dangerous when the peasantry does not belong to the nationality which in old, monarchist Russia was the ruling nationality, that is, when the peasantry, whether Ukrainian, Georgian, Azerbaidjanian or Armenian, is a peasantry which has always seen in the ruling apparatus not only the power of another class over it but also the power of national oppression, so that defensive nationalism led this peasantry to side with its own national bourgeoisie.

Here in the Ukraine—I return to Comrade Rakovsky's letter—where the party consists mostly of town workers and townspeople generally, with only a dash of peasants, where the town workers are to a considerable extent non-Ukrainian, and the national composition of the party has, of course, a definite influence on the composition of the Ukrainian Soviet machine, al-



Leon Trotsky addressing the Red Army

ready in this circumstance alone there is inherent if not a danger then a very serious problem, which it is impossible not to see and which you have to work at solving. There is needed not only an economic bond with the peasant market, not only a general political bond between proletariat and peasantry, you also have to think and think hard about a national bond—about questions of language, schools, culture.

For, comrades, discontent among the peasants, if it were to arise on one basis or another—and it can and will arise because conflicts are inevitable—this discontent will be a hundred times more dangerous when it acquires a coloring of national ideology. National ideology is a factor of enormous importance. National psychology is an explosive force which is in some cases revolutionary and in others counter-revolutionary, but in both cases it is an enormous explosive force. Remember how this dynamite was used by the bourgeoisie during wars when it mobilized the proletariat to defend so-called "national" interests. It was a diabolical experiment and it succeeded, against us. The bourgeoisie showed itself able to utilize the explosive force of nationalism for imperialist aims.

But in the East, in India, in China, hundreds of millions have risen in a national movement directed against imperialism. The national struggle of the East is an enormous explosive force, revolutionary dynamite with a colossal coefficient. The task of the European proletariat is to show itself able to use this force. In our country, comrades, in our constructive work, the national factor is a potential force, it can turn out to be directed this way or that way. If we are not able to approach the peasantry, to study the peasant, his psychology, his language, we may drive him into a second Petlyura* movement, and a second Petlyura movement would be more organic, profound and dangerous than the first.

This second Petlyura movement would be armed with a cultural plan—in the schools, in the co-operatives, in all spheres of life—and every grievance of the Ukrainian peasant would be multiplied by the national factor, and this would be more dangerous than Petlyura's banditry. But if the Ukrainian peasant feels and finds that the Communist Party and the Soviet power deal with him in the sphere of the national question with complete attentiveness and understanding, saying, "We will give you everything we can, we want to help you, our backward brother, to build together with you all the bridges, all the steps by which you will raise yourself up, we want to the utmost of our ability to meet you in your strivings, to help you to share in that language which is your native language, in the benefits of human culture. In all state institutions, on the railways, in the postal service, they must understand you in your own language and speak to you in your own language, because this is your state," then the peasant will grasp and appreciate such an approach.

Even if we cannot give him a well-equipped three-

storied school because we are poor, we must provide schools where his sons may learn to read and write in the language understood by their father and mother. If we don't, the peasantry will multiply all its varieties of discontent with the national coefficient, and that will threaten to liquidate the Soviet regime. We have to realize that we have not solved the national question, as we have not solved a single economic or cultural question. We have created only the revolutionary prerequisites for solving the national question. We have smashed the Tsarist prison-house of peoples, of nationalities. But it is not enough to proclaim national equality, we need to show the oppressed peoples in practice—and they are very mistrustful—that we are with them, that we are for them, that we are serving their national interests not in general phrases but in reality, in work.

People say "better overdone than underdone." An excess of attention and prudence does no harm, but a shortage of it where the national question is concerned will have severe consequences for the party. That is why we have put the national question on the Congress agenda. As with all the other questions, we have posed this question not only on the plane of principle but also quite concretely, adapting it to the given stage of socialist construction.

What organized expression can we give to national requirements in the state structure? The attitude of the Federation* to this question was indefinite. In this matter we have during the last few years been completely under the influence of the notion that this stage would not last long, and just as in Tsar Peter's time the Old Believers said, "What do we want solidly-built houses for, we are expecting the coming of Christ,"—so also we were to a certain extent not inclined to busy ourselves with lasting construction work, expecting as we were a rapid development of the revolution.

Then came NEP, and later it turned out that NEP was a long-drawn-out business, and we have said to ourselves that we must go over, if not to stone houses—we are a long way off from them!—at least to a more durable even if only temporary form of settlement, and our expression of this awareness is our present state organization of the national question. We began with the formation of the Union of Soviet Republics, and when we formed it we took into account the fact that we had not provided for an organizational machine through which we could correctly sound the specific interests and requirements of the various nations, as such. From that we were led to the idea of a special Soviet chamber of nationalities, which at first shocked many comrades.

I must admit that in the beginning I didn't like it much. The very expression "second chamber" seemed unpleasant, with its reminder of old textbooks of state law. But that was not at all the point. The point was that it was necessary to approach the national question in a systematic, organized and planned way. There is

*Petlyura was the leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement based on sections of the peasantry and town petty-bourgeoisie which forcibly opposed the Soviet power in the Ukraine during the civil war. (Translator)

*Reference to the loose federation of Soviet Republics which existed down to the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the end of 1922, only a few months earlier. (Translator)

here, if you like, a certain analogy with the Central Control Commission. What is the Central Control Commission? It is not of course a panacea, and it would be absurd to suppose that we have set up an organ which can solve all problems. No, but this is a new organ which more correctly and systematically checks on what is done in our state machine, in the party and in the working class and thereby facilitates the possibility of a correct solution of problems.

And what is the chamber of nationalities? It is a special organ for more systematically and planfully sounding out where each national corn hurts, how a particular national group will react to this or that measure, and so on. General leadership in national policy remains, of course, wholly and entirely in the hands of our party. But the party cannot solve all these problems out of its own head, by the method alone of inward exercise of party thought; the party needs organized contact with concrete tasks and conditions. To solve old problems the party needs in the national question as well new, more complex, more improved organs and more systematic and planned methods.

The Situation Within the Party

The world situation offers no ground for a change in the foundations of our policy. The internal situation is based on the world situation. The main determining line in the economic and political field is the line of mutual relations between the working class and the peasantry. The fundamental task of the transition period—to ensure relations of alliance with the peasantry—must be carried out from now on by more systematic and planned methods, calculated over a more extended period, in the field of industry, in that of taxation, in that of the state machine and in that of the national question, which in our country means above all the question of the peasant masses of the formerly oppressed nationalities.

All this work can be accomplished with ever increasing success if we improve our state machine, and in particular our economic administration, but not in a fragmentary way, not amateurishly—that is inadequate—but according to a broadly conceived plan, calculated over a number of years. It is not possible to improve the state machine from within alone. It can be improved first and foremost through the medium of the ruling party. Our party has guided this state apparatus for five years and it will go on guiding it in the future as well, fully and completely, but it will guide it more and more systematically in accordance with the complex tasks ahead, perfecting and regulating the methods of its own leadership and demanding from the state machine itself the same wide, planned regulation of methods and of selection of personnel.

Comrades, this urgent transfer of our work on to the rails of system and plan will be successful if the basic political prerequisite, the basic condition is present. And the prerequisite of all prerequisites, the condition of all conditions is our party, its clear thinking, its tempered will, its unity, its fighting capacity. Unity not on the basis of mere rallying to action stations in the

moment of danger—that is, of course, not sufficient—but the unity which has always been characteristic of our party, unity on the basis of collective courage, firmness, merciless evaluation of all dangers and foresight into fundamental problems.

The second condition of the party's steadfastness is its increasing influence on the young people. The struggle for the youth, an arena into which our worst enemies, the Mensheviks, are trying to make their way, must be waged unremittingly. In the period immediately ahead, reconnaissance and, so to speak, dangerous political espionage on the part of the counter-revolution can be carried out best through the Mensheviks, on the basis of the wages question, on the basis of the struggle for the youth.

We have hints of this already. In this struggle of Russian and Ukrainian Menshevism, relying on world Menshevism, we see how Menshevism of the Martov* shade shakes hands with openly counter-revolutionary Menshevism, that which stood for intervention, for armed uprising, which is represented today by the journal *Zarya* published abroad and which inside Russia is interwoven with Kolchakite and Denikinite counter-revolution. It is not beyond possibility that in this year that lies before us we shall have to wage a struggle against attempts by Menshevism to raise its head, and to wage this struggle, in, so to speak, a more "planned" way, which does not in the least mean a gentler way [*laughter, applause*]. There can be no doubt that we shall succeed in this struggle.

Since the epoch of NEP threatens to be further prolonged, all the dangers which are inherent in it assume a more protracted and menacing character. We know what these dangers are, we have analyzed them more than once. They derive from the market relations which engender of themselves currents of centrifugal force that can distract and rob the state machine in the direction of the interests of private capital, wedge the NEP bourgeoisie into it with their interests and ideas, plunder state industry, turning it inconspicuously into the channels of private accumulation. What we need is socialist primary accumulation, sound even if slow.

These currents of centrifugal force wash our party as well and, of course, cannot but be reflected in the course of long-term development in the party's own influence. Of the fact that our party with its revolutionary keenness is firm and unanimous today there can be no doubt. We saw how it reacted to the two platforms (the "anonymous one" and the "Workers' Truth" one) in which an attempt was made to reconsider the question of leadership of the party. In the past year the party has not weakened in its moral and political self-confidence and awareness, but has grown stronger—and this is not surprising, since it has purged itself of alien elements and added to its proletarian element.

The growth of the party will continue along this path in the future too. On the severe conditions which have

*Martov figured for a time as the leader of a sort of Menshevik "loyal opposition" to the Soviet Government within the Soviets. (Translator)

been laid down in the conditions of NEP for joining the party, the party can give and is giving a big rebate to workers at the bench. And yesterday's demonstration showed that this rebate will be fully justified — within reasonable limits, of course, and under serious supervision. A change in the ratio of the elements which compose the party's membership, an even bigger shift in favor of purely proletarian elements, workers at the bench, is the fundamental guarantee of the stability of our party and its power of resistance to all harmful influences.

Lenin Wounded

Comrades, as regards the clarity of thought and firmness of will of our party we have had some additional verification during the past year. The verification was a heavy one, because it was provided by a fact which to this day weighs upon the minds of all party members and very wide circles of the working population, or more truly, upon the entire working people of our country and, to a considerable extent, of the whole world. I speak of the illness of Vladimir Ilyich.

When his condition got worse at the beginning of March and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee met to exchange views on what to tell the party and the country about the deterioration in Comrade Lenin's health, I think you can all imagine, comrades, in what mood that session of the Political Bureau took place when we had to issue to the party and the country that first grave and disturbing bulletin. Even at that moment of course, we remained politicians. Nobody will reproach us for that. We were thinking not only about Comrade Lenin's health—of course, first and foremost we *were* concerned at that moment with his pulse-rate, his heart-beat, his temperature—we were also thinking of what impression the number of his heartbeats would produce on the political pulse of the working class and of our party.

With alarm and at the same time with the profoundest confidence in the strength of the party, we said that it was necessary immediately the danger had been revealed to bring it to the knowledge of the party and the country. Nobody doubts that our foes would endeavor to utilize this news for the purpose of troubling the people, especially the peasants, spreading disturbing rumors, and so on, but none of us doubted for one second that it was necessary immediately to tell the party how matters stood, because to say what is, means to enhance the responsibility of every member of the party. Our party is a large party, with half a million members, a great collective with great experience, but among these half-million people Lenin has his own place which, comrades, is beyond comparison with anyone else's.

There has never been in the past such an influence by one man on the destiny not only of one country but of all mankind. There is no yardstick, none has been created, by which we could measure the historical significance of Lenin. And that is why the fact that he has been withdrawn from work for a long period, that his condition is grave, could not but inspire profound political alarm. We know of course, of course, of course, we know for certain that the working class will triumph.

We sing: "Nobody will bring us deliverance," including "no heroes. . . ." * And this is true, but only in the last analysis of history. That is, in history's last analysis the working class would have triumphed even if there had been no Marx and no Ulyanov-Lenin.

The working class would have worked out the ideas it needed, the methods that were necessary to it, but more slowly. The circumstance that the working class raised up, at two crests of its historical development, two such figures as Marx and Lenin has been of colossal advantage to the revolution. Marx was the prophet with the Tables, and Lenin the greatest fulfiller of the Commandments, teaching not only the labor aristocracy, like Marx, but whole classes and peoples, through experience in the most difficult conditions, acting, maneuvering and conquering.

This year we had to get through our practical work with only partial participation by Vladimir Ilyich. In the field of ideas we had heard from him not long ago some reminders and indications which will suffice us for several years—on the peasant question, on the state machine and on the national question. And now it was necessary to announce a worsening in his health. We asked ourselves with natural alarm what conclusions the non-party masses would draw, the peasants, the Red Army men, because in relation to our state machine the peasants have trust first and foremost in Lenin. Besides everything else, Ilyich represents great moral capital for our state machine in the sphere of mutual relations between the working class and the peasantry. Would not the peasants think, some in our own circle asked themselves, that with a prolonged retirement of Lenin from work, his policy might be changed? How did the party react, the mass of the workers, the country as a whole?

After the appearance of the first alarming bulletin, the party as a whole closed its ranks, braced itself, morally rose to its full height. Comrades, the party consists, of course, of living people, and people have their shortcomings, their defects, and among the Communists there are likewise many who are "human, all too human," as the Germans say: There are and will be conflicts between groups and individuals both serious and trivial, for without such conflicts a great party cannot live. But the political weight, the political specific gravity of the party is determined by the fact that it rises to the surface again whatever tragic shock it has sustained.

The will to unity and discipline, or the secondary and personal, the human, all too human? Comrades, I think we can now draw this conclusion with complete confidence that sensing it would be deprived for a long time of Lenin's leadership, the party closed its ranks, swept aside everything that might threaten the clarity of its thinking, the unity of its will, its fighting capacity.

Before I took my seat in the train to come here to Kharkov I had a talk with our commander of the

* *From the Russian version of The International, equivalent to "No saviors from on high deliver, No trust have we in prince or peer."* (Translator)

Moscow military district, Nikolai Ivanovich Muralov, whom many of you know as an old party man, about how the Red Army soldiers were taking the situation in connection with Lenin's illness. Muralov told me that at first the news acted like a lightning-stroke, everybody recoiled, but then they began to think more, and more profoundly, about Lenin. Yes, comrades, the non-party Red Army man has now thought in his own way but very deeply *about the role of the individual in history*, about that which we of the older generation, when we were high-school boys, students or young workers studied in little books, in prison, in deportation and in exile, what we pondered on and disputed about in relation to the "hero" and the "crowd," the subjective factor and objective conditions, and so and so forth.

And now, in 1923, our young Red Army men have thought about these questions concretely with their hundreds of thousands of minds, and along with them the hundreds of thousands of minds of the peasants of all Russia, the Ukraine and the rest of the Union, about the role of the individual Lenin in history. And how have our political commissars and branch secretaries answered them? They have answered thus: Lenin is a genius, a genius is born once in a century, and world history has seen only two geniuses as leaders of the working class—Marx and Lenin. A genius cannot be created even by order of the mightiest and most disciplined party, but such a party can try to the highest degree attainable to replace it when it is absent, by redoubling its collective efforts.

This is the theory of the individual and the class which our political commissars have been expounding in popular form to the non-party Red Army men. And this is a correct theory: Lenin is not now at work—we must work twice as hard, be twice as keenly vigilant against dangers, preserve the revolution from them twice as steadfastly, use all opportunities for constructive work twice as persistently. And we are doing all this from the members of the Central Committee to the non-party Red Army men . . .

Our work, comrades, is very slow, very partial, even though within the framework of a great plan. Our methods of work are "prosaic": balances and calculations, the food tax and the export of grain—all this we are doing step by step, brick by brick . . . Isn't there a danger in all this of a sort of hairsplitting degeneration of the party? We cannot permit such a degeneration, any more than a break-up of its unity of action, even to the slightest extent, for even if the present period is going to be prolonged "seriously and for a long time, yet it is not going on forever." And perhaps it won't even last for a long time.

A revolutionary outbreak on a big scale, such as the beginning of revolution in Europe, can occur sooner than many of us now think. And if there is one of Lenin's many teachings on strategy that we ought especially firmly to keep in memory, it is what he has called *the politics of sharp turns*: today on the barricades, tomorrow in the pigsty of the Third State Duma, today the call to world revolution, to the world October, tomorrow negotiations with Kuhlmann and Czernin, signature of the obscene peace of Brest Litovsk.

The situation changed, or we estimated it afresh in a



Leon and Natalia Trotsky

new way—the western campaign, "We want Warsaw." The situation was estimated afresh—the peace of Riga,* also a rather foul peace, as you know. And then—stubborn work, brick by brick, thereafter, reduction in establishments, checking—do we need five telephone operators or only three, if three are enough, don't dare to employ five, for the peasant will have to give several extra bushels of grain to pay for them—petty, everyday, hairsplitting work—and there, look, the flame of revolution blazes up from the Ruhr. What, shall it catch us in a stage of degeneration? No, comrades, no.

We are not degenerating, we are changing our methods and procedures, but the revolutionary conservatism of the party remains higher than anything else for us. We are learning to draw up balance sheets and at the same time we are looking with sharp eyes to West and East, and events won't catch us by surprise. By purging ourselves and enlarging our proletarian base we shall strengthen ourselves.

We go forward in agreement with the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie, we allow the Nepmen; but in the party we will allow no Nepmanism or petty-bourgeois, no—we shall burn it out of the party with sulphuric acid and red-hot irons [*applause*], and at the 12th Congress, which will be the first congress held since October without Vladimir Ilyich and one of the few congresses in the history of our party held without him, we shall say to one another that among the basic precepts which we shall inscribe on our minds with a sharp chisel there will be this—don't get ossified, remember the art of sharp turns, maneuver but don't lose yourself, enter into agreements with temporary or long-term allies but don't let them wedge themselves into the party, remain yourselves, the vanguard of the world revolution. And if the signal sounds from the West—and it will sound—though we may be at that moment up to our necks in calculations, balance-sheets and NEP generally, we shall respond without wavering or delay: We are revolutionaries from head to foot, we have been and we shall remain such, we shall be revolutionaries to the end. [*Stormy applause, all rise and applause*].

*i.e. the peace treaty of 1921 which concluded the Soviet-Polish war on the basis of the frontier which remained until 1939, dividing both Byelorussia and the Ukraine. (Translator)

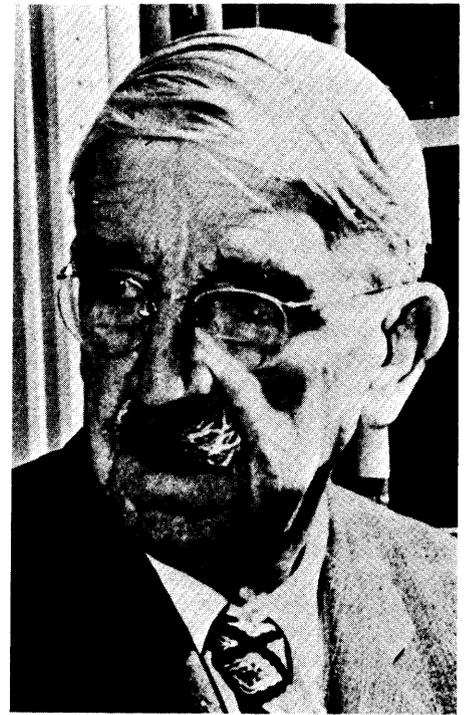


Leon and Natalia Trotsky

LIBERAL MORALITY

THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN JOHN DEWEY AND LEON TROTSKY

BY GEORGE NOVACK



American liberals are convinced that their positions are far stronger than those of the Marxists on both the lofty plane of ethical theory and in practical morality. They have persuaded many others that this is so. Stalin's terror regime, climaxed by the frame-up executions of the Old Bolsheviks in the Moscow Trials, gave the democrats a field day to parade their moral superiority not only over the Stalinists but also over the revolutionary socialists who were their victims. In the late 1930's a debate boiled up in various intellectual circles throughout the globe on the problem of the relations between ethics and politics until the blood-soaked exhibition of morality presented by capitalist imperialism in the Second World War cut it short.

The hearings held in April, 1937, by the International Commission of

George Novack was National Secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky which initiated the campaign to combat and expose the Moscow Trial frame-ups in the 1930's and was instrumental in establishing the Dewey Commission of Inquiry. He recently edited with Isaac Deutscher a paperback anthology of Trotsky's writings The Age of Permanent Revolution. His book on The Origins of Materialism will be published in September.

Inquiry into the Moscow Trials at Coyoacan, Mexico, had touched upon these questions in passing. Soon afterward Trotsky wrote an essay, *Their Morals and Ours*, which appeared in *The New Internationalist* of February, 1938. The philosopher-educator John Dewey, head of the Commission which had cleared Trotsky of the charges against him, wrote a criticism of Trotsky's ideas entitled *Means and Ends* which was printed in the same magazine in August of that year. The press of other work prevented Trotsky from undertaking the rejoinder he wanted to make to Dewey's arguments.

This inconclusive debate between the foremost spokesmen for pragmatism and Marxism was a rare direct confrontation of the fundamental views of the two philosophies on the moral aspects of social and political action. This question has not lost its pertinence or ceased to command the attention of liberals and rebels in the twenty-seven years since. Indeed, it is more timely today than then.

Problems of Ethics

Before coming to grips with the issues of method raised in that ideological encounter, it may be helpful to survey the fundamental problems involved in formulating a critical and rational ethics.

Theoreticians of morality confront

two major difficulties in arriving at a rational foundation or scientific explanation for standards of conduct. One is the extreme variability in the notions of right and wrong through the ages. It would be hard to find a human action which has not been subject to opposing moral judgments. Devouring human beings is today universally condemned—and yet it was universally practiced in primeval times. Some food-gathering and hunting tribes put old people to death; nowadays we strive to prolong their lives.

Freedom in sexual relations which is today illegal was at one time prevalent and approved. Although it is considered wrong to lie, such paragons of ethics as doctors dispute, in general and concrete cases, whether it is right to tell the truth about his condition to a patient stricken with a fatal disease. The grossly unequal ownership and distribution of wealth which is taken for granted under capitalism would have been condemned by the primitive Indians. These illustrations could be multiplied.

Even worse for seekers of the absolute in morality is the fact that the very same features of an action which are the highest good for one set of people are at the very same time supreme evils for another. Strikebreakers are heroes to the bosses but villains to the workers. Stool-pigeons are praised by the



witch-hunters and execrated by their political and union victims. The atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which horrified Asia was justified by the Allied powers. As Cuba has lately driven home to us, the expropriation of private property evokes contrary moral judgments from the defenders of capitalism and the proponents of socialism.

In view of such conflicting moral situations which involve the coexistence of contradictory appraisals of the same acts and actors, what solid grounds can there be for discriminating good from bad, right from wrong? Are stable moral standards at all possible?

Every school of ethics has presented its own answer to these questions. The traditional religions offer a divine justification for their mildewed moralities. The injunctions of their codes are claimed to be God's word as revealed by Moses, Christ, Mohammed and interpreted by rabbis, priests and other authorized church officials. God's commandments are eternal and cannot be violated with impunity because they are the passports to heaven and immortality.

Morality has gradually been liberated from such religious sanctions. With the advance of civilization, more enlightened culture and scientific knowledge philosophers have had to devise rational and secular bases for ethics. Once morality had been dislodged from anchorage in Heaven, it was necessary to find the reasons for its existence and evolution in the changing needs of human beings as these have progressed on earth. Historical materialism finally provided the most valid scientific explanation for the origins and substance of moral codes, their social functions and their limitations.

The Marxist Conception of Morality

"Men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their moral ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based—from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange," stated Engels in his exposition of the Marxist theory of morality in *Anti-Duehring*. The morality of tribal life necessarily differs in its fundamental values from those of civilized societies because of the basic differences in their

productive relations and forms of property. The commandment forbidding stealing or coveting a neighbor's wife appears ridiculous to primitive people who are not bound by the customs of private ownership either in the instruments of production or the agents of reproduction.

Engels pointed out that three principal moralities are in vogue today. There is Christian-feudal morality, best exemplified by Catholicism; modern bourgeois morality; and proletarian morality. Their attitudes toward marriage and divorce serve to illustrate the differences in these moral viewpoints. To the Catholic, marriages are "made in heaven" and should endure forever; to the ordinary bourgeois, wedlock is the result of a civil contract validated, regulated or terminated by government officials; to the socialist, it is a personal matter to be entered into or ended by the free will of the persons concerned.

These general moral outlooks represent three successive stages in the development of economic relations and express the needs and views of different class formations and social systems. They coexist and contend with one another in people's minds and lives today.

Engels concluded that all moralities and their theoretical justifications have been products of the economic stage society reached at that particular epoch. Since civilized society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms and continues to do so, all morality has been and must necessarily be class morality. "It has either justified the domination and interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class becomes powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed." Thus his materialist explanation for the changes and diversity in moral judgments also provides the justification for new and higher ones.

The Ethical Approach of Pragmatism

The pragmatists consider themselves specialists on matters of morality. Moral theory is, on the one hand, their substitute for conventional religion; on the other hand it provides their major means of defense and offense against a thoroughly materialist approach to social problems.

The pragmatists do not lean upon any "eternal verities" as a sanction for moral standards. They understand that these have been irretrievably battered down by the theory of evolution and the acquisitions of modern knowledge. On what grounds, then, can the practice of any virtues be recommended and justified? They are not good in and of themselves, or divinely inspired like the Ten Commandments, or enforced by taboos. According to John Dewey, the worth of any action, any course of conduct or policy is to be judged solely and simply by its real consequences. What counts is not the intentions, motives or aims of individuals but the concrete results which flow from people's actions. Dewey conceives of morality as "overt activity having consequences instead of as mere inner personal attribute." (*The Quest for Certainty*: p. 6) This objective criterion separated Dewey from all the semi-religious and sentimental souls for whom moral worth depends upon "goodness of heart."

Whatever actions tend to increase wealth and equalize its distribution, extend democracy and freedom, institute peaceful relations, open more opportunities for more people, enhance their sensitivities, add to their understanding, etc., are good. If they have the contrary consequences, they must be condemned as immoral.

Thus exploitation is wrong because it robs, divides and oppresses people—and the exploiters should be made to recognize that and either correct themselves or be corrected by the community. Force is wrong, or rather, far more often pernicious than helpful in its results. It must therefore not be resorted to—or at least employed only sparingly in case of overwhelming necessity. Class conflict is wrong—and ought to be replaced by class harmony and collaboration.

Such dicta show great good will and testify to the benevolence of the pragmatic moralist. But they do not promote a scientific understanding of the real situation which has created these social conflicts nor do they indicate a practical solution for them. It is cheap to rail against the rich and say the privileged must consider the needs of the poor and take measures to relieve them. Religion has preached such sermons—and practiced such charity—for many centuries without eradicating

the conditions which generate inequality.

There is a vast difference between such abstract moralizing and a genuinely scientific investigation of morality and its development. A scientific approach to morality should be able to inform us, not only that exploitation is evil, but why the rich must act that way in the first place and thereby indicate how the evils of exploitation can be removed. This is not an individual but a collective social problem.

The highest aim of any humanist ethics is the self-realization of each individual, the development and perfecting of the human personality. Dewey correctly recognized that individual conduct is perforce subordinate to social action and that morality was indissolubly bound up with social conditions, conduct and consequences. He was willing to pose the issue and do battle with Marxism in behalf of his own viewpoint on that advanced arena.

Means and Ends in Morality

The first question he tackled was the thorny one of the relation between means and ends in morality. Many liberal moralizers believe that such a maxim is the root of all evil. It may therefore come as a shock and surprise to them that Dewey agreed with Trotsky that the end justifies the means. The ends and means are interdependent.

But neither one, said Dewey, can be justified by "alleged deliverances of conscience, or a moral sense, or some brand of eternal truths." They can be justified, he declared, only by their actual results. "I hold that the end in the sense of consequences provides the only basis for moral ideas and action and therefore provides the only justification that can be found for means employed." Nothing else can make means good or bad but the outcome of their use.

Trotsky had stated that the ultimate ends of socialist action are the increase of the power of man over nature and the abolition, as a consequence, of the power of man over man (social oppression). Dewey, too, regarded these as the worthiest of objectives. Trotsky further stated that all those means that contributed to the realization of these aims are morally justified. So far, there was no disagreement between the Marxist and the pragmatist.

Their positions parted when the questions of the agencies and roads through which these goals were to be achieved were brought under consideration. Trotsky asserted that the only force in modern society capable of carrying through this job was the organized working class. The only way labor can eliminate oppression and complete the conquest of nature was by developing to the very end its struggles against the capitalist beneficiaries and upholders of economic privilege.

Here Dewey took sharp issue with him. Both of these propositions were wrong, he replied. Trotsky was not warranted in entrusting the fundamental tasks of social reconstruction in our epoch to the workers. This is a matter of common concern which surpasses any special class interests. All people of good will from the topmost level of society to the lowest should be mobilized in joint effort to secure collective control over nature and our economy.

Trotsky also erred, claimed Dewey, in his exclusive reliance upon the prosecution of the class struggle as the means of arriving at the desired goals. Other ways and means than hurling capitalists and workers against one another are not only as good but will bring better results.

Thus their differences over moral theory revolved around disagreement over the agents and the means of social advancement. In essence, it was a dispute over *method*: both method of thought and method of conduct.

Dewey himself deliberately elevated their dispute to the level of logical method and scientific procedure. Trotsky's method of reasoning is incorrect, Dewey said, because he *deduced* the means (the class struggle) from his reading (or misreading) of the course of social development. By illegitimately erecting the class struggle into the supreme and absolute law of history, Trotsky actually subordinated the ends to a particular means instead of permitting the ends to determine the means. How should Trotsky have derived the means? "By an examination of actual consequences of its use," wrote Dewey. This is the only genuinely scientific approach which takes into account the real interdependence of the two factors.

To *deduction*, the extraction of particular conclusions from general rules, Dewey counterposed the pro-

cedure of *induction*, the arriving at generalizations on the basis of repeated or duplicated instances.

This antithesis is an unfounded one. Did Trotsky actually derive his means arbitrarily, as Dewey implied, through deductive processes alone? To be sure, Trotsky did explicitly evaluate means by reference to the laws and needs of the class struggle. These laws, however, were not freely created and imposed upon society by the Marxists. They had been drawn from a prior comprehensive study of social processes over many generations by strictly scientific methods. The laws of class struggle are first of all *empirical* generalizations developed from analysis of the *facts* presented by the history of civilization, including American history.

The Logical Status of The Class Struggle

The impressive array of factual materials regarding class conflict and its crucial role in history from which these laws are derived were observed and recorded long before Marx arrived on the scene. For instance, many ancient Greek writers and historians (Thucydides, Aristotle, Plato) noted and described them. What the historical materialists did was to give the first adequate and correct explanation of them. They explained how classes originated through the growth of the productive forces, the division of social labor, and the existence of a sizeable surplus of products and why class conflicts have revolved around the mode of appropriation of this expanding surplus of wealth.

Is this no more than an *hypothesis* about social development? That is what Dewey, the instrumentalist, wished to say. But the class struggle has had a different role than the dubious one liberals assign to it. It is much more than a mere possibility or a chance and episodic occurrence in civilized life. It is a necessity, a certainty. It proceeds according to a verified set of laws which formulate fundamental factors arising from the innermost constitution of class society. These apply to all types of class societies regardless of their levels of development and specific peculiarities.*

Once the laws governing the class struggle had been discovered, formulated and verified, they could be applied like all other scientific laws.

They enabled investigators to probe more deeply into the structure and inner movements of society, its groupings and leading personalities and thus anticipate and, under certain circumstances, direct its developments to a certain extent.

The Nature of Concepts and Laws

Instrumentalists like Dewey, however, have an iron preconception against even the most solidly based prejudgments. This aversion is a prime principle of their theory of knowledge which has a built-in contradiction. The instrumentalists rightly insist upon the universal changeability of all things. Yet for them ideas maintain a curiously static essence through thick or thin. Ideas do not lose their inherently *hypothetical* character and can never really change into certainties, whatever the course and results of social and scientific development.

This assumption is neither empirical nor rational. In reality, many ideas which begin as hypotheses turn into something quite different as the result of scientific inquiry and verified practice. They become tested truths, scientific laws. The theory of the existence of atoms and the inner atomic structure of matter was only a brilliant guess, an intuition, when it was first propounded in ancient Greece. Nowadays it has become a validated truth from which it is possible to derive the most explosive consequences. Yet for Dewey, like the positivist Ernst Mach, the atom was not a reality but only an "operational idea." (See *Logic*, p. 153 and *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 119 and 131.)

Dewey objected that the laws of the class struggle are not soundly based because they "prejudge the characteristic traits and the kinds of actual phenomena that the proposed plans of action are to deal with." But they

**This reality was recognized not long ago by certain worker-priests in France who had been sent by the Church among the workers to combat the godless materialist heresies of Marxism. "We have learned," they wrote in a letter to Cardinal Feltir, October 5, 1953, "that the class struggle is not a mere principle that one can accept or refuse, but that it is a brutal fact which is imposed upon the working class." Because of their refusal to recant, they were unfrocked.*

do so no more and no less than the laws of atomic activity or any other physical laws.

For pure pragmatists all conceptual generalizations remain perpetually on trial. No decisive verdict on their truth or falsity can ever be rendered by any judge, no matter how qualified, no matter how great the amount of evidence. Why? Because indeterminate elements can never be totally eliminated from reality and therefore what is provisional and inconclusive can never be excluded from scientific thought.

For them every conception has to be freshly evaluated, and every conclusion revalidated from top to bottom, in every new situation. Its thousandth repetition has no qualitatively different or more coercive character than the original occurrence. The instrumentalists talk as though it were possible, and necessary, for people to start afresh on every occasion, confronting the world around them empty-handed and empty-headed.

This is essentially a denial of the value of all acquired knowledge, all scientific method, and even of the results of induction. No one but an infant reacts to the world and tackles the problems it presents without using the accumulated resources of social development, including the growing fund of prejudgments derived from historical experience and the direct examination of reality.

These are not a mass of mere speculations; they consist by and large of authenticated information and tested generalizations. But in the eyes of the instrumentalists for whom, if they are consistent, "ideas do not disclose reality," the content of ideas remains essentially indeterminate and forever hypothetical.

The progress of science leads to the acquisition of knowledge of the real forces which determine the production of phenomena and their subsequent formulation into laws. Dewey immensely exaggerated the aspect of indeterminateness in reality and the uncertainty of genuine knowledge. He underestimated and even excluded on principle knowing in advance and acting on ascertained truths about real situations.

"Every measure of policy is logically, and should be actually, of the nature of an experiment," he insisted in his *Logic*, p. 508. This sweeping assertion is neither logically correct nor factually complete.

It is a dangerous and misleading half-truth.

It depends upon the concrete circumstances of a situation and the nature of the proposal made whether or not a given policy is essentially, or only incidentally, "in the nature of an experiment." In most cases there is, to be sure, an inescapable measure of indeterminacy which endows the reaction to it with a questionable character. But this measure of uncertainty, of contingency, is quantitatively and qualitatively variable. The value of scientific theory and the aim of rational practice is to reduce this to the minimum.

Let us take two examples from industrial practice. A lathe operator in a factory can know in advance whether a bit is too soft to cut steel of a certain hardness. He would not use a softer steel, and certainly not a wooden peg, for that purpose. In this case the end—the machining of metal to a certain shape and size—and the material reality—the hardness of the metal—reciprocally determine beforehand, both positively and negatively, the type of means for attaining the desired product.

Why cannot the same rules apply to industrial relations as to shop practice? Can't the same worker know in advance how his employer will react when he and his associates ask for a raise in wages? The employer is a social reality of a certain type. His material interests give him a specific degree of hardness, a determined resistance to having his costs of production increased and his profits cut. In order to attain their ends, his workers need social instruments of a certain kind, strong enough to overcome that resistance. That is why they have organized unions and engage in strikes instead of relying upon individual petition.

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Here we come to the nub of the problem. Every wage negotiation is not and need not be a totally fresh experiment with unknown factors, whatever may be the uncertainties in any given situation. Workers and employers have been dealing with one another for many scores of years all over the world. An experienced union leadership and an informed membership can enter collective bargaining forearmed with knowledge of the bosses' nature gained from social science and everyday experience which helps them to handle opposition to the just demands of the workers.

If every negotiation or every act of production were to be approached in theory or in practice as wholly or largely experimental, as Dewey demands, then no particular means can be regarded beforehand as necessarily better or more suited to the requirements of the struggle than any other. This excludes reliance upon verified procedures and leaves the field wide open to any capricious innovation.

Such unrestricted and uncontrolled experimentalism is utterly alien to the actual procedures of scientists and to the normal methods of modern industry. The aim of automated factory production is to leave nothing to chance but to regulate all the factors in the process. Accidents, exceptions occur in the best regulated systems. But even these are anticipated by instruments installed in advance to detect these variations when they depart from permissible limits and then to compensate for and correct them in time. Self-regulating systems are especially imperative for such industrial complexes as atomic nuclear plants which embody the highest union of scientific theory and production.

Dewey said he wanted the most up-to-date methods of science and industry extended into everyday affairs. If this is done, then the field of operation for random experiment in the most vital areas of social life ought to be reduced and itself made subject to control. Experiment is necessary in all spheres of activity. Both science and industry take care of this need by providing special places for the conduct of experiments. In industry experimental work in pilot plants, laboratories, and in the field is carefully segregated from mass production which is carried out with already verified techniques and ma-

chinery.

In modern times there have been countless experiences, and even experiments, made by contending social forces in the domain of class relations. The positive and negative results of these various methods of action have been summarized by scientific socialism in the laws of the class struggle and codified in the programs of workers' parties. These have great practical value as guides to progressive social forces in their further struggles.

The pragmatic viewpoint, on the other hand, is based upon the *formal* equality of all ideas rather than on their real material standing. Any idea is regarded as in itself just as true, useful and effective as any other. In the same way the commodity market is presumed to rest upon the formal equality of exchanges; bourgeois law, upon the formal equality of all citizens before the bar of justice; and its democracy, upon the equally decisive vote of all citizens. All these assumptions contradict the real state of affairs in capitalist society with its economic inequalities and class differentials.

One idea is not in reality as good as another. Some are truer and better than others because they do not all reflect reality equally well or widely and therefore do not have the same consequences when used to direct activity.

The Mutual Determinism of Ends and Means

For Dewey the ends and the means are interdependent. But he believed that these two terms merely *condition* one another; neither one can determine the other or be predetermined by sufficient material conditions. The one is as conditional and hypothetical as the other.

For example, exploitation is bad and must be eliminated. But for Dewey it may be uprooted in any number of ways: by class struggle, by class agreement or by a combination of both. None of these means are decisive for accomplishing the desired aim: the abolition of capitalist exploitation. Such is his abstract theoretical position.

This appears to be thoroughly impartial. But when it comes to practice—which, after all, is the decisive test for the pragmatist—the liberal is not so unbiased. By disposition he prefers, and in nine instances out of ten chooses, the methods of least resistance. The line of most resistance is always his last resort. This bias is not accidental. It flows from the necessity of his nature as a social being, his interests and outlook as a middle class intellectual, the ambiguity of being in the middle of opposing social camps.

Sometimes the left liberal does take the road of struggle — but only grudgingly and under the compulsion of overriding circumstances. He feels that this method is somehow out of tune with reality and the best interests of all concerned, including his own. In reality, class struggle methods are simply inconsistent with his in-between position where he is pulled in opposite directions by the antagonisms between capital and labor, white and black.

Dewey's second major criticism of Trotsky is that Marxists are absolutistic in appealing to fixed laws for their choice of means of social action. Trotsky, he claimed, was not being empirical or scientific but idealistic and religious-minded because he imposed his desired aims upon social development and acted as though "human ends are inter-

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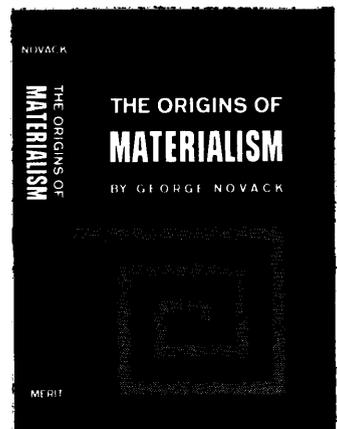
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woven into the very texture and structure of existence."

How much justification is there to this criticism? As a materialist, Trotsky never believed that *human* ends are interwoven into *nature's* existence. He did assert, however, that *class* ends are objectively woven "into the very texture and structure" of *social* existence under certain historical circumstances.

Dewey denied this. For him society does not have so determinate a texture and structure that any general laws on the objectives of classes can be obtained from an analysis of social development and subsequently used to calculate their conduct as a basis for action.

If there are no definite laws governing the activities of classes, then there can be no necessary means, like the class struggle, to attain social objectives. If there are neither ascertainable laws nor prescribed means, then what takes their place? Tentative guesses, hopeful and wishful plans, experimental efforts. Before the act, many different kinds of means, and in principle almost any means, may achieve the ends-in-view. If you don't know where you are going or what you are really up against, any road will presumably take you there.

On what grounds, then, should one means be selected over others? Of course Dewey acknowledges that previous knowledge and experience is to be used in the process of selection. But these are never adequate or decisive. Their worth is demonstrated only by what flows from their use.

Unfortunately, the consequences emerge only after the choice of measures is made. Why, then, can't the choice of means be guided and determined by the lessons drawn from the accumulated consequences of the past? Although Dewey doesn't rule these out, he does not give them decisive weight. For the pragmatist no amount of predetermination is ever definitive; determination comes only after the act and only for that particular act.

This is a preposterous viewpoint. It dismisses as negligible the fact that everything which is determined after the fact thereupon becomes transformed into something determined before the next fact. Nothing remains indefinitely in the purely provisional state that Dewey's logic demands. When enough predetermi-

nate material factors are piled up, the direction and outcome of developments can be foreseen.

Are Social Laws Relative or Absolute?

Compare Dewey's out-of-this-world logic with the materialistic logic of Marxism which conforms to the real course of development and state of affairs.

Every law, including the most necessary and universal, is limited by the nature of the reality it deals with and by its own nature as a human and historically developed formulation. These give it a relative and conditional character. But that is only one aspect of its content. If the law is true, it is absolute for the processes and phenomena covered in the area of its operation.

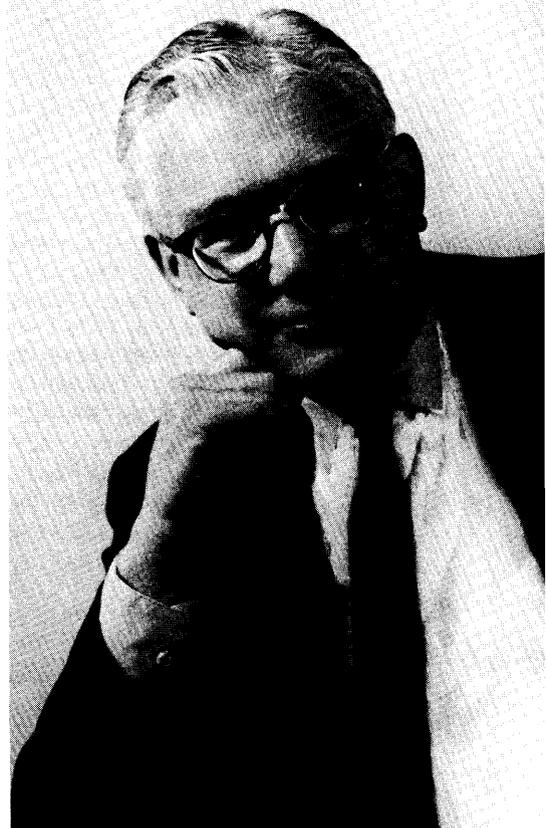
For example, in the case under discussion, the laws of the class struggle are valid only under the conditions of class society. Before primitive society was divided into classes, these laws were not only inapplicable but unthinkable. At the other end of the historical process, as class society disappears in the socialist future, these laws will gradually lose their field of operation and wither at the roots.

Thus these laws governing social relations are both relative and absolute in their application. Their relativity is based upon the changing and contradictory course of social evolution from primitive collectivism through civilization on to socialism. Their absolutism is based upon the central role that the antagonism of class interests plays in the structure and activity of civilized society.

The Material Determinism of Class Aims

Dewey agrees that the realities of social life have to be the starting point and the foundation of any genuine morality bound up with effective social action. This means that, in a society split by antagonisms, it must be recognized that different moral demands will be invoked and different moral judgments enforced by contending classes. If this fundamental fact is waved aside, the resultant morality is bound to be fictitious or hypocritical and any behavior in accord with its prescriptions will give bad results.

Dewey understood that the individual functions in a given social-



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economic framework and that individual morality is bound up with public codes of conduct. For him social ends are ultimately decisive in moral matters. But what conditions actually do, and what ought to, decide what means will produce the desired ends? Dewey taught that informed or "creative intelligence" has to step in and do the job.

Without disputing this, it still does not answer the all-important question. What determines how people behave in this society and what kind of behavior is intelligent and creative? Here the real relations of classes and their roles in capitalist society are determinative.

The ends of classes, and of their members and movements, are actually determined by their material needs and interests. These arise from the parts they play in social production and their stake in specific forms of property. Thus the collective end of the capitalist class in the United States is to preserve and extend their economic system. That is their primary end. And it *determines* the conduct of persons belonging to that class, just as it *conditions* the lives of everyone in our society.

But the workers functioning in the same system have quite different ends, whether or not they are individually or fully aware of the fact.



George Novack

They are impelled by the very necessities of their living and working conditions under capitalism to try and curb their exploitation. In the long run they will be obliged to abolish its source: the private ownership of the means of production and exchange. In this struggle they have the right to use whatever means of combat they can devise for such worthy purposes. These weapons range from unionism to strike action, from political organization to social revolution.

The clash of incompatible ends determines the means employed by the contending forces. Unionism begets anti-unionism; strike-making provokes strike-breaking. Faced with mass revolutionary political action with socialist objectives the capitalist rulers discard bourgeois democracy and resort to military dictatorship or fascism. The historical course of struggle leads toward the final showdown in which one of the decisive polar classes emerges victorious over the other. Marxists consciously work for the supremacy of the working people.

These class ends are definite and clear, even if they are not always grasped or stated with precision by the representatives of capital and labor who are obliged to act in accordance with them by the enviroing circumstances of their socio-economic situations, as these develop from one stage to the next.

The Role of Middle Class Liberalism

But what is the objective historical end of the middle classes and of such of their intellectual representatives as Dewey? In the domain of theory their function is to deny the crucial importance of the class struggle, its necessity and its fruitfulness if properly organized and directed. In practice, they usually strive to curb its development by the working class while its enemies remain unrestrained and powerful. This is a hopelessly reactionary task in social science, politics, economics — and morality.

In his choice of means and in his obscuring of ends, Dewey fulfilled a specific social function as a philosophical representative of those liberal middle class elements which aspire to be the supreme mediators and moderators of class conflict in

our society. In their choice of means and ends the revolutionary Marxists for whom Trotsky spoke likewise fulfill their role as champions of the fundamental, long-range interests of the working masses. The means and ends of both, in principle and in practice, are determined by their class functions and allegiances.

Many liberal moralizers contended that, if means were justified only through their usefulness in achieving ends, the most vicious practices were licensed and the gates opened to the totalitarian abominations of Stalinism. Trotsky met this argument by answering that all means were not proper in the class struggle but only those which really lead to the liberation of mankind.

"Permissible and obligatory are those and only those means, we answer, which unite the revolutionary proletariat, fill their hearts with irreconcilability to oppression, teach them contempt for official morality and its democratic echoers, imbue them with consciousness of their own historic mission, raise their courage and spirit of self-sacrifice in the struggle."

The claim of the pragmatic liberals that their morality is superior to that of the Marxists in theory and practice cannot be sustained. Their ethics lacks a sound scientific basis because it systematically disregards the most fundamental factor in the shaping of social relations and the motivating of individual conduct in modern life: the division and conflict of classes. Their moral injunctions are rendered ineffectual by failure to recognize these social realities. This not only hinders them from promoting the praiseworthy ideals of equality, cooperativeness and peace they aspire to. Their blindness to the facts of life actually helps to reinforce reaction by restraining and disorienting the main counter forces against the evils of the existing system from taking the right road.

This is apparent nowadays when liberals and pacifists "impartially" condemn the terrorism of white supremacists and censure the measures of self-defense employed by Negroes against such attacks. This is part and parcel of the same moral-political position which places the aggressive violence of Washington on a par with the revolutionary actions of the Congolese, Dominican and

Vietnamese peoples in their anti-imperialist struggles for freedom, unity, independence and social progress. Such false judgments come from applying abstract moral codes and categorical universals of conduct to real historical situations instead of analyzing the specific class interests and political objectives of the contending sides.

The revolutionary morality of scientific socialism is effective and progressive because it equips the laboring masses with the kind of outlook and values they need for emancipation. It generalizes and vindicates in theory their feelings that the cause they strive for is just. It explains the aims of their efforts and illuminates the kind of means required for their realization. In the simple words of the ancient moralist: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

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(Continued from Page 98)

tical materialism, a hope that proved to be not misplaced.

At the time Novack was, of course, already a student of Trotsky's thought. Today there are few in the world who are as well acquainted with Trotsky's immense literary production or who have comparable appreciation of the essence of Trotsky's outlook. When C. Wright Mills approached him for help in studying the vast field of Marxism, he was knocking at the right door. And from Mills, Novack gained a fresh impression of the limitations and strengths of the American intellectuals of today and their likely lines of exploration in the field of Marxism.

In his introduction, Deutscher pays tribute to the "many-sidedness and balance" of the selection of Trotsky's writings presented in this anthology. The tribute is well deserved. In view of the sheer quantity of Trotsky's output, the task of deciding what to select as "representative" was a formidable one. The problem of presenting excerpts without injuring them by separating them from their context was even more hazardous. Through concise introductory remarks to the various sections and ample footnotes to historical and biographical references, Novack managed to bridge the gaps very effectively.

In fact, the text of the book has a remarkable flow and consistency so that the anthology gives the rather astonishing effect of standing as a whole in its own right. It is somewhat like listening to Trotsky himself briefly indicating his views on a series of subjects. Out of the book thus emerges an unusually faithful presentation of Trotsky's own personality as a political scientist. This is the man as he really was, Novack says to the honest inquirer in the United States. Judge him and his ideas for yourself.

In their selections, the editors of the *Trotsky Anthology*, rigorously follow the central logic of Trotsky's own outlook and the great revolutionary is permitted to speak for himself on topics which some of his admirers of today find embarrass-

ing such as the role and program of the Fourth International. Thus excerpts from the *Transitional Program* and *The Manifesto on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution* are included in the anthology. The Fourth International was of paramount interest to Trotsky and it was really in its cause that he gave his life. Not to have included these selections and others closely relating to this theme would have distorted the image of Trotsky which Novack set out to provide.

In his organization of the material, Novack seeks to adhere to both the logical line of Trotsky's development as a political scientist and to the actual sequence of events in the life of the revolutionary socialist leader. Where a choice has to be made due to the limitations of the form, Novack gave precedence to the logic. This tends to bring uppermost Trotsky's development as a theoretician and his life of action, beginning with his contributions prior to the 1905 Revolution and ending with his founding of the Fourth International and participation in one of its important discussions involving basic theory.

Since this is done through selections from Trotsky's own writings, we are provided with a really remarkable view of the main sequence of events in the first forty years of this century as seen by one of the world's most acute observers, who was at the same time one of the two leaders who had the greatest impact on the outcome of the history of that period (the other one being Lenin).

Thus this pocket-size book offers quite a treasure: An explanation of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, the key to understanding the main pattern of revolutionary developments not only in Russia but throughout the colonial world today; an analysis of the causes of World War I and the impetus which that war gave to revolution on an international scale, an analysis that holds basically for World War II and the great revolutionary upsurge that came in its aftermath; the gist of Trotsky's explanation of the rise of the Soviet Union to world power,

how the first workers state fell victim to a bureaucratic caste, and the alternatives facing the Soviet people today; some pieces from Trotsky's unique contribution to the understanding of fascism and how to combat it; items dealing with countries as varied as the United States, India and China; two samples of his efforts to expose the Moscow trials; a good indication of his views on party building.

Along with all this are excerpts from Trotsky's writings in the fields of culture, literature, art, morals, science and philosophy. The book begins with the young revolutionist's vision of the twentieth century in which he was to play such an outstanding part; it closes with the mature genius envisioning the inspiring future of mankind.

How well have Trotsky's theories and revolutionary optimism withstood the test of events in the twenty-five years since his death? Isaac Deutscher seeks to answer this question in the introduction. His general conclusion is that while Trotsky turned out to be wrong in particular instances and in the tempo of certain outcomes which he forecast, still he has been borne out remarkably well on all the really fundamental issues.

Referring to the "social optimism" of Marx and Engels as contrasted to the Liberal belief of their time in the automatic progress of bourgeois society, Deutscher says: "They formulated a dual historical prognosis: mankind, they said, will either advance to socialism or relapse into barbarism. Trotsky constantly elaborates this dual prognosis. Fifty or thirty years ago the bourgeois Liberal considered it to be unduly dogmatic and unduly pessimistic; now he is inclined to dismiss it as 'starry-eyed optimism.'

"Granted that the danger of society's relapse into barbarism now looks more menacing than ever, and that even Trotsky could not foresee just how desperately acute the alternative—socialism or the collapse of civilization would become in the atomic age. But then the Marxist school of thought and Trotsky in particular can be reproached only for not being fully aware of how profoundly they were right. Yet Trotsky's optimism was no profession of passive faith; nor were his forecasts the horoscopes of a soothsayer. His confidence in

man's future is predicated on man's capacity and willingness to act and fight for his future.

"His *dum spiro spero* [While there's life, there's hope!] was a battle cry; each of his prognostications was a summons to action. So understood, his optimism in the atomic age is more valid than ever. The closer man may be to self-annihilation, the more firmly must he believe that he can avoid it, the more intense and fanatical must be his determination to avoid it. His optimism is essential to his survival, while supercilious disillusionment and resigned pessimism are sterile and can only prepare us for suicide."

As for Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, Deutscher underlines its solidity as "a profound and comprehensive conception in which all the overturns that the world has been undergoing (in this late capitalist era) are represented as interconnected and interdependent parts of a single revolutionary process." The theory was confirmed first of all in the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia and the establishment of the first workers state in history.

It was confirmed again in opposition to Stalin's theory of "socialism in a single country," and this in face of the fact that "from the early nineteen twenties to the late nineteen forties, all appearances of the world situation spoke against Trotsky's doctrine." Deutscher declares: "Stalin's triumph, long-lasting though it was, turns out to have been as transitory as the situation that had produced it. 'Socialism in a single country' can now be seen as the ideological reflex of temporary circumstances, as a piece of 'false consciousness' rather than a realistic program."

Stalin's theory was abandoned "to all intents and purposes" when Soviet troops "in pursuit of Hitler's armies, marched into a dozen foreign lands, and carried revolution on their bayonets and in the turrets of their tanks."

Following this came the triumph of the Chinese Revolution "which Stalin had not expected and which he had done his best to obstruct." The march of the international revolution had been resumed. "And ever since, Asia, Africa, and even Latin America have been seething. In appearance each of their upheavals

has been national in scope and character. Yet each falls into an international pattern. The revolutionary dynamic cannot be brought to rest. Permanent Revolution has come back into its own, and whatever its further intervals and disarray, it forms the socio-political content of our century."

If Trotsky's "great anticipatory idea" has been confirmed by history, the confirmation, as in the case of all thinkers and political leaders, has not been one hundred per cent, Deutscher points out. In the Chinese Revolution, for instance, "whereas with Trotsky it was an absolute axiom that the revolution must come from town to country and cannot succeed without urban initiative and leadership," yet the revolution was carried from country to town by Mao's guerrilla army.

The Chinese Revolution constitutes an outstanding instance of the historical fact that "not one of the social upheavals of the last two decades has been strictly 'the work of the workers.'" Yet it would be "rash to jump to the conclusion, drawn by some writers, notably the late C. Wright Mills, that all this disproves the Marxist conception that considers the industrial working class as the chief 'historic agency' of socialism. Deutscher reminds those of this view that for over a century "the working classes of Europe were indeed the chief agents of socialism and that generation after generation they struggled for it with an intelligence, passion, and heroism that amazed the world."

The historical record extends from the deeds of the English Chartists to the proletarian insurrections of 1905 and 1917. To this Deutscher might well have added that since 1917 the workers on an international scale have repeatedly displayed readiness on a heroic scale to move toward socialist revolution. This was a cardinal point with Trotsky. Deutscher's rejoinder to those who see no hope in the capacity of the workers is well taken: "A sense of proportion and perspective is needed to avoid generalizing about a long term historic process from one particular phase of it."

Deutscher sees evidence of a "comeback" of Trotskyism today and indications of its eventual triumph even within the bureaucratic

fortresses of the Soviet Union and China. The reciprocal accusations of "Trotskyism" lodged by Khrushchev and Mao against each other in the Sino-Soviet dispute are not without a grain of truth in both cases. But at the present stage, the elements of Trotskyism in the policies of Moscow and Peking are grotesquely combined with "elements of Stalinism." The truth is that the re-emergence of Trotsky's ideas has only begun in the world Communist movement and it remains to be seen how it is going to proceed.

An oversight in Deutscher's fine introduction is his failure to point to the Cuban Revolution either as evidence confirming the validity of the Permanent Revolution or as a great step forward in the appearance of new revolutionary forces outside the official Communist movement. The Cuban Revolution is especially important for its impact in the United States, a good example being the book written by C. Wright Mills on the subject. The Trotsky anthology in which Deutscher's introduction appears is itself a product of the repercussions of this revolution, Mills having turned in the direction of serious study of Marxism and particularly of Trotsky as a direct result of his trip to Cuba and his lengthy conversations with the Cuban leaders. Had Mills lived to write his projected introduction to the anthology, he would scarcely have left out reference to the Cuban Revolution, with its special meaning for Americans. Perhaps in subsequent editions of the anthology, Deutscher will want to consider this development, which is viewed by the world Trotskyist movement of today as the opening of the socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere.

In discussing Trotsky's conversion to the views of Lenin on the kind of party required by the working class to achieve victory, Deutscher insists on the decisive difference between the concept held by Lenin and the kind of party maintained by Stalin. This is excellent and from it one can easily grasp Trotsky's view on the need to fight with all one's energy for realization of the Leninist concept in opposition to Stalinism. Deutscher, however, has a position of his own which he intimates in passing by commenting on the "relative fruitless-

ness" of much of Trotsky's struggle against Stalin and by declaring that outside the USSR, "Trotskyism has not been a vital political movement: the Fourth International has never been able to make a real start."

As against this, it was Trotsky's opinion that to substantially affect the outcome of the battle against the Stalinist degeneration it was necessary to engage fully in the struggle. The conflict, moreover, was not over paltry matters. It involved all the key issues of the day, including some that have become increasingly acute such as the problem of building a working-class leadership capable of effectively meeting the threat of a third world war. It is difficult to see how Trotsky could have followed any other political course than the one he chose. He succeeded in destroying the prestige of Stalinism among the thinking vanguard, few as they were. Thereby he played a decisive role in clearing the way for the resurgence of revolutionary Marxism.

As for his work in founding the Fourth International, Trotsky acted as a responsible revolutionary political leader. On the one hand he pointed to the objective need for the Fourth International as the only revolutionary Marxist movement in an international situation characterized by the death agony of capitalism and an immense potential of mass struggles and elementary outbursts. There would be no absence of revolutionary opportunities in the coming period, he maintained. Indeed openings would arise for extraordinarily swift growth of sections of the Fourth International.

At the same time, Trotsky held that adherents of the Fourth International must prepare themselves for *decades* of difficult struggle. Trotsky stressed this in his own circle of followers. A typical statement is the following, included in the anthology (page 262): "The capitalist world has no way out, unless a prolonged death agony is so considered. It is necessary to prepare for long years, if not decades, of war, uprisings, brief interludes of truce, new wars, and new uprisings. A young revolutionary party must base itself on this perspective."

Here, too, in estimating how correct Trotsky proved to be, a sense of proportion and perspective, not to mention political judgment, is

needed to avoid generalizing about the outcome of a long term historic struggle from one particular phase of it.

American Marxism

On another of Trotsky's predictions, Deutscher in effect challenges the American intellectuals. Trotsky's forecasts concerning the United States entering an era of proletarian revolution in which Marxism was about to conquer the American mind "were indeed far-fetched," Deutscher declares. Instead of a profound economic crisis, American capitalism "achieved quite unparalleled expansion." Consequently Trotsky's prediction of "a great epoch of American Marxism" remains unfulfilled.

"Not only has the United States 'refused' to create any up-to-date version of proletarian socialism, but its working class seems to be further than ever from accepting any brand of socialism at all." The American intelligentsia is no longer even leftist but a "legion of Panglosses believing that the American 'way of life,' slightly refurbished according to the Keynesian prescription, is the best of all possible ways of life."

"Sadly misplaced" as Trotsky's confidence was in "American Marxism" this does not in reality speak against him, in Deutscher's opinion, but against his critics on this point. Trotsky was true to himself and to the basic conclusions provided by Marxist analysis about the future course of American society. The apparent triumph of the Panglosses is based on a post-war prosperity that contains among other poisonous ingredients "an armament fever lasting a quarter-century, including the madness of the nuclear arms race of two decades..." It remains to be seen whether Trotsky was "thinking too far ahead in his American prognostications" or whether his thought was moving in the wrong direction.

In any case, time is growing short. "Because of its social conservatism and political complacency the United States may have missed, or be missing, its greatest historical chance."

"One would like to believe that Americans can as a nation still make good their lag in the field of ideas," continues Deutscher, "but they have not much time to lose."

It is on this note of challenge that Deutscher ends his introduction. One hopes that it will serve to help spur development of a serious appreciation of Marxism and of the contributions of one of its greatest protagonists as a realistic alternative to the illusions of the Panglosses.

Since Deutscher wrote his introduction, American capitalism has provided fresh evidence of how well Trotsky saw its international role in driving peoples onto the road of revolution. The most glaring instance, of course, has been Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam. On the one hand, this has visibly heightened the threat of a nuclear war in which not only civilization but mankind itself could perish. On the other hand, the American aggression has inspired fresh resistance, beginning in South Vietnam and extending throughout the colonial world and into the centers of the West.

One of the most encouraging consequences was the early appearance of political opposition to the war inside the United States itself. The size and energy of this opposition at the opening of a war is unparalleled in American history. It gives great promise, if Johnson persists in deepening the war, of gaining in momentum. Inherent in this opposition is the radicalization of the American workers forecast by Trotsky at the end of the thirties. This outcome can occur with all the more explosiveness because of the undue delay in its appearance and because of the dynamic world situation in which it finally comes into being.

Thus it may well be that Deutscher's challenge to the American intellectuals will be taken up even sooner than he might have anticipated. In that case Trotsky will rapidly come into his own in America. And the theory that best expressed the logic of world revolution when the mighty global process began in Tsarist Russia would then appropriately find its ultimate expression in the stormy social struggles now brewing in the main citadel of world capitalism.

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