

was brought to and the blows renewed. In a semi-unconscious state I finally, towards morning, wrote down all the statements that were demanded of me."

Hundreds of persons have been thus ill-treated and murdered in the divisions of the Defensive.

In order to defend themselves against these terrible brutalities, the prisoners who, separated from their families and the working class and surrounded by a wall of mysterious secrecy, are left to themselves, seize the most desperate means of defence — the hunger-strike. Never a week passes without a hunger-strike of political prisoners breaking out in some Polish town. Particularly in recent times has the wave of hunger-strikes been spreading through the land: in three prisons in Warsaw, two in Lodz, in the Dobrova basin, in Kattowitz, in Petrikau, in Posen, in Bialistok etc.

For what are the political prisoners mainly fighting? Let us take the first example that occurs to us: the demands of the prisoners in Lodz. Their fight is for better food (without maggots), for 12 cubic metres of air each, that the windows should no longer be darkened, for straw to fill their mattresses, for a weekly bath, that they should be given newspapers, books and letters, for separation of political prisoners from criminal elements, for not longer than 48 hours' detention before trial, for the abolishment of tortures during examination, for outdoor exercise, for visits from their parents, for the right to receive food from their relations, for the right to study etc.

These demands alone, which are made in almost the same form by all political prisoners, speak effectively for the desperate situation in which political prisoners in Poland find themselves.

At the present moment the Government is preparing a new prison regulation which will deprive the political prisoners of their dearly bought rights and put them on a level with common criminals. In order however suitably to prepare the ground for the introduction of this law, a wave of new oppressions is passing through the prisons; this produces a series of hunger-strikes which are increasing from day to day.

Workers of the whole world! Workers of England, France and Germany! We call upon you to stand by us in our fight against the monstrous crimes of the Polish possessing classes.

There is only one argument, the argument of force, which can hold its own against the undisguised superior power, the naked brutality, by the help of which the bourgeoisie, which is incapable of any further creative action, is trying to preserve its supremacy. This force is ripening daily. The fighting proletariat of Poland will bring enough force to bear to put an end to the orgies of the impudent bourgeoisie reaction, to break the criminal, insane regime of a class which is doomed to disappear from the arena of history.

You are however aware, Comrades, that your active help and action on your part will increase the sense of their own power in the masses of the Polish proletariat, will fortify them in the fight against superior forces and help to hasten the approach of the great historical day of final emancipation from the clutches of capitalism.

Comrades, we summon you to join in the unrelenting campaign against the crimes of the Polish bourgeoisie. See to it that the White Terror in Poland is discussed at every meeting of the working people. Just as in the past, the working people of England did not allow the blood-guilty Czar Nicholas to put his foot on English soil, just as the representatives of Czarism did not dare to show themselves in the streets of the cities of Western Europe, lest they should have cast in their teeth accusations of the murder and brutal oppression which they exercised on thousands of combatants in the cause of Labour — so do you see to it that nowadays the representatives of the bourgeois Polish Republic, that worthy successor of Czarism, are met from all sides by the scorn and hatred of the class-conscious revolutionary masses of the working people.

Let the Polish bourgeoisie and its Socialist Fascist henchmen know that their crimes are known to the whole International

Working Class, that the International Proletariat extends a brotherly hand to the fighting masses of the Polish people, that it stands by their side and will support them in the decisive moment of the final battle for emancipation, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the Polish and International Soviet Republic.

The Central Committee  
of the Communist Party of Poland

Warsaw, Oct. 19th 1924.

## Revelations as to the Bulgarian Government of Murder.

From the 15th to the 21st of October last there took place in Sofia the trial on account of the murder of the peasant member of parliament, Petkov. The foreign press has written almost nothing concerning this trial. The revelations made by the witnesses during the proceedings provide a clear picture of the fascist regime in Bulgaria. During the course of the trial over 30 witnesses were called; among them well-known political personalities and also the mother of the murdered man. The latter testified that her son had been threatened with death almost immediately after the putsch of June 9th 1923. Petkov at first believed that he had been condemned to death by the Macedonian organisation, and she, the witness, addressed a letter to the chief of this organisation, Alexandrov, asking if this were true. The answer stated that the Macedonian organisation had passed no judgment against Petkov as he had done nothing against the said organisation.

Later Petkov learned that he had been condemned to death by the officers League (an illegal terrorist fascist organisation which forms the chief support of the Zankov government), which decision was duly communicated to him by letter. The mother of Petkov sought by means of influential relations to obtain a pass for her son so that he could go abroad and thereby save his life. The government, through the Minister of the Interior, refused to supply Petkov with a pass. Shortly afterwards he was murdered in the open street.

The witness concluded her statement with the following words: "In my eyes it is not the accused police agent Karkalachev who is the murderer of my son. The government, the officers league, the leading members of which are the Ministers of the present government, have murdered my son. The fact that my son's wife and myself were not permitted to hold a Mass at the place where the crime was committed, the fact that when the murder was announced in parliament the members were not permitted to rise from their seats as a last mark of respect for the victim, and finally the fact that it was attempted to keep me, the chief witness, from coming to Bulgaria in order to prevent me from being present at the trial — all this furnishes the best proof that the government caused my son to be murdered."

These revelations on the part of the mother of Petkov constitute an annihilating indictment against the fascist regime in Bulgaria.

The murderer of Petkov, the police agent Karkalachev, was sentenced to death. This judgment, however, applies much more to the Zankov government, which is the real culprit.

### To Our Readers.

Owing to Postal difficulties, consequent on the railway strike in Austria, it has been impossible for us to publish in this Number the second instalment of comrade Varga's Economic Report for the third Quarter of 1924, but we hope to publish this in our next Regular Number.

## SPECIAL NUMBER

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## How One should not Write the History of October.

(Comrade Trotzky's Book: "1917".)

The V. World Congress and the Thirteenth Party Conference of the Russian C. P. unanimously condemned the political line of the Russian Opposition, with Comrade Trotzky at the head, as petty-bourgeois and opportunist. In spite of this, Comrade Trotzky is carrying on his struggle still further, but in a new form. Under the flag of Leninism, he aims at a revision of Leninism. His book on Lenin was the first attempt of this sort. Many comrades allowed themselves to be dazzled by the literary side of the book, but the scientific organs of the C. P. of Russia and of the C. P. of Germany immediately recognised its tendency and repudiated it with sharp criticisms.

There now follows the second attack. Comrade Trotzky has written a preface of about sixty pages to the recently published third volume of his work: "1917". As in their time, those who came after Marx sought, under the flag of Marxism, to revise Marx, so Comrade Trotzky here attempts a revision of Bolshevism in the name of "Leninism". The "Pravda", the central organ of the C. P. of Russia, replied to this attempt with the following article which we reprint in full. Ed.

Comrade Trotzky's recently published book: "1917", which is devoted to the "Lessons of October", will soon become the mode. It is not to be wondered at, as it aimed at becoming an inner party sensation.

After the events of the past year, which have proved the correctness of the standpoint of our Party Opposition, after the facts, which have again and again proved the correctness of the leadership of our Party, Comrade Trotzky again revives the discussion, although with other means. The preface to the book and it in this preface, as well as in the annotations, that there is the "kernel" of the book) is written in a semi-Aesopic language, so that the totally inexperienced reader will fail to perceive the hints and allusions with which the preface is interlarded. This peculiar cryptic language, for which comrade Trotzky, in spite of the fact that he himself demands "critical honesty", has a strong preference, must be deciphered. For the

work of Comrade Trotzky, which claims to be a guide to the "Study of October", threatens to become a guide for "every present and future discussion". It takes upon itself the responsibility to fight against the line of the Party, as well as of the Comintern, in which it in no way bears the character of a theoretical analysis, but more resembles a political platform, upon the basis of which it will be possible to undermine the exact decisions adopted by the respective congresses.

Comrade Trotzky's book is not only written for the Russian reader; this can be recognised without difficulty. It is to a large extent written for the "information" of foreign comrades. Now, when the problem of "bolshevism" stands on the order of the day in a whole number of communist Parties, when the interest for the history of our Party is undoubtedly increasing, the book of comrade Trotzky can render a great disservice. It is not only not a text book of bolshevism, but it will much rather become a factor for "debolshevism" the foreign communist Parties — so biased, one-sided, and at times exceedingly falsely, does it describe the events, from the analysis of which it seeks to draw conclusions for the present.

This is what renders necessary a critical examination of this new book of comrade Trotzky. It must not remain unanswered. One can only regret that Comrade Trotzky, who draws conclusions from "the teachings of October" which, it is true, are false, draws no conclusions from the more recent epoch of last year's discussion. The best test of different points of view is, as comrade Trotzky himself admits, Experience, Life itself. Life however has shown that the ruling line which is recognised by the Party, has not only not brought the country to "the verge of ruin", as the last year's opposition predicted, which prophesied for the country all the plagues of Egypt, but in spite of events, which are independent of every "platform", as the bad harvest etc., has brought the country forward.

On the other hand a whole number of new tasks under new conditions have arisen; difficulties which are determined by the process of growth. The whole Party desires, before all, concrete work under a leadership which has been tried by experience, upon a "platform" which has withstood this experience. For this reason it was not in the least desirable to reopen the old disputes, even if in another form.

Comrade Trotzky saw fit to do this. Of course he bears the whole responsibility for it. Willingly or unwillingly, we must



reply to this book, as the Party cannot permit a propaganda which is directed against the decisions which the Party adopted with such firmness and unanimity to remain unanswered. We will therefore examine the statement which comrade Trotsky has now submitted to the Party, the "lessons" which he has drawn from October and is now very kindly communicating to our young and old comrades.

I.

The Question of Historical Investigation.

The axle upon which the statements of Comrade Trotsky turn is the estimate of the importance of various periods in the history of our Party. He sees things essentially as follows: the whole period of the development of the Party up to October 1917 is a thing of very little importance. Not until the moment of seizing power was the question decided, it is this period which stands out before all others, only then have we the possibility of testing classes, Parties, their leading cadres, and individuals.

"It would mean a piece of barren scholasticism, but in no way a Marxian political analysis, were we at the present time to occupy ourselves with an analysis of the different view-points of revolution in general, and of the Russian in particular, and thereby to overlook the experiences of 1917. It would be as if we were to indulge in disputes over the advantages of various methods of swimming, but obstinately refuse to turn our eyes to the river, where these methods are being applied by bathers. There is no better test for a point of view over revolution than its application in revolution itself, precisely as a method of swimming can best be proved when the swimmer springs into the water... (page XVI.)

What is the meaning of bolshevising the Communist Parties? It means such an education of these Parties, such a selection of the leading persons, that they will not run off the track at the moment of their October. Herein lies Hegel, the book-wisdom and the essence of all philosophies... (Page 65.)"

These sentences only contain half the truth, and one can therefore (as comrade Trotsky does) draw totally false conclusions from them.

Comrade Trotsky says to the Communist Parties: Study October in order to be victorious! One must not overlook October.

Certainly one must not do that. Just as one must neither forget the year 1905, nor the very instructive years of reaction. Who, and where and when, has recommended such a monstrous thing? Who, and where and when, has even ventured to advocate such an absurdity?

No one has recommended it. But precisely in order to understand the pre-conditions of the October victory, one must at all costs look beyond the immediate preparations of the revolt. But in no event must one be separated from the other. In no circumstances must one estimate groups, persons and tendencies by disconnecting them from that period of preparation which comrade Trotsky compares to disputes over "the best method of swimming". Of course in the "critical period", when it is a question of a decisive struggle, all questions are faced in all their acuteness, and all shades, tendencies and groups tend to express on this occasion their most characteristic, inner, essential qualities. On the other hand, the explanation for the fact that they play a positive role during the flood-time of revolution, does not always lie in the correctness of their "standpoint."

"It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out, when everything is in flames", — thus Comrade Lenin formulated this aspect of the question (Collected Works Volume 17, Page 183 Russian Edition.). In another passage he says: "The revolutionary is not he who becomes a revolutionary on the outbreak of revolution, but he who defends the principles and slogans of the revolution at the time of the most furious reaction". (Ibid. Volume VII.2 Page 151).

That is not the same thing as Trotsky says. Let us dot the i's. What determined the attitude of the Party of the Bolsheviks in October? It was determined by the whole previous history of the Party, by its struggle against all opportunist deviations, from the extreme Mensheviks up to the Trotskyites (For example the "August" Bloc). Can one however,

perchance, say that the correct standpoint of Comrade Trotsky (because it coincided with the Bolshevik standpoint) in the October days resulted from his attitude in the preparatory period? Obviously one cannot say that. On the contrary, had a historical miracle occurred at that time, and had the Bolshevik workers followed that which Comrade Trotsky proclaimed (unity with the liquidators, fight against the "sectarianism" of Lenin, menshevik political platform, during the war fight against the Zimmerwald Left etc.) then there would have been no October victory. Comrade Trotsky, however, entirely avoids dealing with this period, although it would be his duty to impart just these "lessons" to the Party.

Let us quote another example. There fought side by side with us on the October barricades many left social revolutionaries. In the decisive moment of October they contributed their share to the cause of victory. Did that mean, however, that they had been "tried" once and for all by October? Unfortunately this was by no means the case as the post-October experience has shown, which to a considerable extent confirmed the estimate given of these petty-bourgeois revolutionaries before October.

October isolated, therefore in no way suffices for the "test". It is rather the second moment which is of more importance, the moment which Comrade Lenin so categorically pointed out.

The statement of comrade Trotsky, that the "bolshevising" of the Communist Parties consists in such an education and such a selection of a body of "leaders" that they shall not run off the track at the moment of their October, is therefore correct in as far as it also includes the appropriation of the experiences of the "preparatory period". For even the immediate experiences of the Russian October can neither be understood nor made use of if we do not take to heart the teachings of this preparatory period. Comrade Trotsky, who regards the matter in such a way that the Bolshevik Party in its actual essence only began to exist after the October days, does not see the uninterrupted connection of the line of the Party in its entirety up to "the present moment".

And just in the same way he fails to see that after the seizure of power, even after the end of the civil war, history is by no means at an end. In the same way the history of our Party is also not at an end, the history which is likewise a "testing of the Party policy", for it not only contains discussions regarding the one or the other standpoint, but also the experiences of practical policy.

One had to take care not "to leave the track" in October but the same applies to the time of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (when, as Trotsky admits, the "head", that means the life and death, of the Soviet power was at stake). One had also to take care not to leave the track in the discussion of 1921, for without the Lenin policy we would have endangered everything. It would also have been out of place to leave the track in the last year for without the money reform, without the economic policy etc. conducted by the Party, we should have likewise arrived at a desperate situation. In all these critical situations, however, comrade Trotsky has left the track, and in the same manner as in the pre-February period of his political existence, when he had not broken with the open opponents of bolshevism.

"The tradition of a revolutionary party", writes Comrade Trotsky (Page 62), "will not be created through maintaining silence, but out of critical clearness". Very true. The demand for "critical clearness" however must not be raised only in regard to the actions which took place in October, but also in relation to the preceding and the succeeding period of development. Only in this manner is an actual test possible: for the Party of the proletariat acts constantly and passes through more than one "critical" period.

II.

The Lessons of the Revolution of the Year 1917 and the Struggle within the Party.

Shall silence be maintained regarding October and its prologue the February Revolution? Certainly not. That would show either a lack of conscientiousness or stupidity. But, quite in vain, Comrade Trotsky, with his hints and allusions as well as his open appeals, wishes to create the impression that the history of October is being dealt with in a "step-motherly" fashion because in this respect some sort of mental reservations (a

"half-conscious estimate") play a role. Such statements as: "Still more inadmissible... would it be to maintain silence, out of considerations of a personal character, which are of quite secondary importance, regarding extremely important problems of the October upheaval, which have international significance" (Page XII.), are scarcely in place.

This statement is certainly correct.

But in the first place Comrade Trotsky conceals the fact that no less has been written over October than over any other period. Lenin's writings contain a brilliant estimate of this period, from which the Party will be able for a long time to draw all the essential teachings of October.

Secondly, Comrade Trotsky fails to mention that the persons in question have repeatedly admitted their errors, as is well known to the whole Party.

Comrade Zinoviev, in his "History of the Russian Communist Party" and in earlier publications, has spoken with all clearness regarding them, and has declared the same before the Party and before the Communist International; Comrade Lenin also spoke concerning this, but at no time did he connect this error with the later, after October, activity of these comrades who took the wrong course in October\*).

Comrade Trotsky now seeks to make use of these errors in order to revise the whole Party police and to "correctly expound" the whole history of the Party. Therein lies the kernel of the statements of Comrade Trotsky. The whole analysis of the events from April to October is so stated as if the differences of opinion, which "tore the Party to pieces", had become more and more acute until they finally broke out into a conflict which almost led to collapse, and that the revolution was only saved, thanks to the efforts of Comrade Lenin who had the courage to oppose the Central Committee and who was supported by Comrade Trotsky, who, so to speak "anticipated" the fundamental idea of Lenin.

This analysis hardly contains anything which is in accordance with the facts.

In the first place Comrade Trotsky totally ignores the Party. It does not exist, its mood is not to be perceived, it has vanished. There stands only Comrade Trotsky, Lenin is visible in the distance, and we see a slow-witted, nameless Central Committee. The Petrograd organisation, which was the real collective organiser of the workers' insurrection, is altogether absent. Comrade Trotsky's whole treatment of history revolves exclusively round "the highest pinnacles" of the Party structure. With regard to the whole Party structure we look in vain in the historically painted picture-puzzle of Comrade Trotsky: "Where is the Party?" Is it permissible for marxists to write history in such a manner? That is a caricature of Marxism. To write the history of October and to overlook the Party means to stand with both feet on an individualistic standpoint, upon the standpoint of heroes and masses. Such a standpoint is not suitable for the education of the Party membership. But also from the point of view of an analysis of the leading figures, the Chronicle of Comrade Trotsky cannot be approved, for it distorts the facts. Let us see how Comrade Trotsky describes the course of events:

"The decisions of the April Conference gave the Party a correct attitude. The differences of opinion of the leaders of the Party were not liquidated thereby. On the contrary,

\*) It is necessary in this connection to refer to certain facts. In spite of differences of opinion, Kamenev, on the proposal of Lenin, was elected at the April Conference to the Central Committee of the Party, and in the moment of the insurrection, on behalf of the Central Committee, took the chair at the II. All-Russian Congress. Already in November 1917 Zinoviev, whose agreements with the Central Committee only lasted a few days, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Party delivered a report to the All-Russian Central-Executive Committee advising the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. At the Party Conference (beginning of March 1918), Zinoviev, on behalf of the Central Committee, spoke for the Lenin policy against Trotsky and the "Lefts". From this it is to be seen that the whole Party regarded the October errors of these comrades as nothing else than a temporary difference of opinion. On the contrary, they entrusted them with tasks of the greatest importance, in spite of the fact that they did not for a moment doubt of the errors of these comrades.

In the course of events they assumed a more concrete form, and they reached their acutest point at the most decisive moment of the revolution, in the October days." (Page XXXI.) After the July days:

"The mobilising of the right elements of the Party increased. Their criticism became more determined." (Page XXXII.)

And finally before October:

"An extraordinary Party Congress proved to be unnecessary. The pressure of Lenin secured the necessary turn to the left of the forces, both in the Central Committee and in the parliamentary fraction." (Page XXXVI.)

All this is extremely — "incorrect". For already at the time of the VI. Party Conference there had taken place a complete ideological consolidation of the Party. The Central Committee elected at the VI. Party Congress stood unconditionally on the platform of the revolt. Lenin exercised an enormous influence upon the Central Committee, for Lenin himself was a leading member of the C. C. as is known to everybody. But to represent the matter as if the majority of the C. C. were, so to speak, almost against the revolt, means not to know either the Party or the Central Committee, and means to sin against the truth. Was not the revolt decided upon on the 10th of October with an overwhelming majority of the Central Committee? The tremendous energy, the truly enormous revolutionary passion, the ingenious analysis of events and the powerful magnetic power of Comrade Lenin gave a firm stamp to the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the C. C. Comrade Trotsky, however, wants at all costs to separate Lenin from the C. C., to oppose them to each other and to tear asunder the indivisible band, which in reality was not loosened for a moment. History must not be distorted in this manner. Were it not so, if that which Comrade Trotsky writes were correct, then it would be quite unintelligible, 1. why the Party was not split by the conflict; 2. how it was able to triumph; 3. how the conflict (the resignation of some leading members of the C. C.) could be liquidated within a few days by the return of these comrades to their posts. This "miracle", (a miracle from the standpoint of the assumptions of Comrade Trotsky) as is known, was accomplished, and without much difficulty. It is true that one can hint here that after the victory there are many who are prepared to join the victors, as one does "sit in judgement" against victors.

But it must not be forgotten that the victory in Petrograd and in Moscow was merely the beginning of the struggle, the beginning of enormous difficulties, which was perfectly clear to every Party member. These considerations do not help in any way to explain what is to be explained.

All this, however, becomes perfectly understandable if we do not consider the events from such an egocentric point of view as does Comrade Trotsky. In this case we get the following picture: From April to October there gradually disappear the remnants of vacillation in the Party; in October they have been reduced to a minimum; the Party is proceeding with firm ranks into the fight. Above there remain some comrades who are not in agreement with the general line of the Party. But precisely because the Party (that is no little thing, Comrade Trotsky) was united, precisely because the overwhelming majority of the C. C. went with Lenin, these comrades were also carried along by the general stream of the Party and class, and immediately returned to their posts. They have been far more thoroughly "proved" than merely through the October days.

III.

War, Revolution and the Standpoint of Comrade Trotsky.

The "Chronicle" of Comrade Trotsky, as well as his annotations to the same, not only incorrectly describe the relations within the Party, but also the preparation of the "bolshevising" of Comrade Trotsky himself. (We are solely interested here in his political attitude.) We learn from the annotations of Comrade Trotsky's book, for example, that in the articles written by L. D. Trotsky in America there was almost completely anticipated (1) the later political tactics of the revolutionary social democrats. The fundamental conclusions of these articles agree in almost every detail (1) with the political perspectives, which Comrade Lenin developed in his famous "Letters from Abroad". (Page 370.)



We learn here that in the "course of time the differences of opinion between the standpoint of "Nashe Slovo") and Lenin became continually less". (Page 377.) On the other hand, we learn a whole number of details regarding the errors of the "Pravda", of a number of Bolsheviki etc.

But after perusing the book we are little informed in what these differences of opinion, which grew continually less, consisted. And we are decidedly misled if we take it as correct that Comrade Trotzky had already anticipated the Leninist policy, as stated by that terrible busy-body Comrade Lenzner, who was entrusted with the perusal of the book and with adding the notes. (Lenin did not know that he, according to Comrade Trotzky, had committed a plagiarism.) The question of the attitude during the war, however, gives the key to a number of other questions and leads us to the laboratory where the slogans were drawn up, which soon were to play such an extraordinary important, one might rightly say, world-historical role.

We will attempt to call to mind several things in this respect.

1. "Peace" or "Civil War". This is the first difference of opinion, one which involves a considerable measure of principle, for precisely here is to be seen, who and how has anticipated the events, as well as the tactics, of the revolutionary social democracy. The slogan of the civil war which was issued by Lenin and the Bolshevik C. C. right at the beginning of the war was a specific bolshevik slogan, a slogan, which drew a line of demarcation between true revolutionaries and, not only all shades of chauvinists, but also of the internationalists of a petty-bourgeois, pacifist, "humanitarian" colour who sought to approach the centrist elements. Only by bluntly raising the question of civil war was there created the possibility to select the cadre of those revolutionaries who afterwards formed the kernel of the Communist Party.

Comrade Trotzky was most decidedly opposed to this slogan, which he considered as a narrow slogan, unsuited for mass propaganda. Is that perchance an "anticipation" of the Leninist standpoint?

2. Defeatism and the Fight against it. The second distinguishing criterion of the Bolshevik attitude was the slogan that the revolutionary social democrats (we would now say Communists) must, in the imperialist war, before all desire the defeat of their own government. Comrade Trotzky characterised this attitude as an inverted nationalism, or nationalism with a minus sign. Now, however, the deep meaning of this Leninist attitude, whose roots form the chief source of the Bolshevik idea, is now perfectly clear. Yes, the chief source. One only needs to read, for example, the recently published polemic between Lenin and Plechanov over the draft programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Lenin's Collected Works No. 2) in order to perceive this. In this polemic with Plechanov, Lenin finds fault with the Plechanov draft on the ground that this is a text-book and not a declaration of war; there we read about capitalism in general, whilst we require war against Russian capitalism — that is the essence of this polemic on the part of Lenin. Why did Lenin insist upon this? Precisely because he was a fighter and not a declaimer. The slogan of the defeat of one's own government was a declaration of war on every form of pacifism, even when it was hidden under the feather bed of noble phrases, on every one who advocated the defence of the fatherland, even when it was hidden under the cleverest mask. This was the most decided break. A real severance of all connections with on's own bourgeois state. It was precisely such an attitude which determined in reality, in actual practice, the international standpoint of bolshevism. This was the second difference of principle between Trotzky and the bolsheviki.

3. Unity with the menshevist Fraction of Tcheidse. Even during the war Comrade Trotzky still advocated unity with such elements as the Tcheidse fraction, and he did not have the courage to declare for a definite organisatory break which was the necessary preliminary to a correct policy. It was not without reason that Lenin greatly feared that many comrades would be misled by Trotzkyism. It is interesting to note that Trotzky, even in May 1917, did not perceive his earlier errors. Thus we read on page 380 of the book in question:

"On the 7th of May 1917 there was opened the city conference of the United Social Democrats (Bolsheviki and Internationalists). The Conference greeted Comrade Trotzky who was present as guest. In reply to this greeting Comrade

\*) "Our Word" at one time the organ of Trotzky. Ed.

Trotzky declared that for him, who always stood for the unity of the social democratic forces (heavy type by the "Pravda") unity is not an end in itself, that this formula must be given a revolutionary content etc. (Page 380)."

From this it is perfectly clear that Comrade Trotzky does not only not condemn his fight for the unity of the liquidators, but makes this tremendous fatal error almost the basis, so to speak, of unity with the bolsheviki, this time fortunately being prepared to give the formula a revolutionary content.

Unfortunately the same faulty estimation of his own mistake in the organisatory question is also observed at present, (it was clearly revealed by Comrade Trotzky in the last year's discussion). Comrade Trotzky justifies himself with regard to the accusations on the part of "some one of the deep thinking sections of the type of comrade Ssorin" on account of his fight against the bolshevist sectarianism, by a more than strange method.

"My objection to the article was the following: sectarianism still exists as a heritage of the past. But in order to reduce it the "Meshrajony" must cease their separate existence" (Page 66).

Comrade Trotzky already therefore, when he advocated uniting with the Bolsheviki, condemned bolshevist sectarianism as a bad inheritance of the wicked past.

But do we repudiate this heritage? Not in the least, for the so-called sectarianism was, as a matter of fact, the method of creation of our Party, that is the organisatory basic principle of bolshevism. And when Comrade Trotzky writes on Page 6 of his "preface": that he has recognised his "great organisatory mistakes", and on page 66 justifies the charge of sectarianism directed against pre-revolutionary bolshevism, this means that he has not yet drawn all the consequences and all the teaching from the history of our Party. He can, however, not do this if he considers the birthday of the Party to be the day of its union with the "Meshrajony", or even the glorious October days, which Comrade Trotzky, not without birth pangs, was himself born a bolshevik.

4. Fight against the Zimmerwald Left. Finally, there must be mentioned the attitude of Comrade Trotzky on a "world scale" Comrade Trotzky who conducted the fight against chauvinist social patriots etc., was scornful towards the Zimmerwald Left. He regarded them likewise as sectarians, as a bolshevist which quite unadapted for the conditions abroad. Already in America where, as Comrade Lenzner assures us, Comrade Trotzky anticipated the later standpoint of Comrade Lenin, he conducted an active fight against solidifying with the Zimmerwald Left. Trotzky could not approve this "split" from the Zimmerwald centre. The comrades who were entrusted with the editing of "1917" must not take any trouble to illuminate for the international proletariat this part of our Party history, which is quite as important for the International as the question of civil war, of defeatism etc.; for here there is no less at stake than the choice between the II. and the III. International.

5. The Conception of "permanent" Revolution. Comrade Trotzky has, as is proved, not only "anticipated" Lenin's standpoint, but he proved himself to be right in one of the essential points of our revolutionary theory and at the same time of our revolutionary strategy, and that is, in the question of "permanent" revolution. Comrade Trotzky writes concerning it as follows:

"Lenin, immediately before 1905, gave expression to the unique character of the Russian revolution in the form of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. This formula, as the later development shows, could merely be of importance as a stage to the social dictatorship of the proletariat, supported by the peasantry" (Page XVII).

What can be the meaning of that? In 1905 there was a fight of the Bolsheviki, who issued the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry", on the one hand and the Trotsky Parvus group, whose slogan was: "Down with the Tsar and with a labour government!", on the other hand and finally

\*) This refers to the so-called "Meshrajony", who stood side by side with the Bolsheviki and at this time stood for unity with the "left" mensheviki. After the July days they, along with Comrade Trotzky, joined the Bolshevik Party.

the Poles, at the head of whom stood Rosa Luxemburg, who issued the formula: "the proletariat supported by the peasantry".

Whose standpoint proved to be correct?

Comrade Trotzky evades giving a definite and detailed reply to this question. Indirectly however he finds the correctness of his formula confirmed: The formula of Lenin could "merely" be a stage to the formula of Trotzky. But to say that the standpoint of Trotzky proved to be correct is false. It proved to be incorrect, and the further development has proved its incorrectness. The peculiarity of Comrade Trotzky's attitude consists precisely in the fact that he wished to skip a stage which could not be skipped. (He forgot one trifle, the peasantry.)

"It is not sufficient to be a revolutionary and a follower of socialism or a communist in general" wrote Comrade Lenin. "One must understand how to find at any moment the particular link in the chain which one must seize with all his force in order to hold the entire chain and to prepare a sure transition to the following link." (Collected works Volume 15, Page 223.)

It is precisely this which the slogan of Comrade Trotzky failed to give. He has "disregarded" that special link of the chain which should have been grasped with all force, he has underestimated the role of the peasantry and thereby practically isolated himself from the workers.

"Magnificent, catching, intoxicating slogans, which have no basis — that is the nature of the revolutionary phrase." (Lenin XV. Page 100.)

It does not follow from the fact that after many years, and after we have passed over a certain stage, the socialist revolution has set in, that Comrade Trotzky is right. Such an assertion would contradict the facts and would be based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of the tactics of bolshevism, of its, if one may so say, political methodology, which unites a persistent march forward to the great aim with an austere soberness, which rejects all prejudices and all superficiality in its estimate of every concrete situation. Here also Comrade Trotzky is in the wrong. Here also his book entirely misleads the reader. Not to mention the fact that Comrade Trotzky remains silent as to how his "permanent" ultra-left phrase was wedded to an extremely right policy and a bitter struggle against the Bolshevik Party.

#### IV.

#### The Lessons of October and the Communist International.

One of the practical foundations upon which the "Preface" of Trotzky is based is the endeavour, to put it mildly, to "dispute" the policy of the E. C. C. I. He sets out to take revenge for the discussion he lost in 1923 and thereby to oppose, not only the line of the C. C., but also the policy of the Comintern as a whole. For this purpose he has distorted the meaning of the most important epochs of the class struggle of the proletariat in Germany and in Bulgaria. In this he hints that the mistakes of several comrades in 1917 caused the failure of the Communists in Germany and in Bulgaria in 1923. The structure of this idea is very simple when we strip off the husk of words. XYZ erred in the Russian October, XYZ now lead the Communist International. The Comintern has lost the battles a, b, c. It follows that XYZ are responsible for this, as they are carrying on their traditions of the Russian October. Briefly stated that is the meaning of the long effusion.

The frame of this completely ridiculous syllogism has a concrete content. It is therefore necessary critically to illuminate this content, whereupon the whole complicated construction of Comrade Trotzky will collapse.

#### Point 1. Bulgaria.

Comrade Trotzky writes:

"In the past year we had two severe defeats in Bulgaria. First the Party, owing to doctrinaire and fatalistic considerations, missed a most extraordinary favourable moment for revolutionary action (the peasants' revolt after the Zankov patch). Afterwards the Party, in order to make good its mistakes, plunged into the September revolt without having prepared the political and organisatory pre-conditions therefor" (XII).

As the reader will easily see, the reason for the defeat is here considered to be, first menshevik fatalism, and secondly

unlimited optimism (no preparation etc.). These two features are also mentioned in characterising the types of October opportunism. The connection between the Russian October and the present Comintern leadership is therefore completely set up.

Let us, however, examine the facts a little more closely. The first defeat was the result of the fact that the Bulgarian Party had dealt with the peasantry quite incorrectly, and did not know how to estimate their movement or the role of the peasants' League as a whole, or its left wing. They rather adopted the standpoint: "Down with the king, up with a workers' government." At the decisive moment, when it was necessary to take the leadership into their hands and to mount up on the crest of a powerful peasants' wave, the Party declared itself neutral, claiming that the fight was between the town and the rural bourgeoisie, which was no concern of the proletariat. These were the "considerations" of the C. P. of Bulgaria. They have been committed to writing, and can be now proved by documents. If we wish to have an analogy with our October (we should, by the way, be more cautious with analogies), it would be much more apt to take the Kornikoff days (Kerensky-Stambuliski, Kornilov-Zankov). Here, according to the statement of Comrade Trotzky himself, too much support was given to Kerensky, and the distinction between the fight against Kornilov and the defence of Kerensky was not understood. In Bulgaria, however, the exact opposite error was committed.

Wherein therefore lie the "Lessons of October"?

Apart from this, the comrades who are at present members of the E. C. C. I. adopted during the Kornilov days a thoroughly correct attitude, and the whole E. C. C. I. exercised a thoroughly correct criticism of the C. P. of Bulgaria and urged them on.

The second defeat in Bulgaria is a fact, and Comrade Trotzky describes the conditions under which it took place. Will you be so good, Comrade Trotzky, to say, whether in this case you support the old formula of Plechanov during the time of the menshevist decay: "one should not have taken up arms"? Was it necessary or not for the Bulgarian Communists to take up arms?

Yes or no?

Comrade Trotzky does not reply to this. According to our opinion it was necessary to take up arms, as only by this means was it possible to maintain contact with the peasantry who were entering the struggle with elementary force. But there was no time for preparation. That is the true picture of the events. The "Lessons" of Comrade Trotzky have nothing in the least to do with it.

#### Point 2. Germany.

Still more interesting is the question of the defeat of the German proletariat in October last year.

"We have seen there in the second half of the past year a classical (heavy type by the "Pravda") demonstration of the fact that a most extraordinary favourable revolutionary situation of world historical importance can be missed". (XII.)

According to the opinion of Comrade Trotzky therefore, the failure here consisted in the fact that a "classical" moment was missed. It was necessary at all costs to take up the decisive struggle and the victory would have been ours. Here Comrade Trotzky draws a complete analogy with the October revolution in Russia. There as here, we were pushed forward. In Russia, under the pressure of Lenin, we decided upon action and were victorious — in Germany, without the pressure of Lenin, no decision was made and the appropriate moment was lost. Now, however, under the influence of the Russian October revolution it is declared that the forces for the decisive struggle were not sufficient. That is the meaning of the "German events" according to Comrade Trotzky.

But here we have before us mere schematising and grey abstraction. Comrade Trotzky elaborates how history would have been written if the opponents of the revolt had been in the majority in the Russian C. C.: it would then have been said that the forces were too limited, that the enemy was fearfully strong etc.

All this is only outwardly convincing; yes, it is probable that history would have been written in this manner. But that is in no way a proof that the forces of the German revolution in October 1923, were not overestimated.

It is false to say, the moment was a "classical" one. For the social democrats proved themselves to be far stronger than



we thought. An analogy with the Russian October is quite out of place here. In Germany there were no armed soldiers who were for the revolution. We could not issue the slogan of peace. There was no peasant agrarian movement. There was no such party as ours. But apart from all that it proved that social democracy has not yet outlived itself. These concrete facts had therefore to be dealt with. At the time of the decisive events the E. C. C. I. declared itself in favour of the October policy. Now as, owing to the objective conditions this suffered a defeat, and as, thanks to the right leaders, this defeat was "greater than necessary", Comrade Trotsky, who has in fact always supported the right opportunist wing which is inclined to capitulation and opposed the left, now gives a "profound" theoretical basis of his conception, and thereby launches a blow against the leading circles of the Comintern. Such lessons must not be drawn either from the Russian or the German October.

It is also quite inadmissible to cling to many errors to which Comrade Trotsky still clings.

One of the lessons, (the actual lessons) of the German October is, that before action the most far-reaching mobilisation of the masses is necessary. This work has been greatly neglected. In Hamburg, for example, during the revolt there were no councils and our Party organisation was not capable of drawing the ten thousands of strikers into the struggle. Throughout the whole of Germany there were no soviets; according to Comrade Trotsky's opinion that was right, as the soviets were substituted by the factory councils. As a matter of fact, these factory councils could not replace the soviets, as they did not comprise the whole population, including the most backward and indifferent, as the soviets do in the critical and tense moments of the class struggle.

The book of Comrade Trotsky calls for a study of October. This slogan does not contain anything new. It is appropriate for the members of our Party as well as for our foreign comrades. Comrade Trotsky's book, or to be more correct, his preface, claims to be a guide in this study. To this we must say, in the most definite manner: it cannot fulfill this role. It will, however, mislead the comrades, who, behind the exterior fine style, will not observe the complete lack of proportion, the distortion of the true Party history. That is no mirror of the Party but a caricature.

The publication of this "caricature" is by no means a chance event. After what we have said above it is not difficult to perceive to what the conclusions indicated by Comrade Trotsky lead.

In fact: if, as Comrade Trotsky falsely states, in October 1917 something correct could be carried through only against the C. C. is it not possible that such a situation may arise again? What guarantee is there that the leadership will be the right one? And whether it is correct at the present time? The sole "test" is October 1917. Can one trust those who have not stood this test? And did not the Comintern suffer a defeat in Bulgaria and in Germany in consequence of these leaders? Is it not necessary to study the October in such a way that just these problems are more closely investigated?

That is the essence of those problems which Comrade Trotsky, after the failure of his frontal attack in the past year, brings forward for the attention of his readers. Comrade Trotsky can, however, be quite convinced that the Party will understand how to judge rightly and in good time this quiet undermining work. The Party wants work and no fresh discussion. The Party desires true bolshevist unity.