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## What is National Socialism ?

By LEON TROTSKY

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following article was written by Leon Trotsky at the end of 1933. It was published in France in the "Nouvelle Revue Française" and in the United States in the quarterly, "Yale Review" in 1934.

Naive minds think that the office of kingship lodges in the king himself, in his ermine cloak and his crown, in his bones and veins. As a matter of fact, the office of kingship is an interrelation between people. The king is king only because the interests and prejudices of millions of people are refracted through his person. When the flood of development sweeps away these interrelations, then the king appears to be only a washed-out male with a flabby underlip. He who was once called Alfonso XIII could discourse upon this from fresh impressions.

The leader by will of the people differs from the leader by will of God in that the former is compelled to clear the road for himself or, at any rate, to assist the conjuncture of events in discovering him. Nevertheless, the leader is always a relation between people, the individualistic supply to meet the collective demand. The controversy over Hitler's personality becomes the sharper the more the secret of his success is sought in himself.

In the meantime, another political figure would be difficult to find that is in the same measure the focus of anonymous historic forces. Not every exasperated petty bourgeois could have become Hitler, but a particle of Hitler is lodged in every exasperated petty bourgeois.

The rapid growth of German capitalism prior to the First World War by no means signified a simple destruction of the intermediate classes. Although it ruined some layers of the petty bourgeoisie it created others anew: around the factories, artisans and shopkeepers; within the factories, technicians and executives. But while preserving themselves and even growing numerically—the old and the new petty bourgeoisie compose a little less than one-half of the German nation—the intermediate classes have lost the last shadow of independence. They live on the periphery of large-scale industry and the banking system, and they live off the crumbs from the table of monopolies and cartels, and off the ideological sops of their traditional theorists and politicians.

The defeat in 1918 raised a wall in the path of German imperialism. External dynamics changed to internal. The war passed over into revolution. Social democracy, which aided the Hohenzollerns in bringing the war to its tragic conclusion, did not permit the proletariat to

bring the revolution to its conclusion. It spent fourteen years in finding interminable excuses in its own existence for the Weimar democracy. The Communist Party called the workers to a new revolution but proved incapable of leading it. The German proletariat passed through the rise and collapse of war, revolution, parliamentarism, and pseudo-Bolshevism. At the time when the old parties of the bourgeoisie had drained themselves to the dregs, the dynamic power of the working class turned out to be impaired.

The post-war chaos hit the artisans, the pedlars, and the civil employees no less cruelly than the workers. The economic crisis in agriculture was ruining the peasantry. The decay of the middle strata did not mean that they were made into proletarians inasmuch as the proletariat itself was casting out a gigantic army of chronically unemployed. The pauperisation of the petty bourgeoisie, barely covered by ties and socks of artificial silk, eroded all official creeds and, first of all, the doctrine of democratic parliamentarism.

The multiplicity of parties, the icy fever of elections, the interminable changes of ministries aggravated the social crisis by creating a kaleidoscope of barren political combinations. In the atmosphere brought to white heat by war, defeat, reparations, inflation, occupation of the Ruhr, crisis, need, and despair, the petty bourgeoisie rose up against all the old parties that had bamboozled it. The sharp grievances of small proprietors, never out of bankruptcy, of their university sons without posts and clients, of their daughters without dowries and suitors, demanded order and an iron hand.

The banner of National Socialism was raised by upstarts from the lower and middle commanding ranks of the old army. Decorated with medals for distinguished service, commissioned and non-commissioned officers could not believe that their heroism and sufferings had not only come to nothing for the fatherland but also gave them no special claims to gratitude. Hence their hatred of the revolution and the proletariat. At the same time, they did not want to reconcile themselves to being sent by the bankers, industrialists, and ministers back to the modest posts of bookkeepers, engineers, postal clerks, and school teachers. Hence their "socialism." At the Iser and under Verdun they had learned to risk themselves and others, and to speak the language of command which powerfully overawed the petty bourgeois behind the lines. Thus these people became leaders.

#### WHERE HITLER GOT HIS PROGRAMME

At the start of his political career, Hitler stood out perhaps only because of his big temperament, a voice much louder than others, and a circumscribed mentality much more self-assured. He did not bring into the movement any ready-made programme, if one disregards the insulted soldier's thirst for vengeance. Hitler began with grievances and complaints about the Versailles terms, the high cost of living, the lack of respect for a meritorious non-commissioned officer, and the plots of bankers and journalists of the Mosaic persuasion. There were in the country plenty of ruined and drowning people with scars and fresh bruises. They all wanted to thump with their fists on the table. This Hitler could do better than others. True, he knew not how to cure the evil. But his harangues sounded now like commands and again like prayers addressed to inexorable fate. Doomed classes, like those fatally ill, never tire of making variations on their complaints or of listening to consolations. Hitler's speeches were all attuned to this pitch. Sentimental formlessness, absence of disciplined thought, ignorance along with gaudy erudition—all these minutes turned into pluses. They supplied him with the possibility of uniting all types of dissatisfaction around

the beggar's sack of National Socialism, and of leading the mass in the direction in which it pushed him. In the mind of the agitator was preserved from among his early personal improvisations whatever had met with approbation. His political thoughts were the fruits of oratorical acoustics. That is how the selection of slogans went on. That is how the programme was consolidated. That is how the "leader" took shape out of the raw material.

Mussolini, from the very beginning, reacted more consciously to social materials than Hitler, to whom the police mysticism of a Metternich is much closer than the political algebra of Machiavelli. Mussolini is mentally bolder and more cynical. It may be said that the Romish atheist only utilises religion as he does the police and the courts while his Berlin colleague really believes in the infallibility of the Church of Rome. During the time when the future Italian dictator considered Marx as "our common immortal teacher," he defended not unskillfully the theory which sees in the life of contemporary society first of all the reciprocal action of two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. True, wrote Mussolini in 1914, there lie between them very numerous intermediate layers which seemingly form "a joining web of the human collective"; but "during periods of crisis, the intermediate classes gravitate, depending upon their interests and ideas, to one or the other of the basic classes." A very important generalisation! Just as scientific medicine equips one with the possibility not only of curing the sick but of sending the healthy to meet their forefathers by the shortest route, so the scientific analysis of class relations, predestined by its creator for the mobilisation of the proletariat, enabled Mussolini, after he had jumped into the opposing camp, to mobilize the intermediate classes against the proletariat. Hitler accomplished the same feat, translating the methodology of fascism into the language of German mysticism.

The bonfires which burn the impious literature of Marxism light up brilliantly the class nature of National Socialism. While the Nazis acted as a party and not as a state power, they did not quite find an approach to the working class. On the other side, the big bourgeoisie, even those who supported Hitler with money, did not consider his party theirs. The national "regeneration" leaned wholly upon the intermediate classes, the most backward part of the nation, the heavy ballast of history. Political art consisted in fusing the petty bourgeoisie into oneness through its solid hostility to the proletariat. What must be done in order to improve things? First of all, throttle those who are underneath. Impotent before large capital, the petty bourgeoisie hopes in the future to regain its social dignity by overwhelming the workers.

The Nazis call their overturn by the usurped title of revolution. As a matter of fact, in Germany as well as in Italy, fascism leaves the social system untouched. Taken by itself, Hitler's overturn has no right even to the name counter-revolution. But it cannot be viewed as an isolated event; it is the conclusion of a cycle of shocks which began in Germany in 1918. The November revolution, which gave the power to the workers' and peasants' soviets, was proletarian in its fundamental tendencies. But the party that stood at the head of the proletariat returned the power back to the bourgeoisie. In this sense the social democracy opened the era of counter-revolution, before the revolution could bring its work to completion. However, during the time when the bourgeoisie depended upon the social democracy, and consequently upon the workers, the regime retained elements of compromise. Concurrently, the international and the internal situation of German capitalism left no more room for concessions. The social democracy saved

the bourgeoisie from the proletarian revolution; then came the turn of fascism to liberate the bourgeoisie from the social democracy. Hitler's overturn is only the final link in the chain of counter-revolutionary shifts.

A petty bourgeoisie is hostile to the idea of development, for development goes immutably against him; progress has brought him nothing except irredeemable debts. National Socialism rejects not only Marxism but Darwinism. The Nazis curse materialism because the victories of technology over nature have signified the triumph of large capital over small. The leaders of the movement are liquidating "intellectualism" not so much because they themselves possess second and third rate intellects but primarily because their historic rôle does not permit them to draw a single thought to its conclusion. The petty bourgeois takes refuge in the last resort, which stands above matter and above history, and which is safeguarded from competition, inflation, crisis and the auction block. To evolution, economic thought, and rationalism—of the twentieth, nineteenth, and eighteenth centuries—is counterposed in his mind national idealism, as the source of the heroic beginning. Hitler's nation is the mythological shadow of the petty bourgeoisie itself, its pathetic delirium of a millennium on earth.

In order to raise it above history, the nation is given the support of the race. History is viewed as the emanation of the race. The qualities of the race are construed without relation to changing social conditions. Rejecting "economic thought" as base, National Socialism descends a stage lower—from economic materialism it appeals to zoologic materialism.

The theory of race, specially created, it seems, for a pretentious self-educated individual who seeks for a universal key to all the secrets of life, appears particularly melancholy in the light of the history of ideas. In order to create the religion of the genuine German blood, Hitler was obliged to borrow at second hand the ideas of racialism from a Frenchman, Count Gobineau, a diplomat and a literary dilettante. Hitler found the political methodology ready-made in Italy. Mussolini utilized widely the Marxist theory of the class struggle. Marxism itself is the fruit of union between German philosophy, French history and English economics. To investigate retrospectively the genealogy of ideas, even those most reactionary and muddleheaded, is to leave not a trace of racialism standing.

The immeasurable thinness of National Socialist philosophy did not, of course, hinder the academic sciences from entering Hitler's fairway, with all sails unfurled, once his victory was sufficiently established. For the majority of the professional rabble the years of the Weimar regime, were periods of riot and alarm. Historians, economists, jurists and philosophers were lost in guesswork as to which of the contending criteria of truth was real, that is, which of the camps would turn out in the end the master of the situation. The fascist dictatorship eliminates the doubts of the Fausts and the vacillations of the Hamlets of the university rostrums. Coming out of the twilight of parliamentary relativity, knowledge once again enters into the kingdom of absolutes. Einstein has been obliged to pitch his tent outside the boundaries of Germany.

On the plane of politics, racialism is a vapid and bombastic variety of chauvinism in alliance with phrenology. As the ruined nobility sought solace in the gentility of its blood, so the pauperised petty bourgeoisie befuddles itself with fairy tales concerning the special superiorities of its race. Worthy of attention is the fact that the leaders of National Socialism are not native Germans but interlopers from Austria, like Hitler himself, from the former Baltic provinces of the Czar's empire, like Rosenberg, and from colonial countries, like Hess, who

is Hitler's present alternate for the party leadership. A school of barbaric national pothering along the cultural frontiers was required in order to instil into the "leaders" those ideas which later found response in the hearts of the most barbarous classes in Germany.

Personality and class—liberalism and Marxism—are evil. The nation—is good. But at the threshold of private property this philisophy is turned inside out. Salvation lies only in personal private property. The idea of national property is the spawn of Bolshevism. Deifying the nation, the petty bourgeois does not want to give it anything. On the contrary, he expects the nation to endow him with property and to safeguard him from the worker and the process-server. Unfortunately, the Third Reich will bestow nothing upon the petty bourgeois except new taxes.

In the sphere of modern economy, international in its ties and anonymous in its methods, the principle of race appears as an interloper from a medieval graveyard. The Nazis set out with concessions beforehand; the purity of race, which must be certified in the kingdom of the spirit by a passport, must be demonstrated in the sphere of economy chiefly by efficiency. Under contemporary conditions this means competitive capacity. Through the back door racialism returns to economic liberalism, freed from political liberties.

Nationalism in economy practically comes down to impotent, though savage outbursts of anti-Semitism. The Nazis abstract the usurious or banking capital from the modern economic system because it is of the spirit of evil; and, as is well known, it is precisely in this sphere that the Jewish bourgeoisie occupies an important position. Bowing down before capitalism as a whole, the petty bourgeois declares war against the evil spirit of gain in the guise of the Polish Jew in a long-skirted caftan and usually without a cent in his pocket. The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority.

The programme with which National Socialism came to power reminds one very much—alas—of a Jewish department store in an obscure province. What won't you find here—cheap in price and in quality still lower! Recollections of the "happy" days of free competition, and hazy traditions of the stability of class society; hopes for the regeneration of the colonial empire, and dreams of a shut-in economy; phrases about a reversion from Roman law back to the Germanic, and pleas for an American moratorium; an envious hostility to inequality in the person of a proprietor in an automobile, and animal fear of equality in the person of a worker in a cap and without a collar; the frenzy of nationalism, and the fear of world creditors. All the refuse of international political thought has gone to fill up the spiritual treasury of the neo-Germanic Messianism.

Fascism has opened up the depths of society for politics. Today, not only in peasant homes but also in the city skyscrapers there lives alongside of the twentieth century the tenth or the thirteenth. A hundred million people use electricity and still believe in the magic power of signs and exorcisms. What inexhaustible reserves they possess of darkness, ignorance and savagery! Despair has raised them to their feet, fascism has given them the banner. Everything that should have been eliminated from the national organism in the course of the unhindered development of society comes out today gushing from the throat; capitalist society is puking up the undigested barbarism. Such is the physiology of National Socialism.

## FASCISM, SERVANT OF MONOPOLY CAPITALISM.

German fascism, like the Italian, raised itself to power on the backs of the petty bourgeoisie which it turned

into a battering ram against the working class and the institutions of democracy. But fascism in power is least of all the rule of the petty bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it is a most ruthless dictatorship of monopolist capital. Mussolini is right: the intermediate classes are incapable of independent policies. During periods of great crisis they are called upon to reduce to absurdity the policies of one of the two basic classes. Fascism succeeded in placing them in the service of capital. Such slogans as state control of trusts and the elimination of unearned income were thrown overboard immediately upon the assumption of power. On the contrary, the particularism of German "lands" leaning upon the peculiarities of the petty bourgeoisie cleared the place for the capitalist-police centralism. Every success of the internal and foreign policies of National Socialism will inevitably mean the further crushing of small capital by the large.

The programme of petty-bourgeois illusions is not discarded; it is simply torn away from reality, and it dissolves in ritualistic acts. The unification of all classes reduces itself to semi-symbolic compulsory labour and to the confiscation of the labour holiday of May first for the "benefit of the people." The preservation of the Gothic script in counterpoise to the Latin is a symbolic revenge for the yoke of the world market. The dependence upon the international bankers, Jews among their number, is not eased an iota, wherefore it is forbidden to slaughter animals according to the Talmudic ritual. If the road to hell is paved with good intentions, then the avenues of the Third Reich are paved with symbols.

Reducing the program of petty-bourgeois illusions to a naked bureaucratic masquerade, National Socialism raises itself over the nation as the purest form of imperialism. Absolutely false are hopes to the effect that Hitler's government will fall tomorrow, if not today, a victim of its internal insolvency. The Nazis required the programme in order to assume the power; but power serves Hitler not at all for the purpose of fulfilling the programme. His tasks are assigned him by monopolist capital. The compulsory concentration of all forces and resources of the people in the interests of imperialism—

the true historic mission of the fascist dictatorship—means the preparation for war, and this task, in its turn, brooks no internal resistance and leads to further mechanical concentration of power. Fascism cannot be reformed or retired from service. It can only be overthrown. The political orbit of the regime leans upon the alternative, **war or revolution.**

The first anniversary of the Nazi dictatorship is approaching. All the tendencies of the regime have had time to take on a clear and distinctive character. The "socialist" revolution pictured by the petty-bourgeois masses as a necessary supplement to the national revolution is officially liquidated and condemned. The brotherhood of classes found its culmination in the fact that on a day especially appointed by the government the have-nots renounced the hors d'oeuvre and dessert in favour of the have-nots. The struggle against unemployment is reduced to the cutting of semi-starvation doles in two. The rest is the task of uniformed statistics. Planned autarchy is simply a new stage of economic disintegration.

The more impotent the police regime of the Nazis is in the field of national economy, the more it is forced to transfer its efforts to the field of foreign politics. This corresponds fully to the inner dynamics of German capitalism, aggressive through and through. The sudden turn of the Nazi leaders to peaceful declarations could deceive only utter simpletons. What other method remains at Hitler's disposal but to transfer the responsibility for internal distresses to external enemies and to accumulate under the press of the dictatorship the explosive force of nationalism? This part of the programme, outlined openly even prior to the Nazis' assumption of power, is now being fulfilled with iron logic before the eyes of the world. The date of the new European catastrophe will be determined by the time necessary for the arming of Germany. It is not a question of months, but neither is it a question of decades. It will be but a few years before Europe is again plunged into a war, unless Hitler is forestalled in time by the inner forces of Germany.

# The Post-War Strategy of Food

By C. CHARLES.

The appointment of Herbert Lehman as Director of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation is an important indication that the capitalist class of America is preparing for the "peace" that will follow the war.

The more far-seeing capitalists know what is coming. They know that the peoples of the world will present to them a demand for an accounting for the dead, the crippled, blinded and shell-shocked, for the widowed and fatherless, for the dwarfed children and blighted individuals, for the disease, hunger and cold, for the national oppression and degradation and anti-Semitism, for the political autocracy, for the cultural decline, for the disappointed hopes and broken promises which result from the war.

This demand will take the form of a series of social revolutions in the last period of the war as well as in the post-war period. The very existence of the capitalists as a class will be at stake. The "peace" will be an intense war of the classes.

A basic weapon of the capitalists in their struggle for life as a social class will be the control of food. American—and to a degree British—capitalists will brandish this weapon over Europe, Asia and Africa. The famished and starved revolutionary masses, the capitalists hope, are to be brought to their knees by the weapon of food.

They will also attempt to use food to secure from the governing regime of the U.S.S.R. ever greater economic and political concessions aiming at the eventual restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. is considered by the imperialists to be in the category of "unfinished business."

That is the essential meaning of the naming of Lehman to his new post. Following the appointment, the "New York Times" declared on Nov. 28, 1942:

"Food will be a mighty weapon and a powerful persuader in that crucial period between war and peace when the future of the world will be decided.

"... food will decide many questions in the armistice period; it will be a potent adjunct to the diplomacy of peace. We are fighting with arms to make the world free, but when the arms are laid down, for a time at least, we shall have to fight with food to make it safe."

### THE FOOD CRISIS IN EUROPE TODAY

Both the scope and depth of the food problem in Europe is much greater than during the last period of the First World War and the post-war period. Countries which then did not require foreign food and were able to help in the feeding of the war-ravaged regions—the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Italy, northern Africa, France—were now in extreme need of food. The countries which knew hunger during the last war are this time suffering even greater famine.

The Consul General of the Netherlands stated on December 10 that insufficient nourishment was expressed in the mounting death rate in that country. Much of the increase in fatalities from contagious disease is the result of the rampant hunger, deriving from deficiencies of vitamins A and C.

On the same day, the Norwegian Consul General declared that the situation in Norway was becoming "worse and worse from month to month, and that this winter will certainly be critical."

According to the Belgian Consul General the diet deficiency of the adult population in Belgium is estimated at not less than 60 per cent—in other words the adults are getting only about 40 per cent of the food they require for healthy life. The average American consumes about 20 pounds of meat and combined fats monthly. The average adult in Belgium gets two pounds. The prevalence of tuberculosis has increased among children by 30 per cent, as has rickets, and the cases of swelling of feet and limbs from starvation are clogging up the hospitals. Child mortality in the industrial centres has doubled.

If this is the situation in these relatively favoured countries, the condition of the masses in eastern Europe must be many times more horrible. The state of starvation in Greece is well known. By 1941, industrial France had suffered a cut of between one-third and one-half its consumption of bread, and two-thirds in sugars, meats and fat. Now the conditions have worsened. Italy, Germany's ally, is only in a slightly, if at all, better condition than Hitler's fallen foes. Germany itself, the best fed of continental European lands, hovers close to the hunger level, and will undoubtedly sink into conditions like those in the rest of Europe before the end of the war.

And to the list of countries in Europe which will require food from abroad must be added northern Africa, Asia Minor, Japan, India and China.

As manpower is further drained from agriculture and as the remaining draft animals are harnessed to cannon instead of ploughs, as the farm implements become outworn and cannot be replaced, as all the chemicals are diverted from enriching the soil to the manufacture of explosives, as planting and harvesting become less effective, as the cattle, hogs and sheep dependent on imported grasses and grains are slaughtered, as the fishing craft are driven from the sea and the fishermen forced into the armies and navies, as the railroads collapse and the roads are demolished, as the monetary systems break down—as the war continues—the hunger will become ever more intense and far reaching.

The last days of the war will be days not only of hunger but of revolution. As Herbert Hoover wrote in the November 28 "Colliers":

"A starving world must be fed after this war ends

... Even if it had not been promised, we would have to do it if we want to make a lasting peace instead of lasting anarchy.

"There are more Horsemen that follow modern war than at the time the Apocalypse was written. In modern total war, Famine and Pestilence are accompanied by four new recruits whose names are Revolution, Unemployment, Suspicion and Hate."

On July 23, 1942, Cordell Hull warned that "In some countries confusion and chaos will follow the cessation of hostilities."

"I found worry and doubt in the hearts and minds of the peoples behind those fronts. They were searching for a common purpose.

"Europe in 1917 was probably in much the same mood. It is an inevitable corollary of blood and war-weariness. Then, in 1917, Lenin gave the world one set of answers."

In proceeding to use food as a weapon of counter-revolution, the American capitalists have a rich experience to draw upon. They did it once before on a grand scale when, following the last war, and as a matter of fact bringing the war to an end, a series of revolutions swept through Europe.

Hoover was then head of the American Relief Administration and the European Children's Relief Fund, a post similar to that which has just been filled by Lehman.

### FOOD AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION, 1919-1922

A few weeks after the signing of the armistice, Woodrow Wilson requested of Congress \$100,000,000 for European relief purposes. He said in this message of February 24, 1919:

"Food relief is now the key to the whole European situation and to the solution of peace. Bolshevism is steadily advancing westward, is poisoning Germany. It cannot be stopped by force, but it can be stopped by food, and all the (Allied) leaders with whom I am in conference agree that concerted action in this matter is of immediate and vital importance.

"The money will not be spent for food for Germany itself, because Germany can buy its food, but it will be spent for financing the movement of our real friends in Poland and to the people of the liberated units of Austro-Hungarian Empire and to our associates in the Balkans.

"I do not see how we can find definite powers with whom to conclude peace unless this means of stemming the tide of anarchism be employed."

While Wilson was claiming that Bolshevism could not be stopped by force, he was using force against the newly founded Soviet Republic. At the moment of his message, there were on Russian soil, in active struggle against the revolution, American and British troops in Murmansk; American and Japanese soldiers at Vladivostok; Czechoslovaks in eastern Siberia; French naval forces at Odessa, all in active co-operation with White Guard Russian forces. The Allies were also subsidizing the Russian White Guards and the countries bordering Soviet Russia in their wars against the Soviet regime. These White Guards were to Wilson "our real friends in Poland" and "our associates in the Balkans."

Vernon Kellogg, close collaborator of Hoover in the relief work in Europe, says in his "Herbert Hoover, The Man and His Work" (1920), which he describes in the preface as the book of an admiring "friend":

"It is from my personal knowledge of his achievements in this extraordinary position during the first eight months after the Armistice that I have declared my belief earlier in this account that it is owing more to Hoover and his work than to any other single influence that utter anarchy and chaos and complete

Bolshevik domination in Eastern Europe (west of Russia) was averted." (Page 267.)

"Somebody had to do something that counted. So Hoover did it. It was not only lives that had to be saved; it was nations. It was not only starvation that had to be fought . . . it was Bolshevism." (Page 276.) And Hoover himself, in his recent article in "Colliers" of Nov. 28, 1942, summarises his work following the last war thus:

"Our major purpose was to save hundreds of millions of lives. But food and restored employment were the foundations upon which order could be preserved and the completion of peace made possible. Moreover, we sought to sustain the feeble plants of democracy which had sprung up in all these countries."

Democracy for Hoover meant the regime of "Butcher" Mannerheim in Finland, Paderewski and Pilsudski in Poland, Wrangel, Denikin and other White Guards in Russia, and Horthy in Hungary.

A clear example of the role of the relief administration is the counter-revolution in Hungary. Following the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the signing of the armistice a left liberal government under Count Karolyi came to power in Hungary. However, the economic and political conditions in Hungary had reached a state of extreme tension. Hungary was blockaded by the Allies. Food was scarce as were raw materials and fuel. The Jugoslav, Rumanian and Czechoslovak governments, puppets of the Allies, were chopping pieces off Hungary, encouraged by the Allied Council in Paris. Within the country the Republican army was going over to the Communists. The workers were becoming steadily more radical. On March 24 the Karolyi government peacefully stepped aside and a Soviet government was established under the control of the Socialist Party of Hungary, which represented a newly formed united organisation of Communists and Social Democrats.<sup>1</sup>

This Soviet Republic lived four and a half months. T. C. C. Gregory was one of the key figures in the events which led to the crushing of the Hungarian soviets. Let us allow Herbert Hoover's friend, Vernon Kellogg, to introduce this person:

"One of Hoover's rules was that food could only go into regions where it could be safeguarded and controlled. That counted against Bolshevism. Shrewd Bela Kun (head of the Soviet regime in Hungary) was able to play a winning game in Hungary against the Peace Conference and Supreme Council (of the Allies) at Paris, but he was outplayed by softspoken, square-jawed Captain 'Tommy' Gregory, Hoover's general director for South East Europe." (Page 277.)

In "World's Work" of June 1921, Gregory wrote an article entitled "Overthrowing a Red Regime." He described the events frankly enough:

"It was apparent to all in touch with the situation, whether in Paris and London, or in the capitals of south-eastern Europe, that the salvation of central Europe depended, in the early summer of 1919, on the immediate ousting of Bela Kun from his position as Bolshevik dictator in Hungary."

"The obvious method was to employ force . . . Marshal-Foch was summoned for conference, he said that this could be done, but that it would take an army of 250,000 men, completely equipped and prepared for a vigorous campaign. This programme staggered Paris . . ."

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of avoiding any misunderstanding it must be stated that in spite of the unity and their assumption of positions of leadership in the Soviet Republic—to which they were forced by the upsurge of the masses—the Social Democrats remained Social Democrats while the Communists were led by a group of careerists headed by Bela Kun and J. Pogany who proved completely incompetent and who later became part of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The use of direct force was ruled out. Other methods had to be devised. Gregory, in Vienna, came into contact with a General Boehm, representative in Austria of the Hungarian Soviet Government. Boehm, Gregory thought, "was the key to the situation." He thereupon went to work on Boehm's "egotism, ambition and nerve."

Boehm proved amenable to Gregory's proposal that he should take steps to lead a counter-revolutionary movement. In answer to a number of questions he put he was told that:

"Paris would undoubtedly recognise and support any government, representative of all classes, on which the whole people of Hungary could agree; on the second (question he was told) that he undoubtedly knew of men who wielded really powerful influences in Hungary and who would undoubtedly fall in with any plan for the unhorsing of Bela Kun, were it sufficiently well conceived and organised to have a reasonable chance of success. He instantly named Agoston and Haubricht, two of the most powerful of the labour representatives in the Kun government . . . They were sent for and came secretly to Vienna."

Gregory, together with Sir Thomas Cunningham of the British military commission and the Italian diplomatic Social Democratic leaders and they all

"agreed at once that the next step must be the framing of a pronouncement of principle on which the Allied governments could stand in giving their moral support to the anti-Kun movement . . ."

"The declaration, almost immediately suggested to Paris, through Mr. Hoover, contained the following points:

"1. The assumption of dictatorship in which complete powers of government were to be vested. Names to be discussed: Haubricht, Agoston, Garami, and Boehm.

"2. Dismissal of the communistic Kun government, with a repudiation of Bolshevism and a complete cessation of Bolshevik propaganda.

"3. Dictatorship to bridge over period until formation of a government representative of all classes.

"4. Immediate cessation of all terroristic acts, confiscation and seizures.

"5. Raising of blockade and immediate steps to be taken by Entente to supply Hungary with food and coal; and to assist in opening up the Danube.

"6. Immediate calling of an Entente advisory body.

"7. No political persecutions.

"8. Ultimate determination respecting socialisation of permanent government.

"It must be kept clearly in mind, that aside from Boehm, who was a mere tool, the real conspiracy we had set afoot was one dominated by the labour-democratic interests in Hungary . . . Without this strong and active body of men, and without the leadership of the three named, Boehm, or any other military or monarchist conspirator would have been helpless as a schoolboy. The plot hinged on the labour element . . ."

"I wired the eight points to Hoover the moment they were drawn up and now Cunningham and Borghesi communicated them to their respective governments." The French government was also notified. Gregory goes on:

There is no doubt that Mr. Hoover was the principal agency responsible for the prompt return we received" (at the hands of the supreme Allied Council). "The Supreme Council, emphatic in the statement that the programme for Hungary was a general rather than a specific one, signed and issued it. Boehm and his associates . . . began to crystallise their plans."

Among the programmatic points was one promising the lifting of the blockade and the supplying of food to



Hungary. However, Gregory, just at this key point found himself in a difficulty:

"The work for which our (Relief) Mission was created was almost finished and by irrevocable stipulation we were to wind up our activities, close our offices, discharge our staffs, and leave central Europe on August 1. It was now July 28th. Hoover had wired me that our funds were used up and that no more was forthcoming. There was food in Trieste belonging to private packers, as well as supplies of wheat and maize in the Banat that were available, but I had no money with which to purchase these commodities and there was no source from which I could obtain any. Save one.

"Two or three times the assistant Bolshevik food administrator of Hungary, a shrewd and clever man, had come to me secretly in Vienna, representing Bela Kun, and begged me to sell him supplies. I had refused him absolutely for there was a blockade on Red Hungary. I had told him from the first that we would have no dealings of any nature with Bolshevism, and that he was wasting time asking me. Through this source I saw the possibility of effecting a coup that would help terminate our mission in central Europe with complete success.

"The food minister had no more knowledge than had Bela Kun that a mine was being laid under Bolshevism. Within forty-eight hours of the time that the finale (the overthrow of Kun) was to be attempted in Budapest I sent for him and told him that it was possible that I might reconsider my former decision as to selling him food for the Hungarian people.

"He almost cried with joy. But I checked him.

"There is one difficulty in the way,' I said. 'I cannot send you a grain of wheat nor an ounce of fat until it is paid for in cold cash. Have you any real money?'

"You can have your choice,' he said. 'The Bolsheviks have taken charge of the banks in Hungary, and I have millions of cronin, francs, marks, pounds—I have even American dollars.'

"About three o'clock the next afternoon two men accompanied by the perspiring Hungarian minister entered carrying a clothes basket, covered with a cloth. For two hours my assistant checked pounds British and Turkish, French francs, Italian lire, to say nothing of marks and crowns, and with the whole topped with \$90,000 in crisp one-thousand dollar bills of the vintage of Uncle Sam. That night they rested in our name in the Vienna Bank Verein. A trade had been closed with the packers' agents and three train loads of fats ordered to be made ready for immediate shipment to Budapest on receipt of a wire from me."

That afternoon the Bela Kun regime was overthrown. At 10 o'clock next morning

"supply trains, loaded to the guards, and coming from every direction began to roll into Hungary."

However, the overthrow of the Bela Kun regime was but the first stage on the downslope of reaction. The government of yellow Socialists lasted a few days and was overthrown by the Rumanian soldiers—armed and supplied by the Allies—who placed a Hapsburg on the throne. He was removed by the Allied Council of Paris which didn't want a Hapsburg in power, preferring another variety of reactionary.

At this point Gregory's narrative ends. We know what followed. Hapsburg was followed in a short period by the Hungarian White Guards and reactionaries headed by Horthy who came into power and have remained there through pitiless terror and extermination of every individual who raises a voice against the brutal dictatorship. Horthy and the White Guards were encouraged

and aided by the Allies while workers' and peasants' Hungary was starved into submission.

Everything falls into a logical place in this account: the use of a food and medicine blockade against a revolution while helping the counter-revolutionary preparations; the use by the capitalists of the only force which could dislodge the workers, the yellow Social Democratic leaders; then the curt dismissal of the latter by the reactionaries after having served their purpose. The timing is varied, but basically the sequence is much the same in the entire post-World War I history of Europe.

### HOOVER'S COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN FINLAND

Following the Russian revolution of November 1917, a similar revolution took place in Finland. The Finnish workers and peasants found arrayed against themselves both the Finnish bourgeoisie under General Mannerheim and German regiments under General von der Goltz. The combination was able to defeat the Finnish Soviet regime and a period of white terror began during which Mannerheim, supported by German imperialist bayonets, slaughtered 15,000 workers and peasants while 15,000 more died in prisons where a total of 150,000 were held. As a result of these exploits Mannerheim earned the sobriquet of "Butcher." But he could not have succeeded without the aid of Hoover's "relief organisation.

The division of labour is interesting. The Germans aid Mannerheim against the masses. Then this obviously German agent is helped, following the armistice, by the American Relief Administration. In the "Saturday Evening Post" of April 30, 1921, Hoover relates:

"The case of Finland as related to me not long ago by the Finnish minister will illustrate the final importance of all these (relief) measures—not child relief alone. He declared that the American Relief Administration in the winter of 1918-19, and to a lesser extent in the winter of 1919-20, not only enabled the Finnish government to survive but laid the foundations for national stability. Its results so upheld the arms of the forces of order that the country has been able to overcome the menace of Bolshevism at its own door!"

The "New York Times" on Dec. 22, 1918, carried the following dispatch:

"Washington, Dec. 22.—Official announcement was made tonight through the War Trade Board that Finland had apparently been able to overthrow German rule (!) since the signing of the armistice; and set up a popular government and that large shipments of food had been authorised to help the suffering population. This action, which had been recommended by Herbert Hoover, Food Administrator, has been approved by the Allied nations.

"The statement also is made that this government is prepared to extend material help to all parts of Russia which succeeded in driving out the Bolsheviks and the German agents. It is understood that one problem which President Wilson and Herbert Hoover took up with the Allied nations was the importance of such action at the earliest date possible and the tonnage needed for Russian aid will be supplied as rapidly as required, despite other claims here.

"The announcement concerning Finland is taken here as an indication that this government in concert with the Allies is hopeful soon of extending the Russian relief programme which includes the shipment of 200,000 tons of food, clothing, agricultural supplies and railroad equipment in the next three months to follow the armies of occupation.

"This plan of extending aid gradually to many parts of Russia will be carried out as rapidly as possible pending a decision on the question of increasing the armies of occupation."

Toward Soviet Russia, thus, the policy of the Allies was one of armed intervention, and stringent blockade of the Bolsheviks—the "cordon sanitaire"—through which the Bolsheviks could not buy, much less receive as relief either food, medicine or machinery, while A.R.A. relief was supplementing Allied arms and funds furnished to the White Guards and the various border states. This policy lasted for four years until it became clear that the Soviets of Russia were firmly established in power.

The first Allied efforts to crush Soviet Russia took the form of the direct employment of armies of intervention: American, British, Canadian, Czechoslovak and Japanese. This method, however, had to be abandoned. American troops mutinied; the Canadian government, acting under popular pressure, demanded that Canadian troops be withdrawn; the Czechoslovaks fought half-heartedly; the French Black Sea fleet sailors mutinied, and revolt swept through the British Army of Occupation and aroused the English civilian population. English regiments destined to Russia refused to embark. Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain, informed Clemenceau that if the efforts to send Allied troops against Russia were continued, "soviets would be set up in London and Paris."

Following the first fiasco the Allied entered upon a slightly different course: instead of direct intervention they armed, financed and fed White Guard restorationists in their war against Soviet Russia and deliberately encouraged imperialist adventures by the new states bordering on Soviet Russia, especially Poland.

Prominent among the armies of attempted restoration of capitalism were those led by the mercenaries and Czarists, Mannerheim, Semenoff, von der Goltz,<sup>2</sup> Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, Wrangel, Rodzianko and Pilsudski. The population in the territories of these armies were fed by the A.R.A. and the other relief organisations, thus relieving these White Guards of that expense.

In No. 8, Series 2 of the "American Relief Administration Bulletin" we find:

"The American Relief Administration's work in the liberated regions of Russia has followed closely the fortunes and mishaps of the forces arrayed against Bolshevism. From the beginning of the relief in April 1919, its field of operation has enlarged or contracted as Rodzianko's and Yudenitch's men advanced or retreated.

"The work of feeding Pskoff came to an end on the 26th of August with the capture of that city by Soviet troops. Part of the district remained in the possession of the Whites and there the work was carried on as before.

"There was little change during September until the offensive against Petrograd (by Yudenitch) began. September the 28th saw the White troops under way in the direction of Luga and the A.R.A. European Children's Fund following the army and feeding the children of the districts newly liberated.

"On the 15th of October, General Yudenitch announced that Petrograd would fall within three days, on the 16th, Krasnoe Selo was captured and the A.R.A. immediately organised kitchens there."

Petrograd was not taken, and Yudenitch fled in a rout, A.R.A. kitchens and all.

Hoover's continued support of the Whites and the political motivation behind it was indicated in the April 30, 1921 "Saturday Evening Post". In the course of the interview he declared:

"The Russian refugees present a dilemma for which there is no solution as far as I can see until the Bolshevik government falls. In addition to more than two hundred thousand Russian children there are eight

hundred thousand adults—the Intelligentsia—scattered all the way from Helsingfors to Constantinople. If these men and women are not kept alive there will be no nucleus out of which to build the future Russia."

### FEEDING CHILDREN IN WHITE TERRITORY

Feeding children has an appealing humanitarian ring to it. It is indeed a calloused person that will resist such a plea. Approximately \$90,000,000 was raised in the United States for the starving children of Europe.

While 86 per cent of the Hoover Children's Relief Fund was being spent in Poland to feed the children, the Polish "Republic" found ample funds to carry on a war against the Soviets on a 1,600-mile front, which was able to slash 200 miles into Russian territory with 700,000 men under Polish arms. Pilsudski received hundreds of millions of dollars from the Allies in this war, besides the relief funds. Soviet Russia, to repeat, far from receiving arms, was denied the right to even buy either food to feed the starving or medicine for the sick.

Following the collapse of the Polish forces in August 1920 and the driving of Wrangel out of the Crimea, it was apparent that the Soviets were firmly entrenched. However, the blockade and the armed attacks were having a terrible effect on Soviet Russia, bled white by three and a half years' previous participation in the imperialist war. Another and even worse famine was in prospect for the coming year. With the lifting of the blockade and the recognition of the Soviets by various countries, the more sincere relief organisations started to come to the aid of the famine-stricken regions of Soviet Russia. Among these organisations were the Friends Committee, the Nansen organisation, the Jewish Joint Distribution organisation, the Friends of Soviet Russia. Popular outcry against Hoover's policy was strong. It was only at this point—July 23, 1921, after four years of effort to starve the Soviet masses into submission—that Hoover's organisations grudgingly agreed to aid in the feeding of Soviet children in the famine zones.<sup>3</sup>

The use of "philanthropy" now will not be substantially different than it was in 1918-22. Lehman will duplicate the role of Hoover. The only difference between World War I and World War II is that the latter conflict takes place when the social system is 25 years older and therefore more degenerated. This degeneration expresses itself in all fields: economically, in the stagnation of world capitalism as exemplified in the post-war depressions; politically, in the rise of fascism. Food was used in the last war ostensibly to insure the "safety of the new-born democracies." Long before the present war ends this pretence is not seriously maintained. Even capitalist democracy would be too risky a political system for Europe for the Allied imperialists. This time they

<sup>2</sup> Von der Goltz was a German general stationed by the Kaiser in the small Baltic states between Poland and Soviet Russia. His role in Finland has been noted. So great was the Allied fear of Bolshevism that the armistice terms stipulated that the German forces under his command remain in this region as a safeguard against a socialist revolution. The Soviet regime set up by the Lettish masses was crushed by this German imperialist. Later he attempted various expeditions into Soviet Russia.

<sup>3</sup> In the light of his feeding of Poland while she was conducting a war against Soviet Russia, Hoover's recent explanation for his refusal to aid the masses of Soviet Russia is obviously contradictory. In his "Colliers" article of November 28, 1942, Hoover says: "In the last war, defeated Russia, with roughly 140,000,000 people was famine stricken in certain areas. We made an effort to furnish food but Russia refused relief because the Allies stipulated she must stop fighting her neighbours. It was not until the renewed famine in 1922 that we were able to assist her on a large scale." Evidently no such condition was put on Poland—nor Finland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia or the White Guards as a prerequisite to receive relief, quite the contrary, if they were fighting a Soviet regime!



are banking on out-and-out reactionaries as instruments of political control over the socialist masses. This is the meaning of the relations with Hapsburg, Darlan, Franco.

If World War I was fought under the slogan of "Hang the Kaiser," the Second World War has all the appearances of being fought with the purpose of placing Kaisers back on their thrones, as witness the American State and Military Departments' close relations with Otto of Hapsburg, pretender to the Austrian throne.

An editorial in the New York "Times" of December 1 entitled "An Offer to Italy" says:

"... we must tell the Italians, at least in broad terms, what our conditions of peace must be. . . . The Italians must depose Mussolini and his Fascist organisation. . . . We must make it clear that as an immediate consequence of peace, trade between them and the United Nations will be restored, so that they may receive the food and other supplies necessary for the prompt rehabilitation of their country. . . . Clearly the United Nations cannot make peace with the existing Fascist regime. Here again, however, a problem would arise regarding the extent to which it is wise to attempt to impose from the outside a democratic regime or a particular form of government on Italy."

The Allies are perfectly willing to make peace with an anti-Axis non-democratic government, feed it and support it. What the Allies are seeking is an Italian prototype of Hapsburg or Darlan: Maybe the Italian King? or Crown Prince? or General Bagdolio? The future will single out the candidate, but his political physiognomy is clearly delineated: reaction, the ability to deal firmly with the aroused masses.

There are many more months of agony before the war terminates. But as the end of the beginning becomes the beginning of the end, the capitalists are preparing politically and organisationally to suppress the workers and peasants. Likewise must the workers begin to prepare so that food will not be used to support counter-

revolution and starve the revolutionary masses. To allow the capitalist governments to control the dispensation of relief can have terrible consequences.

Even the pro-war International Transport Workers Federation, in the leading article of its bulletin of June-July 1942, warns that food will be used for reactionary political purposes. It concludes its article by declaring that "Only the Labour Movement could offer such a guarantee" against the use of food for reactionary political aims. "In view of what happened from the end of 1918 on there are well-founded reasons for fearing that when the fighting ceases the generally prevalent distress will once again be exploited for political ends," the organ of the Transport Workers points out.

Considering the power of the transport workers, with affiliated transport unions in 35 countries, the article of their bulletin is a welcome sign.

Such a guarantee on the part of the labour movement can be made good in only two ways. One, through the establishment of workers' and farmers' governments in Great Britain, Canada, the United States and other countries with supplies of food. These socialist governments would extend to revolutionary countries under blockade the hand of class solidarity. However, in those countries in which the workers have not succeeded in establishing governments of their class, the slogan of trade union control of post-war relief can be a rallying cry and a method of defeating reactionary purposes in the distribution of food and relief.

The American capitalists are preparing to use food as a means of making the world safe for capitalism after the war. They plan to use it to "persuade" Europe, Africa and Asia's masses. They make their calculations with the hope that the American masses will prove immune to socialism. Is this idea well founded? Not in the least. The power of the awakened American workers may prove the fatal flaw in all the plans of American and Allied capitalism.

# The National Question— Three Theses

By A GROUP OF EUROPEAN COMRADES

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Continuing the discussion on the national question in Europe, we publish in this issue the theses submitted by a group of European comrades and an answer by Felix Morrow.

## I.

It is as clear in the third year of the new World War as it was at its beginning that this is a war of long duration, a war that has no prospect of being decided by means of military power and thus reach its "natural" end. In ever increasing tempo it has changed the economic, political and social face of the earth; it has destroyed dynasties and nations, enslaved peoples and half-extermiated them, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Greece and a large part of Russia have one after another been conquered and occupied by the German armies. Austria, formerly incorporated, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania are under German domination and

control, while the rest of Europe (Sweden, Switzerland, Finland and Turkey) is to a great extent under German influence. In all these countries the regimentation of human life is making gigantic progress and changes them to German prisons. The prisons, the new ghettos, the forced labour, the concentration and even war-prisoners camps are not only transitional political-military establishments, they are just as much forms of new economic exploitation which accompanies the development toward a modern slave state and is intended as the permanent fate of a considerable percentage of mankind. As always, the first victims of a system that has become impossible are the "politically untrustworthy", Jews, foreigners, refugees, of whom the "published" number in France alone was admitted to be over 120,000 on August 20, 1941. This economic ruin is accompanied by a callous destruction of human lives and values and a migration of peoples of colossal extent. "Resettlements," transfer of workers, etc., which amount to hundreds of thousands, follow the movement of armies of millions. The German radio made known in the middle

of August 1941 that a country, such as Belgium, had already supplied 200,000 workers to Germany.

All this is the result of a process which began a long time ago and only increases in intensity in the present war. Far from being "planned organisation," this process follows laws of compulsion and seeks to break through by force, where it cannot shake off, the competition on the international scale. Before as after, the accumulation of capital and unheard of riches on the one side entails the accumulation of misery, suffering, ruin, destruction and barbarism on the other side. The world-wide economic crisis of 1929 cost already as much as the First World War, but the technical rationalisation which followed it flowed into the greater crisis of the new war ten years later. Confronted with the choice of lagging behind and seeing cannons, tanks and airships of the dominant powers turned against them, German capitalism organised its own war machine and beat down the world competition with its cannons, airships and tanks. So mechanisation with progressing capitalist application leads itself ad absurdum. The means of destruction which are supposed to solve the crisis and lead to a solution, force production of further means of destruction and cause unprecedented economic disproportions which subject the whole world. England and America answer German expansion with a rearming which is to surpass any previously known and again set back the production of consumer goods.

The English dominions, Latin America and the resources of India are drawn in increasing measure into the conduct of the war and thus, together with the deep-going changes in Asia and Africa, strengthen the tendency which leads to the universal reduction in the standard of living of the masses, to destruction, to the preparation of greater disproportions and greater crises. Not only have the productive powers of mankind ceased growing, not only have technical discoveries and improvements brought about no further increase in material wealth, but economy is retrogressing. In contrast to the use of complicated machinery, and in contrast to the concentration and over-development of an industry fit only for war purposes, there is compulsory labour, that is, the mass use of manual labour which is cheaper than machine labour, the founding and extension of small and middle-sized firms because of the shortage of consumer goods, the restoration of handwork, the dissipation and ruin of the monetary system. Uneven development is recapitulated in the whole world and along with it, agricultural production decreases constantly. Wherever one looks, there are destruction, gangrene and anarchy in alarming degree which seal the catastrophe of culture.

## II

As a result of the brutal suffering and terrific pressure which the war imposes upon the nations, hate, rage and despair are accumulated and unleashed at first in the countries conquered by Germany. The political situation in these systematically exploited countries is characterised above all by the destruction of workers' and non-fascist bourgeois parties. Step by step unions, political and cultural societies of all kinds, religious organisations, etc. are wiped out according to the German pattern, changed or in some way put under direct fascist control. With certain exceptions, where this process has not yet been fully completed, there is no longer an independent traditional bourgeois or proletarian political or workers' movement, and in these countries (especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia) even the "national" bourgeois is being more and more crushed by such means as "aryanisation," compulsory sales and direct expulsion. All that is left of the old organised "movements" are today

nothing but illegal circles, which have little connection with each other and can in no way act as an entity. Under such circumstances protest against growing suffering must find another outlet. In the face of unbearable conditions, it directs itself against the one visible and consistently present enemy in the form of the German Conqueror. As it is pushed to that limit which is daily drawn closer and closer by this enemy, it levels all and everything and takes a direction which can be described as nothing but a "drive for national freedom." In a few countries (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, in part Poland, etc.) this drive has crossed the limit and has turned into a real people's movement, which also passes the limit of the "old" movements. In it participate all classes and strata, from workers, farm labourers, farmers, urban petty bourgeoisie (tradesmen and artisans, that is, together with the farmers, those classes, which in spite of their large numbers are remnants of pre-capitalistic modes of production) to officials, priests, intellectuals and generals. In other countries, where it has not reached the point of mass resistance, the movement goes underground and finds respective expression in individual acts of sabotage, arson, train wrecks, accidents, assassinations, etc. But everywhere involved in protest movements, at the side of workers and peasants, etc., there are students, journalists, professors, officers, priests, merchants. And they range without distinction amongst the victims of the German repression. The longer the war lasts, the more will German fascism appear as the main enemy to the enslaved and exploited peoples. Everything will be levelled to a desire for the overthrow of this enemy and, in fact, it must be recognised that without it there can be no question of change in existing conditions.

## III

If in the Europe dominated by Germany there is no longer an organised and active workers' movement and even the bourgeois organisations are out of the picture, there can also be no talk of the existence of real revolutionary organisations, insofar as they are understood as united structures, which, even if illegal, would be willing and capable of influencing the development by means at least of correct agitation and propaganda. What is left of the revolutionary tendency are individuals and weak and uneven groups, which are more or less correctly oriented on the general evaluation of the situation and the abstract principles, but living at the brink of events and failing to understand how to formulate their concrete tasks. The mood and initiative of the masses, for which every revolutionist, as every revolutionary party, should have a fine sensitivity, met these organisations completely unprepared and passed over them to the order of the day which can be called "struggle for national liberation." It is no exaggeration to state that revolutionary socialism may once again miss a chance and compromise itself, if it continues to face this struggle any longer without taking part. The responsibility lies with international socialism, to take up the demands of all oppressed—in no matter what form they appear—to raise its voice loudly and clearly, mobilize its forces, to enlighten the world on the meaning of events, to assist the national sections in word and deed, and to lead them to the right path. There is no more burning problem in Europe than the national liberation of nations enslaved by Germany, and its solution with the help and through international socialism is important and indispensable for three reasons.

First, these are **democratic** demands, which must **always** and **everywhere** be supported and without the realisation of which socialism cannot win.

Second, socialism cannot find the necessary allies in city and country for the accomplishment of the revolu-

tion, cannot mobilise the masses for the final battle and cannot win their sympathy if it hasn't stepped forward as the determined defender of their demands during an entire period and thus won the leadership in battle.

Third, only revolutionary socialism is in the position to realise the democratic programme and to give a goal and direction to the movement at hand, without which it must sooner or later relapse and bury socialism under itself.

Along with these general reasons which are applicable under all conditions, there are specific ones which arise from the present situation.

In Europe in order to be able to restore the tie between socialism, isolated because of retrograde development, and the workers' and mass movement, it is necessary to build revolutionary parties and restore the labour movement. But to change the existing cadres and cadre elements into revolutionary parties, it is necessary to have a more sympathetic milieu which allows them under illegality to test their forces, to school themselves, to educate new forces, to gather the most progressive elements around it, to overcome the leveling, to introduce the absolutely essential differentiation and to step forward as the vanguard of freedom. The gulf, which up to the moment of revolution exists between on the one hand the programme of socialist revolution and the ripeness of the objective conditions, and on the other hand the consciousness of the masses and the immaturity of the proletariat and its vanguard, is today especially wide. This gulf, the most important element of which is at present the inexperience of the younger generation, can be bridged only by a system of "transitional demands", but the world situation and the peculiar conditions in Europe make such a system a matter of life and death in the near future.

However one views it, the transition from fascism to socialism remains a utopia without an intermediate stage, which is basically equivalent to a democratic revolution. The advantage of the European situation consists in the fact that the masses are being forced on the path of national freedom and that the struggle

for this because of the general situation offers a complete transitional programme which encompasses all democratic demands from freedom of assembly, press, organisation and religion and the right to strike to the right of self-determination of nations. It would be absolutely false to conceive it possible to take part in politics and ignore the democratic demands; it would be very dangerous to take the attitude that national freedom could not further socialistic interests. The danger of standing with "tied hands" does not confront the one that takes part in the restoration of democracy and becomes its daring standard-bearer but the one who stands passively by, does not participate and allows the movement to pass him by and thereby permits the imperialists, "democrats" and reformists to give it a bourgeois instead of a socialist character. The passive hearer of the socialist revolution is comparable to those Italian Maximalists who upon receiving word of an uprising in Turin decided, after the collapse of the uprising on the fifth day, to deny their aid because it was not a question of a "true communist" uprising. The result was the victory of fascism, the discrediting of socialism, the crisis of proletarian leadership, the Second World War. With the continuation of the World War the "European" problem becomes acute even for American socialism and makes a clear, active connection with it essential. It is enough for every revolutionary to render an account of the forces led into battle in this war in order to come to the same conclusion which was our starting point: It is a war of long duration, which must completely destroy all human culture, if the rebellion of the masses does not end it. Nothing can free World Socialism from the duty of stirring up this rebellion, preparing for it and acknowledging all means of struggle, which correspond to the forces at hand and which permit the formation of a revolutionary party and that has prospects of assuring results most favourable in a given situation. An abstract attitude toward revolution, however, which fails in the secondary as well as the most important tactical questions, can lead to nothing but another defeat.

October 19, 1941.

# Our Differences with the Three Theses

BY FELIX MORROW

There is no difference between us and the comrades of the "Three Theses" as to the reality of the existence of national oppression in the occupied countries. There is no difference between us as to the fact that national oppression now exists in Europe on an unprecedented scale, requiring of us an attentive and sensitive understanding of what is new in the European situation as well as what is similar to the First World War.

Our differences centre around the relation between the slogan of national liberation and the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. We insist that these two slogans must go together, for otherwise the slogan of national liberation degenerates into mere bourgeois nationalism in the service of one of the imperialist camps. On the other hand the "Three Theses," it is all too clear, raise the slogan of national liberation independently of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. In discussions the authors of the "Three Theses" have indicated that they consider national lib-

eration as an immediate agitation slogan and the Socialist United States of Europe as a propaganda slogan, i.e., not at present suitable for immediate agitation. (Despite repeated requests they have not as yet written anything on this question except the "Three Theses.") Their separation of the two slogans must be characterised as a nationalist deviation.

This difference between us on slogans expresses a difference in perspectives. We say that, whichever imperialist camp were to win the war, national oppression in Europe would continue; Anglo-American occupation of Europe would likewise constitute national oppression. An Anglo-American victory would not only bring national oppression to Germany and its allies but we believe would continue national oppression of France and other occupied countries in order to crush the socialist revolution. The bourgeois groups in the occupied countries would undoubtedly be agents of the "democracies" in this task. The authors of the theses, on the other hand,

speak of taking part "in the restoration of democracy" and of a "democratic revolution" (Thesis III) which, if words mean anything, can only mean a "revolution" other than a proletarian and the participation of the bourgeoisie and their labour agents in the "restoration of democracy." The "Three Theses," then, have a perspective of a new democratic epoch in Europe. "Of course" they think it will be merely a stage on the road to international socialism. But they **base themselves** on working for that stage of (in essence) a revival of the Third Republic in France, the Weimar Republic in Germany, etc. For them it is a **necessary stage** preceding the direct struggle for socialism.

### WHO RESISTS THE NAZIS?

Pursuing this false theory of stages the authors of the theses are driven by their logic to a completely false description of the actual composition of the fighters for national liberation in the occupied countries. Who resists the Nazis? Comrade Loris and the French comrades have provided irrefutable proofs that the movement of resistance is predominantly proletarian. The big bourgeoisie collaborates with the Nazis; the rest of the bourgeoisie in part also collaborates or plays no role; even the Gaullist, Andre Philip, apologetically says that the anti-Nazi bourgeois elements "do what they can" but that the proletariat is the core of the resistance. The "Three Theses," however, more consistent than Philip in their search for the elements of a "democratic revolution," states: In the resistance movement "participate all classes and strata from workers, farm labourers, farmers, urban petty bourgeoisie . . . to officials, priests, intellectuals and generals . . . Everywhere there are involved in protest movements workers, peasants, besides students, journalists, professors, officers, priests, merchants, etc." (Thesis II). Thus they place on an **equal plane** the resisting masses of workers and the handfuls of resisting bourgeois elements! Their false theory leads them to a false description of the actually existing situation.

While they thus evoke a mythical scene of a great movement of the bourgeois elements—they do not even mention the bourgeois collaborators of the Nazis!—the "Three Theses" insist that the workers' movement is practically non-existent. There "is no longer an organised and active workers' movement" and "there can also be no talk of the existence of real revolutionary organisations" (Thesis III). Hence, "Under such circumstances protest against growing suffering must find **another outlet**" (Thesis II). That is, while the workers' movement does not and cannot exist at this stage, "another outlet," namely an all-national movement, can and does exist. Thus the "Three Theses" **counterpose** the national movement to the workers' movement. It can now be seen clearly why they will not link together the slogans of national liberation and the Socialist United States of Europe. They consider national liberation as "another outlet" than the workers' movement.

This theory is false in fact, since the liberation struggle has actually unfolded under the leadership of workers' organisations and workers' groups. Suppose, however, there did exist in France a powerful nationalist organisation led by the bourgeoisie, which had drawn into it large sections of the workers. What would be our task then? Obviously, to draw the **class line** between the bourgeois nationalists and the workers aspiring for national freedom, to teach the workers that there is **not** "another outlet" for the workers, but that, whatever the tasks facing the workers—including national liberation—they must fight **only** under the leadership of their **own** workers' organisations.

The workers under the Nazi boot want national freedom. Good. The task is to explain to them that national

freedom in this epoch is the task of the working class under the leadership of the Fourth International. The task is to expose and condemn bourgeois nationalist organisations as agents of the imperialists who can lead only to further national oppression and repression of the workers. The workers must be shown, as proved by the spectacle of bourgeois collaboration with the Nazis, that only the working class can free the country by proletarian revolution.

These are the ABC's of Marxism. It is embarrassing to have to repeat them, but the "Three Theses" make it necessary.

There are new problems, opportunities and tasks, but not in the direction where the "Three Theses" seek them. It is astonishing to me that its authors can write that the struggle "levels all and everything and takes a direction which can be described as nothing but a 'desire for national freedom'." As if, while the Second World War is still going on, the Nazis had succeeded in obliterating the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the occupied countries! **What is really new in the occupied countries is that the national sentiment of the workers and peasants is sharpening their class bitterness against the collaborating bourgeoisie. National oppression has given a new edge to the class struggle.** National sentiment, hitherto serving only the bourgeoisie, today can be used **against** the bourgeoisie of the occupied countries. That is what is new.

While national sentiment can now help the revolutionary movement, it is also still susceptible of perversion to the uses of imperialism. That is why we **reject** most of the methods of combat advocated by the bourgeois nationalists and their labour agents. What is the main content of the Gaullist-Stalinist tactics, for example? Espionage by the British, individual terrorism, individual sabotage. We condemn all these as serving one of the imperialist camps and as incompatible with the proletarian methods. Individual terrorism against German officers and soldiers creates a situation in which it is impossible to **fraternise** with the German soldiers—the absolutely indispensable prerequisite for unity of the German and French workers and soldiers against all the imperialists. Terrorism and individual sabotage, aiding the Soviet Union very little if at all, place terrible obstacles in the way of the fraternisation and revolution which alone can really aid the Soviet Union. The Gaullists and their Stalinist allies are by these methods uselessly sacrificing heroic fighters who could be invaluable to the revolutionary struggle. It should be plain, then, how important it is to combat the false ideology and methods of the bourgeois nationalists and their labour agents. Ideological victory over them is the prerequisite for the efficacious struggle by the working class for national liberation. But there is not a word about this in the theses. In their search for a national movement as distinct from the workers' movement, they falsely subordinate the workers' methods of struggle to the "unity" of national struggle.

We welcome a reply from the authors of the "Three Theses." We shall be only too happy to find that any of our criticisms are but the result of misunderstanding of their vague, confused and contradictory theses. But I must confess that I also recall the false importance which the same comrades gave to the resistance of the German churches to Nazi co-ordination; these comrades then thought that the workers could make significant advances through support of the churches' resistance. I cannot help feeling that the authors of the "Three Theses" have throughout exhibited a tendency to dissolve the workers' movement into "broader" bourgeois movements. In all comradeship, we must ask them to think—and write—their position out to its ultimate implications.

# Radek and Rakovsky Reported Dead

The current issue of "Socialist Courier"—the organ of the Abramovich wing of the Russian Mensheviks—contains the following information concerning the Russian Communists who were purged in the period of the Moscow Frameups, that is, since 1936:

"The information relates to the summer of 1941 the eve of the German-Soviet war. The number of Communists in prisons, concentration camps and exile at the time ran into hundreds of thousands. A special prison has been built—somewhere in the wilds of Yakutsk oblast; incarcerated here are the most prominent figures. No news has come about this jail since no one has as yet been freed there. No correspondence is permitted with those held in this jail. The only thing known is that several hundred of the "Old Guard", including all the former members of the Central Committee who had not been executed, were sent there. Among those mentioned are Bubnov, Rudzutak, Eikhe and others.

## 30,000 PRISONERS

"The wives of prominent Communists who were left at liberty during the

initial period of the Moscow Trials were rearrested in 1939-1940 and placed in a special concentration camp, especially built for the purpose, 40 versts outside of Moscow.

In 1940 this camp contained about 30,000 prisoners including the children who were permitted to stay with the mothers." (Socialist Courier, Jan. 5, 1943.)

The same source goes on to report that K. G. Rakovsky died in jail "from natural causes." Rakovsky was one of the outstanding figures of the Russian revolution. He served as the first chairman of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Later he served the Soviet Union in the field of diplomacy. He was a member of the Trotskyist Opposition from its inception in 1923. He capitulated to Stalin in 1934. He was sentenced to imprisonment in the Moscow Frameup of March 2-13, 1937.

## RAKOVSKY AND RADEK REPORTED DEAD

Another death reported is that of Karl Radek, one of the outstanding Soviet journalists, formerly a member of the Central Committee of the Rus-

sian-Communist Party and member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International from 1919-1924. Radek was given a jail sentence in the Moscow Frameup of Jan. 22-30, 1937.

"Radek died under mysterious circumstances shortly after he was sentenced. (According to our informant, all rumours of Radek's receiving special assignments from Stalin are completely false). He was killed during a walk by one of the G.P.U. guards who shot him with a revolver. The rumour is that the assassin was wreaking vengeance on Radek because the later's 'revelations' had involved one of the relatives or friends of the assassin. According to another rumour, the assassin was involved in a conspiracy whose aim was to prevent any further 'revelations' by Radek.

"It is also reported that after Hitler's attack on Russia many of the arrested Communists were executed. We have no details concerning these executions."

According to the "Socialist Courier" which has in the past published several authentic reports concerning the Soviet Union, the above information comes from a "credible source."

# Three Conceptions of the Revolution

By LEON TROTSKY

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This document was written by Leon Trotsky approximately a year before he was assassinated by Stalin's agent in August 1940. Trotsky's original intention was to include it as a chapter in his biography of Lenin on which he worked during his exile in Norway but which he never completed. Of particular importance is that in this summary Trotsky definitely explains the essential points of his agreements and disagreements with Lenin on the theory of the permanent revolution in its direct application to the development of the Russian Revolution.

The revolution of 1905 became not only "the dress rehearsal for 1917" but also the laboratory from which emerged all the basic groupings of Russian political thought and where all tendencies and shadings within

Russian Marxism took shape or were outlined. The centre of the disputes and differences were naturally occupied by the question of the historical character of the Russian revolution and its future paths of development. In and of itself this war of conceptions and prognoses does not relate directly to the biography of Stalin who took no independent part in it. Those few propaganda articles which he wrote on the subject are without the slightest theoretical interest. Scores of Bolsheviks, with pens in hand, popularised the very same ideas and did it much more ably. A critical exposition of the revolutionary conception of Bolshevism should, in the very nature of things, have entered into a biography of Lenin. However, theories have a fate of their own. If in the period of the first revolution and thereafter up to 1923, when revolutionary doctrines were elaborated and realised, Stalin held no independent

position then, from 1924 on, the situation changes abruptly. There opens up the epoch of bureaucratic reaction and of drastic reviews of the past. The film of the revolution is run off in reverse. Old doctrines are submitted to new appraisals or new interpretations. Quite unexpectedly, at first sight, the centre of attention is held by the conception of "the permanent revolution" as the fountainhead of all the blunderings of "Trotskyism." For a number of years thereafter the criticism of this conception constitutes the main content of the theoretical—"sit venio verbo"—work of Stalin and his collaborators. It may be said that the whole of Stalinism, taken on the theoretical plane, grew out of the criticism of the theory of the permanent revolution as it was formulated in 1905. To this extent the exposition of this theory, as distinct from the theories of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, cannot fail to enter into this book, even if in the form of an appendix.

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The development of Russia is characterised first of all by backwardness. Historical backwardness does not, however, signify a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, with merely a delay of one or two centuries. It engenders an entirely new "combined" social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal and pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating a peculiar interrelationship of classes. The same thing applies in the sphere of ideas. Precisely because of her historical tardiness Russia turned out to be the only European country where Marxism as a doctrine and the Social Democracy as a party attained powerful development even before the bourgeois revolution. It is only natural that the problem of the correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism was submitted to the most profound theoretical analysis precisely in Russia.

Idealist-democrats, chiefly the Narodniks, refused superstitiously to recognise the impending revolution as bourgeois. They labelled it "democratic" seeking by means of a neutral political formula to mask its social content—not only from others but also from themselves. But in the struggle against Narodnikism, Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, established as long ago as the early 'eighties of the last century that Russia had no reason whatever to expect a privileged path of development, that like other "profane" nations, she would have to pass through the purgatory of capitalism and that precisely along this path she would acquire political freedom indispensable for the further struggle of the proletariat for socialism. Plekhanov not only separated the bourgeois revolution as a task from the socialist revolution—which he postponed to the indefinite future—but he depicted for each of these entirely different combinations of forces. Political freedom was to be achieved by the proletariat in alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie; after many decades and on a higher level of capitalist development, the proletariat would then carry out the socialist revolution in direct struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Lenin, on his part, wrote at the end of 1904:

"To the Russian intellectual it always seems that to recognise our revolution as bourgeois is to discolour it, degrade it, debase it. . . . For the proletariat the struggle for political freedom and for the democratic republic in bourgeois society is simply a necessary stage in the struggle for the socialist revolution."

"Marxists are absolutely convinced," he wrote in 1905, "of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does this mean? This means that those democratic transformations . . . which have become indispensable

for Russia do not, in and of themselves, signify the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of the bourgeois rule, but on the contrary they clear the soil, for the first time and in a real way, for a broad and swift, for a European and not an Asiatic development of capitalism. They will make possible for the first time the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class. . . ."

"We cannot leap over the bourgeois democratic framework of the Russian revolution," he insisted, "but we can extend this framework to a colossal degree." That is to say, we can create within bourgeois society much more favourable conditions for the future struggle of the proletariat. Within these limits Lenin followed Plekhanov. The bourgeois character of the revolution served both factions of the Russian Social Democracy as their starting point.

It is quite natural that under these conditions, Koba (Stalin) did not go in his propaganda beyond those popular formulas which constitute the common property of Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks.

"The Constituent Assembly," he wrote in January 1905, "elected on the basis of equal, direct and secret universal suffrage—this is what we must now fight for! Only this Assembly will give us the democratic republic, so urgently needed by us for our struggle for socialism." The bourgeois republic as an arena for a protracted class struggle for the socialist goal—such is the perspective.

In 1907, i.e., after innumerable discussions in the press both in Petersburg and abroad and after a serious testing of theoretical prognoses in the experiences of the first revolution, Stalin wrote:

"That our revolution is bourgeois, that is must conclude by destroying the feudal and not the capitalist order, that it can be crowned only by the democratic republic—on this, it seems, all are agreed in our party." Stalin spoke not of what the revolution begins with, but of what it ends with, and he limited it in advance and quite categorically to "only the democratic republic." We would seek in vain in his writings for even a hint of any perspective of a socialist revolution in connection with a democratic overturn. This remained his position even at the beginning of the February revolution in 1917 up to Lenin's arrival in Petersburg.

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For Plekhanov, Axelrod and the leaders of Menshevism in general, the sociological characterisation of the revolution as bourgeois was valuable politically above all because in advance it prohibited provoking the bourgeoisie by the spectre of socialism and "repelling" it into the camp of reaction. "The social relations of Russia have ripened only for the bourgeois revolution," said the chief tactician of Menshevism, Axelrod, at the Unity Congress. "In the face of the universal deprivation of political rights in our country there cannot even be talk of a direct battle between the proletariat and other classes for political power. . . . The proletariat is fighting for conditions of bourgeois development. The objective historical conditions make it the destiny of our proletariat to inescapably collaborate with the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the common enemy." The content of the Russian revolution was therewith limited in advance to those transformations which are compatible with the interests and views of the liberal bourgeoisie.

It is precisely at this point that the basic disagreement between the two factions begins. Bolshevism absolutely refused to recognise that the Russian bourgeoisie was capable of leading its own revolution to the end. With infinitely greater power and consistency than Plekhanov, Lenin advanced the agrarian question as the central problem of the democratic overturn in Russia. "The crux of the Russian revolution," he repeated, "is the



agrarian (land) question. Conclusions concerning the defeat or victory of the revolution must be based . . . on the calculation of the condition of the masses in the struggle for land." Together with Plekhanov, Lenin viewed the peasantry as a petty-bourgeois class; the peasant land programme as a programme of bourgeois progress. "Nationalisation is a bourgeois measure," he insisted at the Unity Congress. "It will give an impulse to the development of capitalism; it will sharpen the class struggle, strengthen the mobilisation of the land, cause an influx of capital into agriculture, lower the price of grain." Notwithstanding the indubitable bourgeois character of the agrarian revolution the Russian bourgeoisie remains, however, hostile to the expropriation of landed estates and precisely for this reason strives toward a compromise with the monarchy on the basis of a constitution on the Prussian pattern. To Plekhanov's idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie Lenin counterposed the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. The task of the revolutionary collaboration of these two classes he proclaimed to be the establishment of a "democratic dictatorship," as the only means of radically cleansing Russia of feudal rubbish, of creating a free farmers' system and clearing the road for the development of capitalism along American and not Prussian lines.

The victory of the revolution, he wrote, can be crowned "only by a dictatorship because the accomplishment of transformations immediately and urgently needed by the proletariat and the peasantry will evoke the desperate resistance of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie and Czarism. Without the dictatorship it will be impossible to break this resistance, and repel the counter-revolutionary attempts." But this will of course be not a socialist, but a democratic dictatorship. It will not be able to touch (without a whole series of transitional stages of revolutionary development) the foundations of capitalism. It will be able, in the best case, to realise a radical redivision of landed property in favour of the peasantry, introduce a consistent and full democratism up to instituting the republic, root out all Asiatic and feudal features not only from the day-to-day life of the village but also of the factory, put a beginning to a serious improvement of workers' conditions and raise their living standards and, last but not least, carry out the revolutionary conflagration to Europe."

#### THE CRITIQUE OF LENIN'S CONCEPTION

Lenin's conception represented an enormous step forward insofar as it proceeded not from constitutional reforms but from the agrarian overturn as the central task of the revolution and singled out the only realistic combination of social forces for its accomplishment. The weak point of Lenin's conception, however, was the internally contradictory idea of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry." Lenin himself underscored the fundamental limitation of this "dictatorship" when he openly called it "bourgeois". By this he meant to say that for the sake of preserving its alliance with the peasantry the proletariat would in the coming revolution have to forego the direct posing of the socialist tasks. But this would signify the renunciation by the proletariat of its own dictatorship. Consequently, the gist of the matter involved the dictatorship of the peasantry even if with the participation of the workers. On certain occasions Lenin said just this. For example, at the Stockholm Conference, in refuting Plekhanov who came out against the "utopia" of the seizure of power, Lenin said: "What programme is under discussion? The agrarian. Who is assumed to seize power under this programme? The revolutionary peasantry. Is Lenin mixing up the power of the proletariat with

this peasantry?" No, he says referring to himself: Lenin sharply differentiates the socialist power of the proletariat from the bourgeois democratic power of the peasantry. "But how," he exclaims again, "is a victorious peasant revolution possible without the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry?" In this polemical formula Lenin reveals with special clarity the vulnerability of his position.

The peasantry is dispersed over the surface of an enormous country whose key junctions are the cities. The peasantry itself is incapable of even formulating its own interests inasmuch as in each district these appear differently. The economic link between the provinces is created by the market and the railways but both the market and the railways are in the hands of the cities. In seeking to tear itself away from the restrictions of the village and to generalise its own interests, the peasantry inescapably falls into political dependence upon the city. Finally, the peasantry is heterogeneous in its social relations as well: the kulak stratum naturally seeks to swing it to an alliance with the urban bourgeoisie while the nether strata of the village pull to the side of the urban workers. Under these conditions the peasantry as such is completely incapable of conquering power.

True enough, in ancient China, revolutions placed the peasantry in power or, more precisely, placed the military leaders of peasant uprisings in power. This led each time to a redivision of the land and the establishment of a new "peasant" dynasty, whereupon history would begin from the beginning; with a new concentration of land, a new aristocracy, a new system of usury, and a new uprising. So long as the revolution preserves its purely peasant character society is incapable of emerging from these hopeless and vicious circles. This was the basis of ancient Asiatic history, including ancient Russian history. In Europe beginning with the close of the Middle Ages each victorious peasant uprising placed in power not a peasant government but a left urban party. To put it more precisely, a peasant uprising turned out victorious exactly to the degree to which it succeeded in strengthening the position of the revolutionary section of the urban population. In bourgeois Russia of the twentieth century there could not even be talk of the seizure of power by the revolutionary peasantry.

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#### LENIN'S APPRAISAL OF LIBERALISM

The attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie was, as has been said, the touchstone of the differentiation between revolutionists and opportunists in the ranks of the social democrats. How far could the Russian revolution go? What would be the character of the future revolutionary Provisional Government? What tasks would confront it? And in what order? These questions with all their importance could be correctly posed only on the basis of the fundamental character of the policy of the proletariat, and the character of this policy was in turn determined first of all by the attitude toward the liberal bourgeoisie. Plekhanov obviously and stubbornly shut his eyes to the fundamental conclusion of the political history of the 19th century: Whenever the proletariat comes forward as an independent force the bourgeoisie shifts over to the camp of the counter-revolution. The more audacious the mass struggle all the swifter is the reactionary degeneration of liberalism. No one has yet invented a means for paralysing the effects of the law of the class struggle.

"We must cherish the support of non-proletarian parties," repeated Plekhanov during the years of the first revolution, "and not repel them from us by tactless actions." By monotonous preachments of this sort the philosopher of Marxism indicated that the living dynam-

ics of society was unattainable to him. "Tactlessness" can repel an individual sensitive intellectual. Classes and parties are attracted or repelled by social interests. "It can be stated with certainty," replied Lenin to Plekhanov, "that the liberals and landlords will forgive you millions of 'tactless acts' but will not forgive you a summons to take away the land." And not only the landlords. The tops of the bourgeoisie are bound up with the landowners by the unity of property interests, and more narrowly by the system of banks. The tops of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are materially and morally dependent upon the big and middle proprietors—they are all afraid of the independent mass movement. Meanwhile, in order to overthrow Czarism it was necessary to rouse tens upon tens of millions of oppressed to a heroic, self-renouncing, unfettered revolutionary assault that would halt at nothing. The masses can rise to an insurrection only under the banner of their own interests and consequently in the spirit of irreconcilable hostility toward the exploiting classes beginning with the landlords. The "repulsion" of the oppositional bourgeoisie away from the revolutionary workers and peasants was therefore the immanent law of the revolution itself and could not be avoided by means of diplomacy or "tact."

Each additional month confirmed the Leninist appraisal of liberalism. Contrary to the best hopes of the Mensheviks, the Cadets not only did not prepare to take their place at the head of the "bourgeois" revolution but on the contrary they found their historical mission more and more in the struggle against it.

After the crushing of the December uprising the liberals, who occupied the political limelight thanks to the ephemeral Duma, sought with all their might to justify themselves before the monarchy and explain away their insufficiently active counter-revolutionary conduct in the autumn of 1905 when danger threatened the most sacred props of "culture." The leaders of the liberals, Miliukov, who conducted the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Winter Palace, quite correctly proved in the press that at the end of 1905 the Cadets could not even show themselves before the masses. "Those who now chide the (Cadet) party," he wrote, "because it did not protest at the time by arranging meetings against the revolutionary illusions of Trotskyism . . . simply do not understand or do not remember the moods prevailing at the time among the democratic public gatherings at meetings." By the "illusions of Trotskyism" the liberal leader understood the independent policy of the proletariat which attracted to the soviets the sympathies of the nethermost layers in the cities, of the soldiers, peasants, and all the oppressed, and which owing to this repelled the "educated society." The evolution of the Mensheviks unfolded along parallel lines. They had to justify themselves more and more frequently before the liberals, because they had turned out in a bloc with Trotsky after October 1905. The explanations of Martov, the talented publicist of the Mensheviks, came down to this, that it was necessary to make concessions to the "revolutionary illusions" of the masses.

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In Tiflis the political groupings took shape on the same principled basis as in Petersburg. "To smash reaction," wrote the leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, "to conquer and carry through the Constitution—this will depend upon the conscious unification and the striving for a single goal on the part of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. . . . It is true that the peasantry will be drawn into the movement, investing it with an elemental character, but the decisive role will nevertheless be played by these two classes while the peasant movement will add grist to their mill."

Lenin mocked at the fears of Zhordanya that an irreconcilable policy toward the bourgeoisie would doom the workers to impotence. Zhordanya "discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in a democratic overturn and forgets . . . about the peasantry! Of all the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and is enamoured of the landlord-liberals. And he does not know the peasants. And this in the Caucasus!" The refutations of Lenin while correct in essence simplify the problem on one point. Zhordanya did not "forget" about the peasantry and, as may be gathered from the hint of Lenin himself, could not have possibly forgotten about it in the Caucasus where the peasantry was stormily rising at the time under the banner of the Mensheviks. Zhordanya saw in the peasantry, however, not so much a political ally as a historical battering ram which could and should be utilised by the bourgeois in alliance with the proletariat. He did not believe that the peasantry was capable of becoming a leading or even an independent force in the revolution and in this he was not wrong; but he also did not believe that the proletariat was capable of leading the peasant uprising to victory—and in this was his fatal mistake. The Menshevik idea of the alliance of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie actually signified the subjection to the liberals of both the workers and the peasants. The reactionary utopianism of this programme was determined by the fact that the far advanced dismemberment of the classes paralysed the bourgeoisie in advance as a revolutionary factor. In this fundamental question the right was wholly on the side of Bolshevism: the chase after an alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie would inescapably counterpose the Social Democracy to the revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. In 1905 the Mensheviks still lacked courage to draw all the necessary conclusions from their theory of the "bourgeois" revolution. In 1917 they drew their ideas to their logical conclusion and broke their heads.

On the question of the attitude to the liberals Stalin stood during the years of the first revolution on Lenin's side. It must be stated that during this period even the majority of the rank-and-file Mensheviks were closer to Lenin than to Plekhanov on issues touching the oppositional bourgeoisie. A contemptuous attitude to the liberals was the literary tradition of intellectual radicalism. One would however labour in vain to seek from Koba an independent contribution on this question, an analysis of the Caucasian social relations, new arguments or even a new formulation of old arguments. The leader of the Caucasian Mensheviks, Zhordanya, was far more independent in relation to Plekhanov than Stalin was in relation to Lenin. "In vain the Messrs. Liberals seek," wrote Koba after January 9, "to save the tottering throne of the Czar. In vain are they extending to the Czar the hand of assistance! . . . The aroused popular masses are preparing for the revolution and not for the reconciliation with the Czar. . . . Yes, gentlemen, in vain are your efforts. The Russian revolution is inevitable and it is as inevitable as the inevitable rising of the sun! Can you stop the rising sun? That is the question!" And so forth and so on. Higher than this Koba did not rise. Two and half years later, in repeating Lenin almost literally, he wrote: "The Russian liberal bourgeoisie is anti-revolutionary. It cannot be the motive force, nor, all the less so, the leader of the revolution. It is the sworn enemy of the revolution and a stubborn struggle must be waged against it." However, it was precisely in this fundamental question that Stalin was to undergo a complete metamorphosis in the next ten years and was to meet the February revolution of 1917 already as a partisan of a bloc with the liberal bourgeois and, in accordance with this, as a champion of uniting with the Mensheviks into one party. Only Lenin on arriving from abroad

put an abrupt end to the independent policy of Stalin which he called a mockery of Marxism.

### THE PEASANTRY AND SOCIALISM

The Narodniks saw in the workers and peasants simply "toilers" and "the exploited" who are all equally interested in socialism. Marxists regarded the peasant as a petty bourgeois who is capable of becoming a socialist only to the extent to which he ceases materially or spiritually to be a peasant. With the sentimentalism peculiar to them, the Narodniks perceived in this sociological characterisation a moral slur against the peasantry. Along this line occurred for two generations the main struggle between the revolutionary tendencies of Russia. To understand the future disputes between Stalinism and Trotskyism it is necessary once again to emphasise that, in accordance with the entire tradition of Marxism, Lenin never for a moment regarded the peasantry as a socialist ally of the proletariat. On the contrary, the impossibility of the socialist revolution in Russia was deduced by him precisely from the colossal preponderance of the peasantry. This idea runs through all his articles which touch directly or indirectly upon the agrarian question.

"We support the peasant movement," wrote Lenin in September 1905, "to the extent that it is a revolutionary democratic movement. We are preparing (right now, and immediately) for a struggle with it to the extent that it will come forward as a reactionary, anti-proletarian movement. The entire gist of Marxism lies in this two-fold task . . ." Lenin saw the socialist ally in the Western proletariat and partly in the semi-proletarian elements in the Russian village but never in the peasantry as such. "From the beginning we support to the very end, by means of all measures, up to confiscation," he repeated with the insistence peculiar to him, "the peasant in general against the landlord, and later (and not even later but at the very same time) we support the proletariat against the peasant in general."

"The peasantry will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution," he wrote in March 1906, "and with this it will completely exhaust its revolutionary spirit as the peasantry. The proletariat will conquer in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and with this it will only unfold in a real way its genuine socialist revolutionary spirit." "The movement of the peasantry," he repeated in May of the same year, "is the movement of a different class. This is a struggle not against the foundations of capitalism but for purging all the remnants of feudalism." This viewpoint can be followed in Lenin from one article to the next, year by year, volume by volume. The language and examples vary, the basic thought remains the same. It could not have been otherwise. Had Lenin seen a socialist ally in the peasantry he would not have had the slightest ground for insisting upon the bourgeois character of the revolution and for limiting "the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" to purely democratic tasks. In those cases where Lenin accused the author of this book of "underestimating" the peasantry he had in mind not at all my non-recognition of the socialist tendencies of the peasantry but, on the contrary, my inadequate—from Lenin's viewpoint—recognition of the bourgeois-democratic independence of the peasantry, its ability to create its own power and thereby prevent the establishment of the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat.

The re-evaluation of values on this question was opened up only in the years of Thermidorian reaction the beginning of which coincided approximately with the illness and death of Lenin. Thenceforth the alliance of

Russian workers and peasants was proclaimed to be, in and of itself, a sufficient guarantee against the dangers of restoration and an immutable pledge of the realisation of socialism within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. Replacing the theory of international revolution by the theory of socialism in one country Stalin began to designate the Marxist evaluation of the peasantry not otherwise than as "Trotskyism" and, moreover, not only in relation to the present but to the entire past.

It is, of course, possible to raise the question whether or not the classic Marxist view of the peasantry has been proven erroneous. This subject would lead us far beyond the limits of the present review. Suffice it to state here that Marxism has never invested its estimation of the peasantry as a non-socialist class with an absolute and static character. Marx himself said that the peasant possesses not only superstitions but the ability to reason. The regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened up very broad possibilities for influencing the peasantry and re-educating it. The limits of these possibilities have not yet been exhausted by history. Nevertheless, it is now already clear that the growing role of the state coercion in the U.S.S.R. has not refuted but has confirmed fundamentally the attitude toward the peasantry which distinguished Russian Marxists from the Narodniks. However, whatever may be the situation in this respect today after twenty years of the new regime, it remains indubitable that up to the October revolution or more correctly up to 1924 no one in the Marxist camp—Lenin, least of all—saw in the peasantry a socialist factor of development. Without the aid of the proletarian revolution in the West, Lenin repeated, restoration in Russia was inevitable. He was not mistaken: the Stalinist bureaucracy is nothing else than the first phase of bourgeois restoration.

### THE TROTSKYIST CONCEPTION

We have analysed above the points of departure of the two basic factions of the Russian Social Democracy. But alongside of them, already at the dawn of the first revolution, was formulated a third position which met with almost no recognition during those years but which we are obliged to set down here with the necessary completeness not only because it found its confirmation in the events of 1917 but especially because seven years after the October revolution, this conception, after being turned topsy-turvy, began to play a completely unforeseen role in the political evolution of Stalin and the whole Soviet bureaucracy.

At the beginning of 1905 a pamphlet by Trotsky was issued in Geneva. This pamphlet analysed the political situation as it unfolded in the winter of 1904. The author arrived at the conclusion that the independent campaign of petitions and banquets by the liberals had exhausted all its possibilities; that the radical intelligentsia who had pinned their hopes upon the liberals had arrived in a blind alley together with the latter; that the peasant movement was creating favourable conditions for victory but was incapable of assuring it; that a decision could be reached only through the armed uprising of the proletariat; that the next phase on this path would be the general strike. The pamphlet was entitled "Before the Ninth of January," because it was written before the Bloody Sunday in Petersburg. The mighty strike wave which came after this date together with the initial armed clashes which supplemented this strike wave were an unequivocal confirmation of the strategic prognosis of this pamphlet.

The introduction to my work was written by Parvus, a Russian emigre, who had succeeded by that time in becoming a prominent German writer. Parvus was an exceptional creative personality capable of becoming

infected with the ideas of others as well as of enriching other by his ideas. He lacked internal equilibrium and sufficient love for work to give the labour movement the contribution worthy of his talents as thinker and writer. On my personal development he exercised undoubted influence especially in regard to the social-revolutionary understanding of our epoch. A few years prior to our first meeting Parvus passionately defended the idea of a general strike in Germany; but the country was then passing through a prolonged industrial boom, the Social Democracy had adapted itself to the regime of the Hohenzollerns; the revolutionary propaganda of a foreigner met with nothing except ironical indifference. On becoming acquainted on the second day after the bloody events in Petersburg with my pamphlet, then in manuscript, Parvus was captured by the idea of the exceptional role which the proletariat of backward Russia was destined to play.

Those few days which we spent together in Munich were filled with conversations which clarified a good deal for both of us and which brought us personally closer together. The introduction which Parvus wrote at the time for the pamphlet has entered firmly into the history of the Russian revolution. In a few pages he illuminated those social peculiarities of belated Russia which were, it is true, known previously but from which no one had drawn all the necessary conclusions.

"The political radicalism of Western Europe," wrote Parvus, "was, as is well known, based primarily on the petty bourgeoisie. These were the handicraft workers and, in general, that section of the bourgeoisie which had been caught up by the industrial development but was at the same time pushed aside by the capitalist class. . . . In Russia, during the pre-capitalist period, the cities developed more along Chinese than European lines. These were administrative centres, purely functional in character, without the slightest political significance, while in terms of economic relations they served as trading centres, bazaars, for the surrounding landlord and peasant milieu. Their development was still very insignificant when it was halted by the capitalist process which began to create big cities after its own pattern, i.e., factory cities and centres of world trade. . . . The very same thing that hindered the development of petty-bourgeois democracy served to benefit the class consciousness of the proletariat in Russia, namely, the weak development of the handicraft form of production. The proletariat was immediately concentrated in the factories.

"The peasants will be drawn into the movement in ever larger masses. But they are capable only of increasing the political anarchy in the country and, in this way, of weakening the government; they cannot compose a tightly welded revolutionary army. With the development of the revolution, therefore, an ever greater amount of political work will fall to the share of the proletariat. Along with this, its political self-consciousness will broaden, its political energy will grow.

"The Social Democracy will be confronted with the dilemma: either to assume the responsibility for the Provisional Government or to stand aside from the workers' movement. The workers will consider this government as their own regardless of how the Social Democracy conducts itself. . . . The revolutionary overturn in Russia can be accomplished only by the workers. The revolutionary Provisional Government in Russia will be the government of a **workers' democracy**. If the Social Democracy heads the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat, then this government will be Social Democratic.

"The Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia but the very process of liquidating the autocracy and

of establishing the democratic republic will provide it with a rich soil for political work."

In the heat of the revolutionary events in the autumn of 1905, I once again met Parvus, this time in Petersburg. While preserving an organisational independence from both factions, we jointly edited a mass workers' paper, "Russkoye Slovo", and, in a coalition with the Mensheviks, a big political newspaper, "Nachalo". The theory of the permanent revolution has usually been linked with the names of "Parvus and Trotsky". This was only partially correct. The period of Parvus' revolutionary apogee belongs to the end of the last century when he marched at the head of the struggle against the so-called "revisionism", i.e., the opportunist distortion of Marx's theory. The failure of the attempts to push the German Social Democracy on the path of more resolute policies undermined his optimism. Toward the perspective of the socialist revolution in the West, Parvus began to react with more and more reservations. He considered at that time that the "Social Democratic Provisional Government will not be able to accomplish a socialist overturn in Russia." His prognoses indicated, therefore, not the transformation of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution but only the establishment in Russia of a regime of workers' democracy of the Australian type, where on the basis of a farmers' system there arose for the first time a labour government which did not go beyond the framework of a bourgeois regime.

This conclusion was not shared by me. The Australian democracy grew organically from the virgin soil of a new continent and at once assumed a conservative character and subjected to itself a young but quite privileged proletariat. Russian democracy, on the contrary, could arise only as a result of a grandiose revolutionary overturn, the dynamics of which would in no case permit the workers' government to remain within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Our differences, which began shortly after the revolution of 1905, resulted in a complete break between us at the beginning of the war when Parvus, in whom the sceptic had completely killed the revolutionist, turned out on the side of German imperialism, and later became the counsellor and inspirer of the first president of the German republic, Ebert.

### THE THEORY OF PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Beginning with the pamphlet, "Before the Ninth of January," I returned more than once to the development and justification of the theory of the permanent revolution. In view of the importance which this theory later acquired in the ideological evolution of the hero of this biography, it is necessary to present it here in the form of exact quotations from my works in 1905-6.

"The core of the population of a modern city, at least in cities of economic-political significance, is constituted by the sharply differentiated class of wage labour. It is precisely this class, essentially unknown during the Great French Revolution, that is destined to play the decisive role in our revolution. . . . In a country economically more backward, the proletariat may come to power sooner than in an advanced capitalist country. The assumption of some sort of automatic dependence of proletarian dictatorship upon the technical forces and resources of a country is a prejudice derived from an extremely oversimplified 'economic' materialism. Such a view has nothing in common with Marxism. . . . Notwithstanding that the productive forces of industry in the United States are ten times higher than our, the political role of the Russian proletariat, its influence upon the politics of the country, and the possibility of its coming influence upon world politics is incomparably higher than the role and significance of the American proletariat. . . .

"The Russian revolution, according to our view, will create conditions in which the power may (and with the victory of the revolution **must**) pass into the hands of the proletariat before the politicians of bourgeois liberalism get a chance to develop their statesmanly genius to the full. . . . The Russian bourgeoisie is surrendering all the revolutionary positions to the proletariat. It will have to surrender likewise the revolutionary leadership of the peasantry. The proletariat in power will appear to the peasantry as an emancipator class. . . . The proletariat basing itself on the peasantry will bring all its forces into play to raise the cultural level of the village and develop a political consciousness in the peasantry. . . . But perhaps the peasantry itself will crowd the proletariat and occupy its place? This is impossible. All the experience of history protests against this assumption. It shows that the peasantry is completely incapable of playing an **independent** political role. . . . From what has been said it is clear how we regard the idea of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.' The gist of the matter is not whether we consider it admissible in principle, whether we find this form of political co-operation 'desirable' or 'undesirable'. We consider it unrealisable—at least in the direct and immediate sense."

The foregoing already demonstrates how erroneous is the assertion, later endlessly repeated, that the conception presented here "leaped over the bourgeois revolution." "The struggle for the democratic renovation of Russia", I wrote at that time, "has wholly grown out of capitalism and is being conducted by the forces unfolding on the basis of capitalism and is being aimed **directly and first of all** against the feudal-serf obstacles on the path of the development of capitalist society." The question, however, was: Just what forces and methods are capable of removing these obstacles? "We may set a bound to all the questions of the revolution by asserting that our revolution is **bourgeois** in its objective aims, and therefore in its inevitable results, and we may thus shut our eyes to the fact that the chief agent of this bourgeois revolution is the proletariat, and the proletariat will be pushed toward power by the whole course of the revolution. . . . You may lull yourself with the thought that the social conditions of Russia are not yet ripe for a socialist economy—and therewith you may neglect to consider the fact that the proletariat, once in power, will inevitably be compelled by the whole logic of its situation to introduce an economy operated by the state. . . . Entering the government not as impotent hostages but as a ruling power, the representatives of the proletariat will by their very act destroy the boundary between minimum and maximum programme, i.e., **place collectivism on the order of the day**. At what point the proletariat will be stopped in this direction will depend on the relationship of forces, but not at all upon the original intentions of the party of the proletariat."

"But it is not too early to pose the question: Must this dictatorship of the proletariat inevitably be shattered against the framework of the bourgeois revolution? Or may it not, upon the given **world-historic** foundations, open before itself the prospect of victory to be achieved by shattering this limited framework? . . . One thing can be stated with certainty: Without direct state support from the European proletariat the working class of Russia cannot remain in power and cannot convert its temporary rule into a prolonged socialist dictatorship. . . ." From this, however, does not at all flow a pessimistic prognosis: "The political emancipation led by the working class of Russia raises this leader to unprecedented resources and makes it the initiator of the world liquidation of capitalism, for which history has created all the necessary objective prerequisites. . . ."

In regard to the degree to which the international Social Democracy will prove able to fulfil its revolutionary task, I wrote in 1906:

"The European socialist parties—above all, the mightiest among them, the German party—have each worked out their own conservatism. As greater and greater masses rally to socialism and as the organisation and discipline of these masses grow, this conservatism likewise increases. Because of this the Social Democracy, as an organisation embodying the political experience of the proletariat, may become at a certain moment a direct obstacle in the path of the open conflict between the workers and bourgeois reaction. . . ." I concluded my analysis, however, by expressing assurance that the "Eastern revolution will imbue the Western proletariat with revolutionary idealism and engender in it the desire to speak to its enemy 'in Russia' . . ."

\* \* \*

Let us sum up: Narodnikism, in the wake of the Slavophiles, proceeded from illusions concerning the absolutely original paths of Russia's development, and waved aside capitalism and the bourgeois republic. Plekhanov's Marxism was concentrated on proving the principled identity of the historical paths of Russia and of the West. The programme derived from this ignored the wholly real and not at all mystical peculiarities of Russia's social structure and of her revolutionary development. The Menshevik attitude toward the revolution, stripped of episodic encrustations and individual deviations, is reducible to the following: The victory of the Russian bourgeois revolution is conceivable only under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie and must hand over power to the latter. The democratic regime will then permit the Russian proletariat to catch up with its older Western brothers on the road of the struggle for socialism with incomparably greater success than hitherto.

Lenin's perspective may be briefly expressed as follows: The belated Russian bourgeoisie is incapable of leading its own revolution to the end. The complete victory of the revolution through the medium of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" will purge the country of medievalism, invest the development of Russian capitalism with American tempos, strengthen the proletariat in the city and country, and open up broad possibilities for the struggle for socialism. On the other hand, the victory of the Russian revolution will provide a mighty impulse for the socialist revolution in the West, and the latter will not only shield Russia from the dangers of restoration but also permit the Russian proletariat to reach the conquest of power in a comparatively short historical interval.

The perspective of the permanent revolution may be summed up in these words: The complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is inconceivable otherwise than in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat basing itself on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which will inescapably place on the order of the day not only democratic but also socialist tasks, will at the same time provide a mighty impulse to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West will shield Russia from bourgeois restoration and secure for her the possibility of bringing the socialist construction to its conclusion.

These terse formulations reveal with equal clarity both the homogeneity of the last two conceptions in their irreconcilable contradiction with the liberal-Menshevik perspective as well as their extremely essential difference from one another on the question of the social character and the tasks of the "dictatorship" which was to grow out of the revolution. The frequently repeated objections of the present Moscow theoreticians to the effect that:

the programme of the dictatorship of the proletariat was "premature" in 1905 is entirely lacking in content. In the empirical sense the programme of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry proved to be equally "premature". The unfavourable relation of forces in the epoch of the first revolution rendered impossible not the dictatorship of the proletariat as such but, in general, the victory of the revolution itself. Meanwhile all the revolutionary tendencies proceeded from the hopes for a complete victory; without such a hope an unfettered revolutionary struggle would be impossible. The differences involved the general perspectives of the revolution and the strategy flowing therefrom. The perspective of Menshevism was false to the core: it pointed out an entirely different road for the proletariat. The perspective of Bolshevism was not complete: it indicated correctly the general direction of the struggle but characterised its stages incorrectly. The inadequacy of the perspective of Bolshevism was not revealed in 1905 only because the revolution itself did not receive further development. But at the beginning

of 1917 Lenin was compelled, in a direct struggle against the oldest cadres of the party, to change the perspective. A political prognosis cannot pretend to the same exactness as an astronomical one. It suffices if it gives a correct indication of the general line of development and helps to orient oneself in the actual course of events in which the basic line is inevitably shifted either to the right or to the left. In this sense it is impossible not to recognise that the conception of the permanent revolution has fully passed the test of history. In the first years of the Soviet regime this was denied by none; on the contrary, this fact met with recognition in a number of official publications. But when on the quiescent and ossified summits of Soviet society the bureaucratic reaction against October opened up, it was from the very beginning directed against this theory which more completely than any other reflected the first proletarian revolution in history and at the same time clearly revealed its incomplete, limited and partial character. Thus, by way of repulsion, originated the theory of socialism in one country, the basic dogma of Stalinism.

Read

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